



Date: _____

Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Jesus Is the King Series, Lesson 41

Lesson Title: The King Gives Rest

Take Home Point: The King's burden is light.

Warm-Up:

I have a friend who is a good man. He believes Jesus is his Savior and the only way to heaven. And he has all the attributes one would associate with being a spiritually positive person. He's a good father and husband, trustworthy, giving, morally upright, church-goer, hard-working employee for his company, etc. I enjoy his friendship. But he still clings to the notion that he must improve himself to be worthy of God's favor. He has the idea (which is not uncommon) that if he lives what he believes to be a good life, it will be easier to come to God for help or forgiveness. As a result, his is not a soul at rest.

Read: Matthew 11:25-30, 23:1-8

Observation (What happened?):

In Matthew 11:28, who did Jesus call to come to him for rest?

In Matthew 23:3, what did Jesus warn the people not to do? Why?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What kind of rest do you think Jesus was offering to those tired of carrying a heavy load in their soul?

Did Jesus condemn the actions of the teachers and lawyers? What was the focus of his condemnation?

Insight:

In Matthew 11:28-30, notice that Jesus does not say there is no burden at all for those who come to him. He describes his yoke as easy and his burden as light. What is this burden that is so light? Jesus tells us exactly in Matthew 22:37-39. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and most important commandment. The second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.'" It is the burden of living by the heart, not by a set of rules. It takes away any need (or possibility!) of getting to heaven by your own effort. It is the light load of trusting a gracious and loving God who has accomplished everything necessary for our rescue. Certainly we want to be good people and do good things, but only as we are guided by God's Spirit. We do not gain God's acceptance by our actions; our actions are the loving response of a thankful heart to the love already poured out on us.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

Do you know someone who is trying to get to heaven by good works? How can you tell them about the rest Jesus offers?

Are you attempting to "earn points" with God by what you do? Why do you do what you do?