

## NEXT STEP: STUDY &amp; SHARE

## READINGS

Zechariah 9:9-12

Psalm 145:8-14

*The Lord is gracious & full of compassion. (v8)*

Romans 7:15-25a

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

You are great, O God, & greatly to be praised.  
 You have made us for yourself, & our hearts  
 are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we  
 may believe in you, call upon you, know you,  
 & serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ,  
 our Savior & Lord. Amen.

## SERMON TEXT- Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

[Jesus spoke to the crowd saying:] <sup>16</sup>“To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces & calling to one another, <sup>17</sup>“We played the flute for you, & you did not dance; we wailed, & you did not mourn.” <sup>18</sup>For John came neither eating nor drinking, & they say, ‘He has a demon’; <sup>19</sup>the Son of Man came eating & drinking, & they say, ‘Look, a glutton & a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors & sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.” <sup>25</sup>At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven & earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise & the intelligent & have revealed them to infants; <sup>26</sup>yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. <sup>27</sup>All things have been handed over to me by my Father; & no one knows the Son except the Father, & no one knows the Father except the Son & anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. <sup>28</sup>Come to me, all you that are weary & are carrying heavy burdens, & I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you, & learn from me; for I am gentle & humble in heart, & you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy, & my burden is light.”

## LISTENING TO . . .

**GOD-** *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. What do the following add to your understanding, esp. vv25-27? *See Matthew 5:9, 5:45, 7:11, 10:42, 13:36-43, 17:24-27, 15:21-26, 18:1-7 (esp. v3); 19:13-15; 21:10-17; 23:12-15, 37-39*
2. Consider what St. Paul says about our bondage; *see Romans 3:9, 19-26, 6:1-23, 11:32; Galatians 3:22-23; see also Matthew 23:1-7; John 8:31-47; 1 John 1:8-10*. Is anyone spiritually free of a “yoke” to pick one of their choice? That is, do we come to Jesus from a neutral place & decide his offer against all other spiritual offers, or must he rescue us for his purposes?

**EACH OTHER-** *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. What is comforting to you about this reading? Make a list of at least 5 things.
4. Wisdom is proven by its outcomes (v19b). How is your biblical faithful proven wise, at least as Jesus would define it? *See Luke 10:20; John 20:24-31; 1 Corinthians 1:1--2:31; Philemon 4:7; James 4:6; Revelation 2:1--3:22; see also Luke 9:26, 12:9; 1 John 2:23*

**NEIGHBORS-** *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. It's common to feel let down by false or unfilled expectations (cf. vv17-19). For some, Jesus' grace-filled message to repent & believe (cf. *Mark 1:15*) doesn't meet their expectations for eternal life & salvation. How can you speak clearly about both the free gift (cf. *Romans 5:15-21*) & the responsibility it brings? *See Romans citations in #2; Acts 2:14, 22, 36-42; Romans 12:1-21, 13:8-14; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 5:1-20*
6. Author & apologist GK Chesterton wrote “The Christian ideal has not been tried & found wanting. It has been found difficult; & left untried.” (*What's Wrong with the World*, 1909.) Which burdens are easier: to sin, or not? To get eternal life through good (perfect, righteous) living, or through faith in Jesus alone? To convince God to lower his standards for you, or be raised up to expectations of holiness? *See Matthew 7:13-14, 10:38, 16:24; Luke 13:24; Romans 5:8, 10:9-10; Galatians 2:16-21; Colossians 1:10, 2:6; 2 Peter 3:8-13; Revelation 3:20*

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Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

07.09.23

Series: Reality Check

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Reality of the Yoke

*You're gonna be hitched one way or another; Jesus' load is easy & light*

-Notes-

**KEY VERSE:** Take my yoke upon you, & learn from me; for I am gentle & humble in heart, & you will find rest for your souls. (v29)

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**-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-**

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven & earth;  
you have revealed these things to infants. (*Matthew 11:25*)

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