

Revelation and Rest by Zac Poonen

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In Mathew 11:25, Jesus said, "Father, I praise You that You hid these things from the wise and the intelligent and revealed them to babes". The great truths of the new covenant have been hidden by God. You cannot discover them by study. You can read every commentary in the world, but you won't discover them, because they are hidden from the clever and the intelligent. You need revelation, and God gives that only to those who are like babes - who have, a pure heart. Whether they have a clever head or not doesn't matter. Intelligence gives us no advantage whatsoever in God's kingdom. It's a pure heart that gets God's revelations. Children are also teachable. A little child is ignorant and gladly acknowledges its ignorance. For example, he will ask his father, "Daddy, why are yellow lines drawn on the road?" We adults know that those lines are drawn to divide the road for the traffic. But a child doesn't know even a simple thing like that. Very few believers come to the Holy Spirit in that way, saying, "Lord, You wrote this Book. What does this mean? I am foolish in spiritual matters. Please explain it to me." In the new covenant, we have the privilege of being filled with the Holy Spirit and to have Him Himself teach us the Scriptures that He wrote.

Christ has appointed teachers in the church. But when listening to those teachers, if you stop with what you receive from them, you will never know God. What they teach you may be true, but you get it second-hand from them. You have to take that second-hand stuff before the Lord and say, "Lord, make this first-hand knowledge for me. Make it my own experience." Then those truths will be yours forever. If you don't do that, then even the truths you receive from heaven will become stale - like the manna sent from heaven began to breed worms within 24 hours. But the manna that was kept in God's presence in the most holy place remained fresh at all times.

In Mathew 11:28, Jesus said, "Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. "This is the fulfilment of the Old-Testament Sabbath. The new-covenant Sabbath is not a day of physical rest, but an inner rest that Jesus gives us. He gives it first of all, to those who come to Him acknowledging that they are weary and heavy laden. I have had people come to me saying, "Brother Zac, I want to join your church." I ask them why they want to join our church and they reply, "Because I am sick and tired of my present church." I then tell them, "If you are sick and tired of your present church, after a little while, you will become sick and tired of us too. So don't join us. We are actually a bunch of people who are sick and tired of ourselves, not sick and tired of others. If you are sick and tired of yourself, then you are welcome to join us; and we'll have wonderful fellowship together.

Many pastors are constantly seeking to increase the numbers in their churches. But Jesus invited only those who were sick and tired of their defeated lives to come to Him. Are you sick and tired of your depressed, gloomy life and of the failures in your family life? Are you fed up of the lack of freshness and anointing in your ministry? Then the Lord invites you saying, "Come to Me and I will give you rest. " It is not God's will that we should ever be agitated or upset. He wants us to be at rest 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

and 52 weeks a year, whatever may happen around us. But we can live such a life only if we acknowledge our defeated state first and come to the Lord and say, "Lord, give me this Sabbath-rest at any cost."

In Mathew 11:29, Jesus said, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me - for I am gentle and humble in heart". A disciple is a learner and he comes to Jesus to learn from Him, like a teachable child. What does the Lord want us to learn from Him first of all? Many want to learn how to preach, how to heal the sick, and how to prophesy, etc. But the Lord wants us to learn gentleness and humility from Him first of all. In fact, those are the only two things that He ever asked anyone to learn from Him. But there are not many Christians who are eager to learn these two virtues. And that is why they do not experience His Sabbath-rest either.

When you see a godly man with an anointed and effective ministry, you may long to have a ministry like his. But that is the wrong thing to pursue after. What you need to emulate first is his godly life. The Lord may call us to be fishers of men or teachers in His church. But He wants us to live "in rest" first. If we are not at rest in our own hearts, we will have many problems ourselves and cause problems for others too".

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