



Sunday November 23, 2014
Rest For Our Souls

We live in the midst of turmoil and unrest. Whether it is the global scene, national, city or even at a personal level. There are many causes of unrest or disturbance around us.

Today, we wish to discuss unrest at a personal level and address how we can find rest for our souls.

What causes unrest in our souls?

1, Stressors of life

Top Causes of Stress (a report in the U.S.)

<u>Cause</u>	<u>Factors</u>
1 Job Pressure	Work Overload, Co-Worker Tension, Bosses,
2 Money	Loss of Job, Reduced Retirement, Medical Expenses
3 Health	Health Crisis, Terminal or Chronic Illness
4 Relationships	Divorce, Death of Spouse, Arguments with Friends, Loneliness
5 Poor Nutrition	Inadequate Nutrition, Caffeine, Processed Foods, Refined Sugars
6 Media Overload	Television, Radio, Internet, E-Mail, Social Networking
7 Sleep Deprivation	Inability to release adrenaline and other stress hormones

[Source: <http://www.stress.org/daily-life/>]

When it comes to causes of workplace related stress, survey showed:
46% Workload
28% People issues
20% Juggling work/personal lives
6% Lack of job security
[2005 survey]

We cannot escape these stressors of life. Running away is not the answer.
We cannot predict some of these challenges that may come our way.

What else causes unrest in our souls?

2, Inner unrest

Sometimes there could be unrest inside of us, due to several factors:

- Guilt and shame : we may carry regrets, shame and pain from our mistakes.
- Consequences of our wrong doing : when we do wrong, the fear of the consequences trouble us.



- Fear of the future : uncertainties about the future
- Discontentment about life
- Our failures
- etc

Underlying all of this is our sinfulness. Our own sin.

What does God's Word teach us about these things? What did the Lord Jesus say in relation to the unrest we face?

Matthew 11:28-30

28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 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.

30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30 (The Message Bible)

28 "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest.

29 Walk with me and work with me--watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you.

30 Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

Remember, these are not the words of a man, but the words of God. This is God's answer - God's way for us to have rest for our souls.

If the Lord Jesus were to speak to us, an audience in the 21st Century, with all the sophistication and conveniences of technology, etc., He would speak the same thing. Come to me all of you who labor, who are heavy laden, tired, worn out, burned out....and I will help you recover your life, I will help you get real rest.

Is this just a nice statement He is making suitable for framing on our walls and serves for a nice poster invitation - but has no real impact on everyday life - OR - is this statement of Jesus something real, something we can actually experience. Of course, this is for real. He wants us to experience this.

First

The rest that Jesus gives is not an escape from facing the challenges of life.

He is not calling us all to come and live in a monastery or to take up the life of an ascetic.

The Lord Jesus made these statements:

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.



John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

He promised us peace, a different kind of peace. A peace that is in Him. But He did state that in the world there will be challenges, difficulties, turmoil, unrest.

So what the Lord Jesus is really promising us is the ability to walk in rest, in peace, even though there are all the stressors of life and causes for inner turmoil.

Imagine this painting where the scene is an ocean in a violent storm. The sky is dark with lightning cutting across the sky, and the waves are crashing into the rock walls of the cliffs by the shore. But there, about halfway up the cliff, is a birds' nest tucked into a tiny hollow in the rock. A mother bird sitting on a nest with her little babies tucked underneath her, sleeping soundly. That is peace! Peace is not just the absence of a storm, but rest in the middle of the storm.

Second

He calls us to do two things:

(1) Take my yoke upon you and (2) Learn from me, and you will find rest.

(1) Take my yoke upon you, because my yoke is easy and my burden is light

(2) Learn from me because I am gentle and lowly in heart

Lets talk about these two things:

(1) Take my yoke upon you, because my yoke is easy and my burden is light

Take my yoke - This is a figure taken from the use of oxen. The yoke is a long wooden beam with two curved areas that fit over the necks of a pair of animals, usually oxen, to harness them together to pull a plow, a cart, or some other load.

The yoke, therefore means to come under authority, and to labor for one, or in the service of someone.

When the oxen come under the yoke - they cannot go where they want, but where the farmer wants. The oxen are serving the purposes of the farmer, doing what the farmer has in mind.

