

“COME UNTO ME.”

By Keith Greer

"Come unto Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light" {Matthew 11:28-30}

As a gospel preacher I've offered a countless number of invitations. Brethren understand the invitation, right? This is when the preacher is drawing his lesson to a close. We pick up the songbooks out of the rack in front of us, and we look at our watch to see how "long winded" the preacher was today. Sound familiar? I wonder how many have really "heard" an **invitation**.

So what is my point? In this passage in Matthew, Jesus is offering what many refer to as "**the great invitation**." What makes this "invitation so special?" For one, it is **offered by our Savior**. Jesus was concerned for the welfare of all mankind. He came and willingly died on the cross for you and me. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." {Romans 5:7,8}

Did anyone ever display that much love for another? "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are my friends if you do whatever I command you." {John 15:13,14} Truth be known, He also died for those who were not His friends! "And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots." {Luke24:33,34}

Another reason, this is a great invitation is that the **One who offered it can fulfill the promises made**. "That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil." {Hebrews 6:18,19}

Now preacher, surely you are not going to compare this invitation of the Lord's, to the "**invitation**" at the end of a lesson? Please consider a few facts ... "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." {John 8:32} "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." {Romans 10:17} " ... Let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord." {1 Corinthians 14:37} "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen " {1 Peter 4:11}

Does the invitation mean no more than the "signal" that the lesson is about over and we are going to be standing and singing a song? Remember that passage that tells us to "sing with the understanding," 1 Corinthians 14:15? Do we give careful and prayerful attention to the words that we're singing encouraging those in the audience to make their lives right with God? Would you be "put-off" if

one were to come forward to be baptized into Christ because now the line will be longer at the restaurant and you really wanted to see that game on TV!

Next time you hear a gospel preacher offering the invitation, maybe you better listen before picking up that songbook. Just remember where he got the information for those things, and whose invitation it really is! For it was the Lord that said, "**Come unto Me all you who labor and are heavy laden.**" If the Lord said it first, I believe it is worthwhile to hear! ***