**Come to Me**

Matt. 11:28-29

Introduction:

1. “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

2. This is a very attractive and powerful invitation. I would like to share my load. I would love to find rest.

3. “But how can I be sure that I can trust Jesus? He promises to carry my load, but what if I try to do this and His yoke is too heavy for me? I am just not sure I am ready yoke up with Him. I have yoked up with some people and they betrayed me.

4. My parents for example. Parents are supposed to support their children, but mine abandoned me. Mine burdened me with a load I could not carry. Mine hurt me so badly I am still carrying the scars of what they did to me.

5. How can I come to Jesus?”

6. This invitation to come to Jesus is an invitation into relationship, but it is not so easy for some of us.

Discussion:

I. God created us for relationship.

 A. God observed, “It is not good for man to be alone” (Gen. 2:18).

 1. Something insufficient or incomplete in that.

 2. Evidently it is “not good” for men to only have relationship with God.

 3. Evidently it is “not good” for men to only have relationship with those of the same

 sex.

 4. Evidently it is “not good” for men to only have relationship with animals. A good

 source of positive relationship. Some prefer their dog to their husband/wife.

 B. God is relational—Father, Son, Holy Spirit.

 1. The statement in Gen. 1 is, “Let Us make man in Our image.”

 2. God is relational and part of our being created in His image is relational.

 3. Creation in His image involves relation to God and other image bearers both male

 and female.

 C. God’s designed plan does not include shame (Gen. 2:25).

II. Sin damaged relationship.

 A. Shame was one of the first recognitions from sin (Gen. 3:7). Shame marred the

 relationship between the man and the woman.

 B. Sin damaged their relationship with God (3:8).

 C. Vulnerability was recognized.

 1. They were afraid.

 2. They withdrew and hid themselves.

 3. They blamed someone else as they attempted to avoid responsibility (3:12).

 D. The Lord responded graciously to their vulnerability.

 1. He made garments to cover them.

 2. He did not leave them exposed.

 3. He initiated a plan to address their vulnerability and the exposure of sin (Gen.

 3:15).

III. Repaired relationship by means of vulnerability.

 A. The rest of Scripture is about repairing relationship. God sent His own Son.

 Vulnerability is the means to relationship repair. Jesus made Himself vulnerable (Phil.

 2:6-8).

 B. The challenge for us is to make ourselves vulnerable in relationship. But sin and

 shame inhibit us.

 1. We are afraid (to be intimate).

 2. We withdraw.

 3. We avoid.

 C. Jesus came to help the hurting.

 1. John asked, “Are you the One or shall we look for another?” (Matt. 11:3). Jesus

 responded, “The blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the

 deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor have the gospel preached to them”

 (11:4-5).

 2. He invited women and children, the most vulnerable to come to Him.

 3. He invited sinners and tax-collectors.

 4. He invited the avoidant scribes and Pharisees, the hypocrites (Matt. 23:37-38).

 5. He died for those who crucified Him and said forgive them they do not know what

 they are doing (Lk. 23:34). Extending forgiveness means carrying the pain you do

 not deserve and making yourself even more vulnerable to the pain of rejection.

 D. But being like Him repairs relationships.

 1. We are the salt and light influence and are to let our light shine that the Father may

 be glorified (Matt. 5:13-16).

 2. BUT when we do that persecution comes from the hand of the fearful, the

 mistrusting and the avoidant (Matt. 5:10-12; 1 Pet. 4:12ff).

IV. What does avoidance of vulnerability look like (1 Pet. 4:3).

 A. “I don’t need anybody. I am an island and an island feels no pain.”

 B. Attempts to “fill” the void of relationship.

 1. Pleasure seeking activities.

 2. Workaholism – working to avoid going home.

 3. Dependence upon wealth. Love of money. “You are what you have.”

 4. All of the above can be medications of loneliness.

 5. Additionally—drugs, alcohol, sex, buying, eating.

 6. “Righteousness” (Lk. 18:11ff).

 7. Blaming someone else.

 8. No commitment.

 9. Anger (Lk. 15:28), self-righteousness (29), feeling unjustly treated (29).

 10. Looking for love in all the wrong places (Jn. 4:17—5 husbands).

 C. Examples by comparison.

 1. The tax-collector of Lk. 18:9ff made himself vulnerable. The Pharisee did not.

 2. The prodigal son made himself vulnerable. The older son did not (Lk. 15:11ff).

 The older son said, “You don’t care about me.”

 3. Lazarus was vulnerable. The rich man was not (Lk. 16:19ff).

 4. The one Samaritan leper who was thankful made himself vulnerable, the other 9

 did not. (Lk. 17:11ff).

 5. The rich young ruler failed to make himself vulnerable (Lk. 18:18ff).

V. When we fail to make ourselves vulnerable we inhibit relationship.

 A. Marriage is the place to develop relationship.

 1. Between marriage partners.

 2. Between them and their children.

 3. These relationships provide the foundation for all other human relationships.

 B. Our relationships in the church as the people of God . . .

 1. Are repaired relationships (Gal. 3:26-28).

 2. Notice the role of faith (trust) in such relationships (Gal. 3:24). We must learn to trust

 to overcome our feelings of vulnerability.

 3. This is accomplished by Christ making himself vulnerable to us. Another being

 vulnerable to you draws you into relationship with them. If they domineer over you

 distrust is created and you fear, withdraw and avoid.

VI. So what do we need to do?

 A. In humility we need to make ourselves vulnerable to one another as Christ made

 Himself vulnerable to us. When someone makes themselves vulnerable to us we need

 to treat them kindly, even though they don’t deserve it.

 B. But first we need to make ourselves vulnerable to Him who died for us. Confessing we

 have been going about life all wrong acknowledges powerlessness.

 C. From the acceptance, love, grace and compassion we experience we can move to

 extending relationship to others.

Conclusion:

1. Will you accept relationship with Christ?

2. Will you humble yourself?

3. Will you come to Him and take your load off?