

SERMON SERIES**SPRING - SUMMER 2021****PROMISES OF GOD****May 2 The promise of rest Matthew 11.28-30****Life Group questions**

Jesus said: "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." NIV

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." The Message

- 1 Share how Jesus' words resonate with you in your present situation. Take some time receiving the rest Jesus offers, as you listen to this lovely Celtic setting of 'I heard the voice of Jesus say': <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74kyfROS4q8>
- 2 The mental picture we probably have of a yoke is a piece of shaped wood across the shoulders of two oxen, enabling them to pull together as they draw a plough. Does this help us to picture walking closely with Jesus and imitating what he does?
- 3 Although Jesus' hearers would have been familiar with this farming practice, 'yoke' also had a significant metaphorical meaning for them. It was used by Rabbis to mean their detailed and over-elaborate interpretation of Old Testament law (the Torah), which their disciples had to follow. You can read about this here: <https://www.stmatthewshollandpark.com/yoke/>
In what way would Jesus' yoke be easier and lighter at that time? Look at Mark 12. 28-34. Does Jesus want to free you from any 'religious' burdens you have put on yourself or others have put on you? See Galatians 5.1.
- 4 This is the only place where Jesus describes his own character. How much does our society value the qualities of gentleness and humility? Jesus asks us to learn these from him, and imitate him. (See Galatians 5.22-3) This is quite a counter-cultural way of living. Is this what 'learning the unforced rhythms of grace' means?