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Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor
on Thursday. February 18. 1982

Lesson. Mark 5.

Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11. 28.

We may say immediately this is one of the very choice, monumental Scriptures, the very words of our beloved Saviour to those He eternally loves. An amazing Scripture, it is as we ponder the interpretation of the little word that is of unprecedented, unparalleled importance, Come. What are the three salient points in relation to coming, being invited by the Lord Himself to come to His breast, to His everlasting arms, to His heart, for that is our dwelling place in all generations? And how do they come? In a formal, official, legal manner? No. They come with divine, sovereign, eternal, efficacious power that is released and exercised in their ransomed souls though they feel to be in a distressed state: they come with the powerful, irresistible drawing of divine grace and immutable love so nothing can prevent them coming. They have a fixed objective, a radiancy divine shines from Jehovah Jesus into their souls.

The three things in coming. First, they draw near to Christ. Can you evaluate the eternal dimensions and blessings of that favour? A poor, burdened, trembling sinner eternally loved, by special invitation of the Son of God Himself drawing near to Him, getting closer all the while. Are you there? Next is approaching, well within sight of His extended arms. Hezekiah saw this when he said, "The Lord was ready to save me," to meet me with a smile on His face. The smile of God means Heaven; it is Heaven. If you want a definition it is the everlasting, permanent, uninterrupted smile of God on your person, now on your immortal soul; in the immortal glory of the first resurrection on your body too. What a thrill goes through the breast of a child of God when they feel the infinite power, glory, majesty, preciousness, the unparalleled attraction of the Lord Jesus so they are drawing near, getting closer all the time, approaching, nearly there. I wonder what your response is? Try to

evaluate the eternal dimensions of the term come from Christ! So they approach, begin to see His dear face, His reconciled countenance, His everlasting arms, a place of repose, His bosom; to see His eyes, the dear windows of His soul; begin to feel a transcendent power transporting them from all that is terrestrial, material; ascending, approaching. The third is arriving. Come. I shall hope to define this as we work out the glorious truth with you who know Him and experience this to a degree. I wonder how many in this little congregation can give a testimony concerning arriving? When the Lord has said to you, "Come unto me," will He leave you sitting by, looking at Him? Will He leave you at a little distance from Him? No. He embraces you, draws you to His loving breast. You are one. He kisses you with the kisses of His mouth. You have arrived, you are one with Him, with the Holy Father, Holy Ghost, and the holy Church in all ages.

Think of the vast importance of the word with almighty authority and efficacy from the mouth of the Lord Jesus. Do you hear it? If you have heard it you will hear it at the end, when you die, and at the Day of Judgment. He has only two words, Come, and, Depart, and the whole human race will be divided in this way. He will say to His dear ones, Come, and He has said it. He will say to the wicked and to religious people on earth, who have a form, a shell, no substance, life, power, and the irreligious, the profane, Depart. Friends, try to compute the fulness, glory and wonder of the term Come. Does He say it to you? does it flow out to you in the gospel? Come. I feel we may say it is one of the most wonderful words of the Bible a sinner can hear with divineunction and power, for the Lord to say Come. I should like a little season for you to deeply meditate as to whether you know what it is. I say to you now there are several things we see that are so beautiful, glorious, divine. Listen to them. The first is the Son of God incarnate, and only by the incarnation of the Son of God is it possible. Why? Because there could be no union, oneness without His assumption of a holy humanity and we being blessed with His divine nature. He could never say Come apart from that. You will find there must be two things of like quality and character before there can be fusion or oneness. There must be compatibility, holy and divine. And it is because the Son of God assumed a holy humanity into

indissoluble union with His divine Person that He can say to poor sinners He loves, Come. And because poor sinners partake of His divine nature so when they arrive they are one. We may use the analogy because it is Scriptural, the Lord Himself uses it. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." So arriving is to know what it is to be one with Him. If you look at the subject in depth you will see the tremendous significance, beauty, glory, wonder of Come. Has Jesus said, Come, to you? to me? There is a lot of superficiality concerning religion, even in our Chapels. There are fleshly emotions and various things that affect people considerably. Do you know what it is for the Lord to say to you, Come? I appreciate and understand the word of gratitude when people say they appreciate a sermon or the divine service, What is there in it? what is the spiritual content of it? Have you received anything vital? Would you say the minister warmed to his subject and it was good? You need to hear the Lord saying to you, "Come unto me." These are things that are eternal, deathless, heavenly, divine. Has He said to you, "Come."? The ministry of the Spirit is a vehicle whereby the Lord displays His beauty and through the wonderful instrument He says "Come" to those He loves. You will know what your answer to the question is.

The other step is, we have before us the Lord Jesus and it is one of His divine characters in the dear Covenant of His Grace, namely; He is the Divine Inviter. He invites. Has Christ ever invited you? It is an amazing truth to think of invitations of the gospel when you think of the state of poor sinners; for the King of Heaven to invite you. You will say, "Lord, do not leave my name out!" Solemn it is as the King issues invitations ^{if} and we are not on the list! So He is the Divine Inviter. He does invite. I might say Amen and stop if the Lord does not invite these characters to come to Him. This is the quintessence of the gospel. So, Divine Inviter, and second, the invited. Third is the banquet: oneness, marriage, the banquet. Take it home with you: these are clear points for you to remember- the Divine Inviter, the invited, and the marriage of the Lamb and the banquet. "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." You may never have seen the Text in the

