

the death on the cross, and at the same time Jesus lived on behalf of sinners the perfect sinless life we need for perfect acceptance with God. Christ Jesus through His shed blood on Calvary and with His resurrection from the dead as Saviour of sinners, grants freely and fully perfect rest for body and soul, for all His own, even for as many as come to Him. In Revelation 14:13 we read also then these comforting words from the inspired apostle John, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, 'Write, Blessed are the dead [who] die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.'"

With the Lord and coming to Him in faith and repentance is found perfect rest for body and soul for time and eternity, and all for Jesus' sake alone. This is the great gospel message for all people, indeed, the only true gospel message in all places for all time, for every tribe and nation. Are you coming to the Lord Jesus, seeking always salvation and rest all with Him and in and through Him? In Hebrews 4:1 God's Word states, "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Without Jesus as your Saviour and Lord, you are and remain without peace with God, and you have no hope of real rest, not in this life nor forever in the eternal world to come. But the gospel of Jesus Christ calls us from this awful judgment to true and eternal rest.

"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This Word of Jesus, as with all His Word, is so reliable and urgent and important considering the awesome Person Who spoke it, the age-old problem He describes, and the abundant promise He here gives. "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD", especially also now Matthew 11:28! And don't think and act as if it doesn't relate to you, my friend, nor put this off till it is forever too late! Amen.

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### **BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST**

*Radio Ministry of the FREE REFORMED CHURCHES of North America*

*Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)*



### PROCLAIMING THIS TEXT AS SO RELIABLE

Matthew 11:28 is one of the more well known Scripture texts in the Bible. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." You might be one of so many who ask if a person can really live and die in salvation rest, trusting this word of Christ the Saviour. Can a sinner find true peace and be ready to die and meet with God and judgment, putting his hope and trust in this Word of God, this gospel Word of Jesus? What do you think? Is this Word of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners, reliable? In this message what I want to proclaim is three reasons that bring out this is such a reliable, trustworthy, dependable true gospel promise.

For one just think with me of the **Person** Who spoke these words. It is Jesus, Who is the way, the truth, and the life; Jesus, Who never would tell a falsehood; Jesus, Who only always meant what He said, and said what He meant. His words are more reliable and trustworthy than that of any other human being who ever lived. Do you know and believe that too? A true Christian knows and believes, whatever else might or might not be the case, God's Word is always reliable, and the words of Jesus, Who is God come in the flesh, cannot fail. God's Word is so to be counted on and so to be trusted, so to be believed and relied upon. In Matthew 24:35 Jesus states even, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." God's Word, Jesus' Words, the Holy Spirit's writing, is the truth, absolutely so and completely so. You can't go wrong that way, indeed, it is the only way to live and die triumphantly clinging to and trusting in God and His Word! In John 6:68 we hear Jesus' disciple, Peter, say to Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life!" In Revelation 21:5 we read from the lips of the exalted Saviour in heaven about the Bible and the gospel way of victory through Jesus Christ, "And He that sat upon the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.' And He said to me, 'Write, for these words are true and faithful.'"

The Person Who speaks here and calls, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," is Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners. Oh, how He should be listened to and how He should be heard! Are you coming to Jesus at His call, yes, even with the calling now from Matthew 11:28? To live and die in peace, we each and all need to come to Jesus and repent of sin and believe on Him.

Here notice with me a second reason this text is so reliable and urgent to depend on, for consider not just the Person Who speaks these words, but the **problem** He describes. The problem Jesus describes is people who are labouring and heavy laden. What does Jesus mean with that phrase? He is speaking about people struggling in life's journey, labouring to be accepted of God and weighed down time and again with such a sense and realization of our sins and sinfulness before God. He is speaking about people, realizing that life is short and before we know it, we come to death's door and then face the last judgment, and how then shall we stand before God?

