

## JESUS CALLS

We are each and every one called by the gospel of Christ (II Thess. 2:14). One such call is found recorded in the book of Matthew. Jesus said, "*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light*" (Matt. 11:28-30).

This passage as well as many others, reveal that the invitation is offered to all who truly want salvation. After all, God sent His only begotten Son because He loved the world, not just some select few (John 3:16). Ultimately, the offer is for eternal life in heaven with the Father, the Son and all the faithful saints of all ages. Such an offer certainly should not be taken lightly.

However, the gist of this brief article is to consider the idea of "rest unto your souls". The easiest way sometimes to really see the significance of something is to look at the opposite of it. Therefore, consider that without the salvation offered by Jesus, one has no rest for their soul. In fact, five times in the book of Matthew, we find recorded the words, "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" connected to those who have not embraced the Son of God (Matt. 13:32; 13:50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30). Jesus told of a rich man who died, was buried and found himself in "torment". This man cried that he was in torment in this flame. Also, he stated that he did not want his brothers to come to that place of torment (Luke 16:23-24, 28). This certainly doesn't sound like a resting soul to me!

The Hebrew writer speaks of that eternal rest. He said, "*There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God*" (Heb. 4:9). However, he also points out that the eternal rest in heaven is not guaranteed. One can come short of it. "*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*" (Heb. 4:1). In addition, the Hebrew writer points out how one can assure himself of that rest. He says, "*Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief*" (Heb. 4:11).

In short, Jesus calls us to salvation. He desires that we all be saved. He has promised us eternal rest. However, one can still miss out on it. It will be by obedience to the commands of God that we reach it.

Don't miss out on that eternal rest?

*Robert*

## THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Though many in the world today hold little if any respect for the church, it is a God ordained, Christ built and Holy Spirit guided institution. This being the case, it is anything but useless or irrelevant.

The church of the New Testament was built by and upon the foundation of Jesus Christ the Son of God. Jesus said, "*upon this rock I will build my church...*" (Matt. 16:18). Paul wrote, "*For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*" (I Cor. 3:11). Therefore, ownership of the church of the New Testament belongs to Jesus and to Jesus only. It does not belong to any man on earth. Often we hear one say something about "my church" or "your church". If it is mine or yours or that of any other man on earth, it is not the church of the New Testament. It belongs to the Lord!

Jesus Christ is the head of the church built by Christ and found in the pages of the New Testament. Paul wrote, "*And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all*" (Eph. 1:22-23). And again, "*And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence*" (Col. 1:18). If Christ is the head, (meaning that He has absolute authority), then no man or group of men on earth have authority to make or break the doctrines and practices of the church. Paul said, "*...If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed*" (Gal. 1:9).

Though it is true that the church does not save, the Bible teaches that all the saved are members of the church that Jesus built and was the foundation of and over the which He is head. Luke wrote, "*Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved*" (Acts 2:47). Paul wrote, "*But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him*" (I Cor. 12:18). And, he said to the Ephesians, "*...and he is the saviour of the body*" (Eph. 5:23).

Friends, there is only one church in the New Testament and it belongs to the Lord, He built it and is the head of it. Those who will be saved must be members of it. With this in mind, why would one reject the Lord's church for some man-made one? Why would one who is a member of that church be unfaithful?

**Robert**