“Come Unto Me”

Zanesville, OH | March 24, 2019 | Sermon Notes

**Foundational Scripture:** Matt. 11:28-30; Rev. 1:9

**Intro**:

* Jesus’ invitation in Matt. 11:28-30 is one that is well known. The words of Jesus *“Come to Me or Come unto Me”* have no doubt impacted people across the world in one way or another. However, I’m afraid that many people do not really understand the nature of Jesus’ invitation. The religious world preaches the need to come to Jesus. Follow Jesus, serve Jesus, love Jesus, live for Jesus. But what does it really mean to come to Jesus? What does it mean to follow Him, love Him, serve Him and come to Him? When Jesus says, *“Come unto Me”* what does He mean and what we should we look for? Jesus gives the answer within the same context of extending His invitation but the true extent of the coming to Jesus of is found in Rev. 1:9. John, the apostle of Christ, the disciple whom Jesus loved, outlines for us what we should expect when we come to Jesus.

**What Should I Expect When I Come to Jesus?**

1. **Suffering**
   1. The first thing we ought to expect when we come to Jesus is suffering or tribulation. There is a two-fold sense in which we should expect suffering. The **first** is in relation to the sacrifices and changes we must make when we come to Jesus.
   2. When one comes to Jesus he/she must understand that there are certain changes that must be made. Requirements must be met and it begins with circumcision of the heart (Deut. 10:16; Col. 2:11). Jesus invites us to come unto Him for rest but we must be willing to get rid of the distractions, the sin and the situations which lead us away from Him.
   3. We must be willing to become a different person. We have to kill our worldly selves and close the door completely on sin and the devil (Eph. 4:22, 27; Col. 3:5-11). We can expect that when Jesus says, *“Come unto Me”* it won’t be easy but sacrifices must be made in order to get better (Mk. 9:43-48).
   4. In many walks of life, sacrifices and a certain level of suffering must be met before any rewards, payouts or benefits can be received. People hear *“Come unto Me and I will give you rest”* and they think that Jesus will just magically snap a finger and everything will fall into place. Finances will be stable, my marriage will suddenly get better, kids will fall into line, I will land my dream job etc. Jesus says come, but there is work to do.
   5. Thus, the idea of taking His yoke upon you. A yoke is an instrument usually placed on a pair of animals who would plow the fields (ox, cattle etc.) It would guide them to do their work in the best possible way and the most efficient way. Jesus’ yoke is His law, His word, His teachings. When we come to Him, we should expect to commit to this and get rid of everything that keeps us from doing His will. Suffer. For. Him. Suffer. For. Rest. (1 Pet. 5:10).
   6. The **second** sense in which we should expect suffering is the physical, emotional and mentally challenging scenarios we will find ourselves in. If you come to Jesus, know that your faith will be tested. Your faith will be tried by trials, scenarios and problems from left-field. You cannot prepare for these no matter how hard you try, but it’s how you deal with them that will be the key (Jam. 1:2-4; 1 Pet. 1:6-7).
   7. The devil will use everything in his power to deter you, to discourage you and to destroy you (Gen. 37, 39-40; Job; 1 Pet. 5:8-9). John and the saints in his time and that part of the world, were severely and brutally persecuted for the word of God and their testimony. John says when you come to Jesus, this is a part of the package deal.
   8. While we may not experience such persecution now, we may have diseases, we may have lost loved ones, we may have been segregated and disowned by our family and friends but this is a part of the package. This is included in the invitation (Matt. 5:10-12).
   9. Suffering is quintessential in coming to Jesus, loving Jesus and following Jesus. It is important and pivotal that when we choose to accept this invitation and when we come to Him, we expect that suffering will be a part of this in some fashion, shape or form (Acts 14:22).
2. **Kingdom**
   1. The second thing we should expect when we come to Jesus is the Kingdom. Again, there is a two-fold sense that is meant by the use of the term kingdom. In **one** sense when we come to Jesus, we must expect to be a part of the church (His kingdom). We are placed within a family, a group of believers, Christ’s body in which every single soul must determine to be an active participant.
   2. There is no laziness, no half-heartedness, no talk of apathy. There is 100% commitment and when Jesus says, *“Come unto Me”* we should expect that what follows is effort, energy and hard-work. We take His yoke, His word, His law and we go out and plow the fields. We spread the word of God (Matt. 9:37-38).
   3. We take His yoke and we look at our inner selves and we dissect and evaluate what needs to change, what needs to improve, what needs to be removed. How can I be a better Christian today? How can I help my brother or sister today? Is there someone who needs my help or am I seeking the help and encouragement of others?
   4. When we come to Jesus, know that you signed up for an occupation and not a vacation. We want that rest, we want that more than anything else. Then work for it! Show God that you’re not just saying it but that you mean it. Be about the Lord’s business (1 Cor. 15:58). You want the rest, you want the reward? Then put in the hard work and suffer and be an active participant in His kingdom.
   5. The **second** sense is that even though we are in the kingdom now, the fullest realization of it will only be achieved when Jesus gives us that rest. Suffering and kingdom now merge to demonstrate a powerful message. We can’t truly be a part of Christ’s kingdom without suffering (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 1:8, 12; 1 Pet. 2:19-21; 4:1-19) and it is only through suffering we will achieve the greatest blessings (Rom. 8:18). Consider Christ’s suffering achieving salvation. Even so our suffering will achieve the ultimate reward: **Rest from Sin and Satan in Heaven!**
3. **Perseverance**
   1. Finally, when we come to Jesus, we must expect to persevere and endure. Expect that it won’t be easy but that it will be worth it! Know that it won’t be easy to suffer at times. It will be hard to make some changes. It will be hard to give up those things you love and enjoy but you have to ask is it worth going to hell over that stuff?
   2. Am I willing to make every day (and not just Sunday or Wednesday) the day that I devote my undivided attention and cast my unwavering loyalty to God? Jesus says, *“Come unto Me”* but do I have the heart and do I have the will to do what it takes to suffer, be an active participant and to persevere?
   3. Am I willing to accept advice and correction when necessary so that I can improve and grow? Do I evaluate myself often to the point that if I realize I am in “coasting” mode that I will shut that down and excel still more at all costs (1 Thess. 4:1,10)? Small victories are great but they are not a cause for pause but a chance for further growth.
   4. When I come to Jesus I need to expect that I will do whatever it takes for His word and His will even if that means giving my life. Why? Because I know He has promised me something nobody else has and nobody else can: **Rest for my soul forever!**
   5. I must model my life after His and I must take up my cross and follow Him (2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 12:1-2). The race is not over when we see the line, the race is over when we cross it. Then and only then will our joy be made complete (1 Jn. 1:4). When I come to Jesus, I should expect to persevere and endure till my appointment with death arrives or my Lord returns.

**Conclusion:** Jesus told the story of a Rich Young Ruler who came to Him and asked what he needed to do to have eternal life. What does it take? Jesus in effect told him, *“you need to suffer, expect a kingdom and persevere”* (Mk. 10:21). *“Come unto Me”* takes a lot. It takes hard-work and pain and dedication and Jesus’ invitation is not one everyone can accept and not one everyone is willing to accept. The disciples are standing there seeing this all unfold and Peter assures Jesus they have done better than the young man (Mk. 10:28). Jesus in turn tells him that coming to Him is not easy but it’s worth every bit of sweat and tears you have had to endure and there is a grand prize with your name on it once you cross the finish line. (Mk. 10:29-30). *“Come unto Me.”* Now that you know what Jesus meant, will you accept His invitation? **Are you concerned enough about the state of your soul that you will do what it takes to be saved?**