same way as you see it now. I will dilate on that. It is the foundation we are dealing with. Why is He able to invite them? why? Because of His priestly work of atonement; because He has atoned for their sins and expiated them; and because He has made them holy, put in them the principle of holiness and the new creation is holy and cannot be sullied. He is able to invite them. Why does He? Why should He invite you? There is nothing very special about it. At best we are, as sons of fallen Adam worthless worms, and we shall feel it. Why should He invite people? There is nothing in us to merit His esteem or give the Creator delight. That is true in relation to our state in Adam; not in relation to our state in grace: it does not apply to that. The Lord does esteem His own work in the sons and daughters He travailed for and brought forth, and He does find His delight in His bride.... You will know the delight of Christ in the Father and the Holy Ghost, and His bride. Why should He invite you? Because He loves you: that is why. And because He knows, and I will take a summary from the Hymn, because you are the fruit of the everlasting, electing love of the Father. Precious truth indeed! it could not be more precious. When you shine in full glory you will realise it. And it is because you are the purchase of Christ's agony your holy souls are formed anew by the Holy Ghost. It is because He loves you He invites you to Him. It is because you are His portion, because His delights are with you. It is because He has made you His adopted sons and daughters; because there is an eternal and filial relationship. You are His bride: it is because there is this conjugal relationship. So He invites you because He loves you, and because He delights in you; because you are one with Him, and because you are going to be with Him. You will not begin to fathom this throughout Eternity. Eternity surrounds us now: presently if we are among these we shall be with Him through Eternity. We have said He invites you. He wishes to have you with Him, to have His bride, His Church about Him.

Why does He invite you? Because He loves you, and you can never measure the love of God, the height, depth, breadth, length; all the dimensions of the boundless, ineffable love of God. Does it mean anything to you? Have you a sweet hope that He loves you so dearly so He says, "Come unto me"? You will find in divine teaching and discipline

and sanctified tribulation you will drop all else eventually. It is, "Come unto me, your Saviour." You drop the world, self, flesh, all below, and you will come to Him. There is only One.

So He says, "Come unto me." It is in order that you should receive rest, and all the fulness of rest and in the foretaste and principle of it: also in many cases that He should use you to His glory. That is why I read the Lesson where I did. The poor tormented man the Lord loved eternally and cast out his devils, and for substance He said to him, "Come unto me," and he did come. He was found sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind. He came. One of the joys of your soul will be to be found sitting at the feet of Jesus.

"May I sit for ever viewing
Mercy's streams in streams of blood."

You would always sit at His dear feet and remain there. When the Lord was about to get into the ship and go to the other side the man wished to be with Him, to follow a precious Christ everywhere, and never be out of His sight. You are like that. Get a glimpse of the Lord Jesus and if you could you would follow Him so He was never out of your sight. The Lord said to him, "Go home to thy friends - I am going on the ship - and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Go home: he should rest, and the Lord put a yoke on him; he was to serve Christ. There are two things in rest. You would like to remain in rest always, but it is rest and serve. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me - I obeyed My divine Father as His servant and did always those things that please Him. Spend the rest of your life learning of Me - for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

I have told you I am working this out in reverse order. Now who did He invite, and what is their condition? It is a descriptive sentence and they are descriptive terms that will nearly always find God's people. He says, "Come unto me." Who are these people He invites? They are those He eternally loves, has redeemed and blessed with life, for there would be no labour, (labour is synonymous with travail) if there were no life. They are those He has blessed with life, grace, His Spirit, who have eyes to see, ears to hear, hearts to feel and believe. These are the

people He invites: poor sinners He has regenerated, souls He has quickened into divine life. "Come unto me," He says; those in a condition where they need their Jesus, even for the first time; in a condition where they will value Him, and are prepared to receive blessing and rest. That is a great thing, is it not?

There are two terms used and in brevity we will look at them. "Come unto me, all ye that labour." They are in travail because they are alive. I present it to you in this way. Your life will consist of labour. You may think of it as travail, and it is in many cases. Travail is painful, labour is painful, it is hard. Why are the people of God in labour and often in travail? Because they have life divine in their souls and there is everything in the world and from the pit and in their hearts to come against them, and so to think, speak, do in a right manner is labour against the tide of fallen nature. It is labour to preach if the Lord is with us, and it is blessed to feel travail come. The devil is against you, you are against yourself; you are your own enemy, that is your body of sin and death. The world and the microcosm of the world in you is against you; men are. So it is against pressure, persecution, reproach, opposition, and so it is spiritual labour. Wonderful it is to have this so you do not go with the tide, whether in profanity or in the religious world. Anything goes with a dead religion. If you have got life it is against wind and tide; it is a struggle, a conflict, labour, and it will increase. Don't think it will diminish. You men who pray, it will be harder as you get older. Why? Because of all the infernal powers and the malice of a wicked heart, the carnality and the infidelity of your nature. It is labour, your life is labour, blessed labour!

I used the word travail for a specific reason; namely, this sore, painful labour is to bear fruit: your joys will come out of your travail. As he is allowed the devil will set on you. It is no exaggeration, as some have said, "Thy soul, full of woe, shall pass as through hell." Do you know anything of it? It is labour, travail. He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour - all in travail - and are heavy laden." O the load! I wonder as to the limit there is in a load a poor human being can carry. Take any work of engineering. There is a maximum load one must not go beyond or it is breaking point. If any thing is made by man with

precision for durability there comes a time when there is metal fatigue and something breaks up. It is a wonder we don't. "heavy laden." It is a wonder to me as to how the people of God are enabled to bear such loads over the years. The secret is, the Lord says to you, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is a foretaste of the eternal rest you will know in Heaven. It is the rest of faith; it is resting on Jesus, your Beloved, on His atonement. He has atoned for your sins. You rest on His spotless righteousness which He has imputed to you. You rest on His character, His faithfulness, immutability, eternity, omnipotence. You are resting on His promises, on Christ in the promises; on His compassion, mercy, unfailing goodness. You rest on Him in His gospel, His Being, on the Trinity, on the Covenant of Grace, resting, resting on the bosom divine. Blessed be God.