



'Worship at home' Sunday July 9th 2023



We come to worship God,
who we find in the holy spaces
and the ordinary places of our lives.

You are invited to find a **stone** that is large enough to write on,
and a **texta/permanent marker** to use as an aid for prayer.

Opening

If you are tired from carrying heavy burdens,
come to me and I will give you rest.

Take the yoke I give you.

Put it on your shoulders and learn from me.

I am gentle and humble, and you will find rest.

This yoke is easy to bear, and this burden is light.

Christ calls us to come to worship

To rest from the things that are troubling us

To learn what Christ can teach of life

To realise what we can offer to others

And so to return into the world to serve

Let us worship God ~ posted on the **Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa,
New Zealand.** <http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/>

Sometimes life can be a struggle. Illness, family troubles,
financial stresses can make the burdens of everyday life seem
overwhelming at times.

Spend some time reflecting on your life.

**What troubles weigh you down
at this time?**

What lies heavy on your heart?

**Write these on your stone
with your marker.**



Hold the stone in your hands as you read the following Scripture.

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

“To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: “ ‘We played the pipe for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.’ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’ But wisdom is proved right by her deeds.” At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things

from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do. “All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, 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. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

New International Version

A yoke is a wooden beam used to enable two animals to work together to pull a load. What is too heavy for one is often quite manageable for two, as they help each other.



Sometimes we have loads which seem too heavy to bear: a serious illness, a family problem, financial worries, or our own inner anxieties can threaten to overwhelm us at times. Jesus invites us to yoke ourselves to him, to lighten our load. He doesn't offer to relieve us of that load altogether, but he does assure us that when we walk his ways, travelling alongside, he will share that load with us. What seems too heavy for one becomes quite manageable, with Jesus' help.



**Hold your stone in your hands.
Feel its weight in your palm.**

**Reflect again on your own
burdens and struggles.**

**Do you tend to cling to them,
trying to manage them all yourself?**

Now imagine Jesus saying to you: ***“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, 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. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*** Imagine Jesus coming alongside you and shouldering those burdens with you. Can you feel the weight lifting? He may bear most of the weight for you, or he may simply take enough for you to continue your daily walk through life.

Gently let your stone fall, perhaps onto the floor or into your garden. As you do so, let go of your burdens and give thanks for the strength to be found in Christ Jesus.

In this Scripture, Jesus is addressing the people of his time, who are unable to recognise the truth of God’s presence amongst them. They label both John and Jesus as social misfits and disregard their teachings. This could just as easily be addressed to our generation, when we too fail to see the presence of God in our midst. Jesus reminds us that God is sometimes found in what is seemingly small and insignificant, and wisdom in life does not always come from cognitive learning, but through relationship with God the Father, through the Son. Jesus invites us to come and “learn from me.”

The rest that is promised is not about taking a holiday from life, but more about adopting a new way of living, grounded in a supportive and transformative relationship. When we walk with Christ Jesus we grow in discipleship. Our learning is not simply a gain in knowledge, but brings about a change in who we are and what we do. 3



*I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Come unto me and rest;
lay down, O weary one, lay down
your head upon my breast."
I came to Jesus as I was,
weary and worn and sad;
I found in him a resting place,
and he has made me glad.*

*I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold, I freely give
the living water; thirsty one,
stoop down and drink, and live."
I came to Jesus, and I drank
of that life-giving stream;
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
and now I live in him.*

*I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's light;
look unto me, your morn shall rise,
and all your day be bright."
I looked to Jesus, and I found
in him my star, my sun;
and in that light of life I'll walk,
till travelling days are done.*



**THE BEAUTY OF
FINDING REST
IN CHRIST IS
THAT YOU HAVE
PEACE IN THE
STORMS OF
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LONGER HAVE
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PASS FOR YOU
TO FIND REST.**

come to me all who are weary

Horatio Bonar 1808-89 alt.

*Collection, adaptation and arrangement
from the English Hymnal, Oxford University Press.*



Closing Prayer:

Gracious God, lead us on with you. You invite us to abide in you, to surrender our cares, fears and anxieties and allow you to bear the burden with us. You call us deeper into relationship with you, as we learn to trust and to walk with you. We pray for those whose burdens threaten to overwhelm us at this time. We pray for people all over the world whose loads are too heavy to carry. We ask your comfort, your strength, and your wisdom in these situations. Amen.