The problem we have from our conception, as the Bible teaches and history proves, is that we are conceived and born in sin, and of ourselves never can we make things right with God, but only daily increase our debt through our countless sins and shortcomings before the righteous and holy God. Of ourselves we never can pay the just punishment for our sins in any respect, and we never can begin to live a perfect life wholly pleasing to God, without sin and wrongdoing anymore. No, we are by nature dead in sins and trespasses and we are hopelessly guilty and condemned before God left to ourselves. Some, like the Pharisees and all false religions of man's making, come up with their own schemes and ways to try to soothe their guilty consciences before God and falsely promote ways and means of somehow appeasing God and yet pleasing Him, but it just is not possible of ourselves ever to please God again. When Jesus says then, "*Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden*", He is addressing sinners in their sinful state and hopeless condition of themselves.

Why is this word so reliable then? Because it addresses us where we are at. Do you know this about yourself, too, that the problem of getting right with God is a hopeless problem left to your sinful self? Do you admit and confess you are a person born in sin and guilty of sin and plagued with sin, and never can you of yourself clear yourself nor cleanse yourself nor renew yourself from all your sins and sinfulness, no matter what you might think, say, or do? You see Jesus, the Saviour of sinners, knows the human condition of sin and our sinfulness by nature, and how it results in people in various degrees and multiple ways labouring and being heavy laden in life's brief journey. This is the reality of all fallen mankind in one way or another, labouring and being heavy laden, never able of ourselves to find peace with God and perfect peace with others.

Why is Matthew 11:28 so reliable and trustworthy? Because of the Person of Jesus who speaks these words and the problem of mankind He describes. The only solution from our sinful condition is to come to Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners. Notice also how the Bible says, "*Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden.*" In other words, this text does not put a fence around the invitation but is a wide-open invitation. Some will

make a condition out of the problem Jesus describes but wrongly so. They say that only those may come to Jesus who know about labouring and being heavy laden over sin who also feel something of that and can tell something of that. Yet Jesus is by no means here giving a conditional gospel promise, but He is describing all who may come and those who will come. It is true that without a sense of sin and you realizing something of your wretched sinfulness and dreadful state by nature you won't hear the gospel call, but that is not the same as saying the call and invitation of the text is only for those with a right sense of or a certain measure of their sins and sinfulness. Jesus is calling to lost mankind in a world full of the misery of sin, and His call is, "*Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" The call given especially to all who labour and are heavy laden doesn't narrow the gospel call and invitation here but only broadens it and underscores it all the more for all people to hear and respond to.

Are you one who also comes to Jesus for His salvation and rest for body and soul? Notice yet how the text gives the call to come to Jesus all who labor and are heavy laden right in the context of speaking of God's decree of election. The decree of God's election, which Jesus refers to in the verses just prior, in no way minimizes the sincere gospel call to all, but only underscores the sure success of the gospel call. The gospel is not for people as the elect of God, but for people as sinners, and the sinners saved by grace trusting Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord are the elect of God. Don't place the decree of God's election unto salvation before the gospel offer and so limiting the gospel offer, but see the matter of God's election to salvation as part of the gospel offer, and the sure success of it. None who come to Jesus shall be put to shame! Hear Jesus say in Matthew 11:27&28, "*All things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knows the Son, but the Father; neither knows any man the Father, save [except] the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*"

Do you see what reasons to rely on this word of our text then? The Person who speaks these words, and the problem He describes us with, and lastly, thinking of the **promise** Jesus makes here, are all reasons to come to Jesus in spirit and truth for now and as long as you live. Jesus' promise is "*and I will give you rest.*" Freely He will grant rest, meaning reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sin, everlasting righteousness, and the gift of eternal life, and all that is wonderful beyond words for body and soul. Are you looking to Jesus Christ for rest and peace with God and putting all your weight, all your life, all your hope in His hands? Jesus gives rest in a total and ultimate way before God and man and in life and death and for body and soul, for Jesus as Saviour of sinners accomplished perfect salvation from all sin through His glorious person and gracious work as Saviour of sinners. Jesus Christ, the gospel further tells us, died the death we sinners deserve, even