



# EQUIPPING U

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION/AUGUST 2013

## Matthew 11:28-12:8

[28] Come to me, all 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.

### I WILL GIVE YOU REST

[1] At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. [2] But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath." [3] He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: [4] how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? [5] Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? [6] I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. [7] And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. [8] For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."



## Authentic Rest

As a Bible teacher, I meet a number of worn-out women wanting to know why they aren't experiencing rest. These women know the promise in Matthew 11, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," but they look at their lives and think God hasn't delivered.

Perhaps you've had the same thought. You've read the passage in Matthew and expect life to be easy.

But life is hard. You find yourself expecting God to fix your problems, but you're up to your neck in problems.

The same Jesus who promised rest also promised difficulties. "In this world you will have tribulation." Rest and problems going together, how can that be? Worn-out Christians everywhere want to know, "Where is the rest?"



**TEACHING TIP.** Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life." Since no one can come to the Father apart from Him, be sure that your teaching points students to Him.



**TEACHING TIP.** Make plans to host a picnic for your Sunday School class. Potluck picnics create a great atmosphere for people to go from classmates to friends.



**TEACHING TIP.** Encourage the kids in your life to memorize the books of the Bible and portions of Scripture. With a little incentive, like a small prize or competition, you'll be surprised at how much and how quickly they can learn.

When we think of rest, we tend to picture a week with no pressures or responsibilities, often on the beach or at some remote cabin. But is that the rest Christ promised?

## Where is the rest?

When Jesus invited, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden..." He wasn't talking to Christians; He was talking to Jews—Jews who were laboring under the law to be righteous, heavy laden under the traditions of the Pharisees who taught their rules as if they came from God Himself.

Jesus is inviting these Jewish people to Him for the rest we call salvation, not the rest we call vacation. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." (Romans 10:4)

Authentic rest for our souls is given at salvation, when our sins are forgiven and we are given Christ's righteousness.

## Authentic rest

Has Jesus Christ delivered on His promise of rest? Absolutely! Has He also delivered on His promise of tribulation? Absolutely!

What a joy it is to see former worn-out women, once embittered with God, develop grateful hearts. They now have a right understanding of Christ's promised rest along with realistic

expectations about earthly tribulations.

Accurately knowing and sharing the promised rest of the gospel is essential. Sadly, there are many in our churches who are weary and heavy laden because they, like the Jews before them, are struggling to be righteous under the law. The law can't make us righteous; only faith in Christ can justify us.

Let's invite the weary, worn-out people around us to come to Jesus, to find authentic rest for their souls.

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



**John Petty**

*ICEA is a volunteer staffed ministry. Each month Equipping U highlights and honors one of our faithful volunteers.*

A long-time attendee of the ICEA training conferences, John Petty, in recent years, has begun serving as part of the conference planning committee. We are grateful to the Lord for John's heart for providing opportunities where people can be trained to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ. We at ICEA are blessed to have him on the team!

## FROM THE EDITOR

I'm so thankful to Jesus Christ for the rest He has given to me. How good it is to be a child of God!



We at ICEA have been praying for you this summer. Many of you have served in Vacation Bible Schools, 5-Day Clubs, and other summer ministry opportunities and **we'd love to hear some praise reports from you.** You can e-mail us at [EquippingU@iceaOnline.org](mailto:EquippingU@iceaOnline.org).

Serving with U,

Kimberly von Oeyen

## REGISTER TODAY & SAVE!

Enjoy \$35 early bird registration for the October 19 Equipping U Church Ministries Training Conference at Ward Church in Northville, Michigan. Conference information is available online at [www.iceaOnline.org](http://www.iceaOnline.org).

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