

### **From Pastor Greg's Heart ~ An Invitation to Rest**

**Matthew 11:28, 29**, *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 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. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

In this passage of Scripture Jesus calls out to the weary and the burdened. Why are they weary? Or why are they burdened? Why are we weary? Or why are we burdened? I believe the answer is the mishandling of “stress.”

I remember my counselling professor in seminary listing certain changes in life that cause incredible stress. Some of those stressful changes include a death in the family, loss of employment, loss of a home, financial loss, marital infidelity, work place harassment, injustice, physical (or mental, emotional, sexual) abuse, robbery, building a house, pregnancy, planning a wedding, caring for a chronically ill loved one, raising a strong-willed child and conflict with a family member, friend or neighbour. Stress when mishandled can cause long lasting mental, emotional and physical illness. Stomach ulcers, high blood pressure, hypertension, heart attack, loss of sleep, stroke, and depression can result. How have you been managing stress in your life lately?

The good news is you don't need to deal with it by yourself. Jesus asks you to “*come to me*” and He promises, “*I will give you rest.*” You might ask, “How can I have rest in the midst of a crisis or tragedy?” Jesus answers in verse 29, “take my yoke upon you.” This is farming imagery of being yoked with an ox in a wooden yoke to plow a field. Jesus is saying, “when you are yoked with me you will find it easy and the burden I put upon you will be light.” Jesus will be like the stronger ox. He will pull you through your stress, crisis, and tragedy.

Another way of looking and dealing with stress is checking your own heart. You may be unable to change the circumstances around you, but you can change how you react or respond to them. Your emotions of panic, fear, worry, anxiousness,

hopelessness, anger, bitterness, or unforgiveness will feed your stress. This is why you must surrender your emotions to Jesus and not be yoked with them.

Instead in verse 29 Jesus wants you to *“learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”* This is where Jesus teaches us His gentleness and His humility in facing stressful situations. When and where you have not responded in gentleness or humility, ask the Holy Spirit to lead you to repentance. Repent of your overreactions! Repent of being yoked with problems! Repent of being yoked with other people’s burdens and reacting negatively to them as they do! We can carry other people’s burdens to the LORD in prayer and we can support a friend or loved one going through a crisis. We can be helpful listeners and give advice as the LORD leads, but to be yoked with that person’s stress puts you in the position where only Jesus can walk. Only Jesus can lighten a burden and give rest to souls!

Here’s the good news! After you have resigned from being the saviour of your soul, Jesus will give you the same invitation as before, “Come to me.” In releasing all your burdens to Him, He will teach you to be gentle and humble in heart.

Can you say the following with me? “I choose to hear your call and be at rest with you, Jesus. I choose to only be yoked with you, Jesus. I pray for my spouse, parent, sibling, child, neighbour, or friend who is in crisis that they will find rest in You. I will love and care and help where I can, but I refuse to be their saviour. Jesus, I point them to you, and I trust you will lead them to the rest and salvation they need.”

Are you feeling the stress lifting? Take a balloon and blow it up without bursting it. Once its body is fully inflated hold the neck between your two thumbs and index fingers and prevent the air from escaping. Now pull the rubber apart at the neck and let the air release slowly to make high-pitched-sounds. This is how we sound when stress has overcome us, and we get agitated or angry or emotional with others. Now let go of the balloon and watch it fly through your room and quickly fall to the ground empty. This is the quick release Jesus is asking from you when we let go of our stress and our man-made yokes. Once we are empty of self, He will pick you up and inflate you with His Spirit instead of stress.

Enter into rest with Jesus and allow Him to carry you and your stress! Are you feeling the stress lifting? Give thanks to the Him! Give thanks!