So He invites us to come to Him and take His yoke, as opposed to the burden of the world or whatever we are carrying now.



He invites us to come under His authority, and align ourselves to His ways, to His plan, to work toward His purposes. He promises that His yoke is easy and light.

The yoke could be a double yoke where two oxen walked together, or a single yoke. Most likely the Lord Jesus had the double yoke in mind. He was he was inviting us to come under the same yoke with Him. What a blessing that is, to have Jesus by our side pulling our load with us! Even if it was a 'single yoke' He promised it would be easy and light.

So the first step here to experience the rest that Jesus offers us in the midst of turmoil is to come to Him and willingly yield to His yoke - His authority, His ways, His plans, His purposes.

Whose yoke are you carrying - your own, the worlds, whatever? Will you come to Jesus and take His yoke?

Will you come to Jesus and submit yourself to Him to His authority and tell Him that you will take on His ways, His plans, His purposes for your life? His promise is, my yoke is easy, my burden is light.

John 6:27 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."

The next thing He told us, to walk in His rest is :

(2) Learn from me because I am gentle and lowly in heart

To learn from me, is essentially, a call to become His disciple. Begin to embrace His Word. Begin to hear and do His sayings. Have our mind, thoughts, choices, perspectives, views, aligned to His Word.

He is not forceful or overbearing as a Teacher. He is gentle and kind as He teaches and impart His Kingdom truth into our lives.

What He teaches us is ofcourse juxtaposed to the knowledge of this world.

As we learn from Him, we begin to see things from heavens perspective. We begin to see life from eternity.

We begin to walk by faith and not just by sight.



We learn to trust and let God intervene. As the Scripture states:

Proverbs 3:5,6

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;

6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

We learn to keep our mind on God even when things are not going right, and our peace, our rest, our inner calm comes from Him. He becomes the anchor that steadies us in the middle of the storm.

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.

We learn to do what is right, even if there are threats, and consequences that may seem difficult. Because we know that He leads in paths that are right, and the eventual result will be peace, quietness, rest.

Isaiah 32:17 The work of righteousness will be peace, And the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.

The storms of life come to everyone. It's like the two men, one who built his house on the sand and the other on the rock in Matthew 7:24-27. Both faced the storms, the winds and the waves. But the house on the rock stood. We know that as we learn to keep and do His teaching and build our lives on His Word, we have the assurance, that we will stand. This is the basis of our rest.

What about the unrest because of our sin, wrong doing, the guilt and shame of our failures, etc?

The Lord Jesus Christ took our sin, our guilt our shame on the Cross when He died for us. His blood cleanses us from our sin and releases us from guilt and shame, so that we can stand clear, without any sense of condemnation.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

John Newton was an Englishman who was part of the Royal Navy, and after leaving the service, he became involved in the Atlantic slave trade, taking Africans from West Africa and selling them as laborers in America. He lived an evil life, until one day in 1748, a violent storm battered his vessel so severely that he called out to God for mercy, a moment that marked his spiritual conversion. Later, he stopped his slave trade, studied



theology and was ordained in the Church of England in 1764. Along with poet William Cowper, in Buckinghamshire, he began to write hymns. To illustrate a sermon on New Year's Day of 1773, they wrote this beautiful hymn which is still sung today "Amazing Grace".

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

God's grace can release us from all the sin, guilt and shame!

In a troubled world, there is rest for our souls!
The Lord Jesus offered it to us.

Matthew 11:28-30

28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 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.

30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Salvation Call



USEFUL RESOURCES



Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

YOUTUBE: <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

WEBSITE: <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

CHURCH: <https://apcwo.org>

FREE SERMONS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

FREE BOOKS: <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

DAILY DEVOTIONALS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

JESUS CHRIST: <https://examiningjesus.com>

BIBLE COLLEGE: <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

E-LEARNING: <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

WEEKEND SCHOOLS: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

COUNSELING: <https://chrysalislife.org>

MUSIC: <https://apcmusic.org>

MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP: <https://pamfi.org>

CHURCH APP: <https://apcwo.org/app>

CHURCHES: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

WORLD MISSIONS: <https://apcworldmissions.org>