## **Bits and Bites:**

**1) Reopening for Church Services** – Now that we are in Step 3 of the “Road Map to Reopening Ontario” we are allowed to fill our sanctuary with physical distancing and masks. All are welcome Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. with Kids Church for ages 4 to Grade 6! We are also able to sing behind our masks. You can click this website for more details <https://www.ontario.ca/page/reopening-ontario>

With regards to our **outdoor services**, we are allowed as many people as the property can hold with physical distancing with no masks required. Masks are recommended if you cannot maintain a 2m distance. So far, our evening services have been blessed with wonderful weather, excellent speakers and joyous fellowship. In step 3 we are also allowed a social gathering of 100 people, so we are able to serve food and drinks if our hosts are fine with it. Our remaining outdoor evening services are Sundays at 6:30 p.m. **August 8** at Dan & Cheryl Shepherds (Emily Ferrier is speaking); **August 15** at Tim & Lynda Bournes (Dan Shepherd speaking); and **August 22** at Steve & Amy Blair (Tim Dunning is speaking). I hope to see you out in the fresh air praising our Saviour and LORD Jesus!

**Our Sunday morning worship services** are still available online through livestreaming at 10 a.m. by going to <https://www.facebook.com/CalvaryBibleChurchSF/> If a pop-up window should appear asking you to login to Facebook, look for the phrase at the bottom – **Not Now** - and click it to be able to visit the site without a Facebook account.

**2) A farewell blessing to Connie Ryan (Sr.)**. She is moving to New Westminster, B.C. on August 15<sup>th</sup>. She will be closer to her son and will be living in Thornebridge Gardens Retirement Residence, Room #416, 649 8<sup>th</sup> Ave, New Westminster, BC V3M 2R2. We thank her for her love and prayers over the years and wish Her God’s richest blessing in her new home.

**3) Baptism coming soon!** I have been in contact with two individuals who are desiring baptism. I have had a baptismal class with one of them. It is exciting to be part of this important step of obedience with them. At our church we practice, “Believer’s Baptism” which means we baptize believers by immersion (dipping under). Baptism is Jesus’s ordinance (ordained practice) which follows conversion to Him. If you are hearing God’s prodding to follow the LORD Jesus in baptism, please have a chat with me (613-283-6474) or one of the elders...Mike (613-267-6091), Chris (613-285-8102) or Kevin (613-297-3161). We have opportunities for baptisms at our outdoor services on August 15 and 22.

**4) The Discipleship Focus continues at Calvary Bible Church.** I have been preaching a series of messages since May on the importance of building

relationships with other believers with the purpose of helping them to grow in their faith and in the character of Christ. If you want to be discipled contact one of the elders or me and we will help you find someone of your gender who will be able to help you grow in your faith in Christ.

**5) Jake's books are for your taking!** Jake and Ruth Giesbrecht have arrived safely to their son's cottage in New Brunswick while they wait for their house to be moved on their property later this year. Jake has left behind a good part of his library of books which are on display in the fellowship hall at church. Please feel free to take some books home.

**6) Congratulations to Anne Ryan and Rodney Conoley** and their engagement to be married. Pray for them as plans are underway for their wedding.

### **Prayer Corner**

- 1) Thank God for Dianna Robertson's positive attitude as she continues to heal from her hip surgery. She still has a few open wounds from her infected incision. Pray that the antibiotic she is on will aid with the healing. Pray for her return to our fellowship.
- 2) Madeline Hawe is recovering well from her hip replacement. Pray for her knee and right shoulder that are now aggravating her because of arthritis. Pray for her future medical appointments.
- 3) Cora Collison is battling a few health issues including her back, foot and bowel. Pray for her healing.
- 4) Thank the LORD for Georgina MacIntosh as she is recovering well from her knee replacement. Pray for her to be ready for her next replacement in September.
- 5) Thank the LORD for Debby Hunter's good recovery from her broken foot.
- 6) Francine Hill will be scheduled to have her lumpectomy to remove the cancerous lump in four weeks. Thank the LORD for Francine's faith and positive attitude as she is trusting in Jesus every step of the way.
- 7) Pray for our Vacation Bible School on August 3 to 6. This is a small VBS to keep our church kids in touch with each other and blessed with God's Word.
- 8) Pray for plans for the fall which may include small groups, Awana, discipleship and more.
- 9) Pray for two women from our community who have attended our past Evening Services and their desire to be baptized this summer.