*Faith and “Come!”*

*Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28* NKJV.

Come! The Greek word Jesus used in this wonderful scripture is *deute.*It’s very connotation contains the idea of coming, with a joyful exclamation! Jesus is waiting for us to come to Him. I need this scripture today. Life has been quite heavy lately but amid hard diagnosis for family members, a difficult birth story, and challenging decisions, how refreshing it is to know He bids me to come! There is no hesitation, no requirements, just simply “come”.

Who is He calling? Those who labor. *Kapiao*is the Greek word used here. It means to grow weary, tired, exhausted (with toil, burdens or grief). The picture is of a person who has been working hard and long at their task. They have been diligent to the point of exhaustion. This is the person God is calling to come to Him. He also singled out those who are*heavy laden* (*phortidzo)*. This is a military term for the pack every soldier is required to carry with them on their assignments. The weight depends on how long they would be gone.

As I write this article, I am aware of my exhaustion. It is not simply a physical exhaustion, but it is mental as well. The burden God is showing me I am carrying…the backpack, if you will, is my concern for others. A friend who’s son has schizophrenia and is having a difficult time right now. My daughter-in-law, who is recovering from birth complications for my eleventh grandchild. My sister and niece, who are beginning cancer treatments this coming week. As I come to Him, He is showing me I need to lay them at His feet. How about you? Have you been working hard at your assignment for Him? Have you taken on the concerns of others?

As I waited upon Him today, I realize it was not wrong to be carrying these concerns. The problem comes when we do not yoke up with Him. He does not mean for us to carry these by ourselves. The entire purpose of a yoke is to re-distribute the weight, so it is easier to bear. But if we don’t take the time to come to Him and receive His rest, we will end up trying to carry the whole thing by ourselves. Yesterday I as I hugged and prayed for my exhausted son. I felt a shift. We came to our Lord together. There is a blessing and release that comes from praying together, isn’t there? I am not the refresher, but we know the One who is!

What is His promise? *I will give you rest* (anapauo). This Greek word comes from *ana*which means up and *pauo*to make to cease. It means not only a cessation from toil, but refreshment, to rejuvenate, to reinvigorate or revitalize—all good things! Someone asked me yesterday how I was, and I simply admitted, “I am exhausted”. I think they wanted me to say, “I’m great!”…but he took the time to listen and pray for my burdens. I began to feel my own shift beginning to take place. As he prayed, it was hard not to sit in my weariness, but to engage with my faith. But as I did, I felt stronger.

When we “come” to Jesus in our weariness and exhaustion, we must “come” in faith, or we will leave in the state we came in! When we take up His yoke, we set ourselves as learners. He wants to teach us something. To reveal some part of Himself or His Father we have not experienced or understand as yet. Since He is *gentle and lowly in heart*, we must come to Him in the same way: humble and meek. Not as know-it-alls, but teachable. He knows all of our to-do lists. Are we willing to let Him adjust it? Do you trust Him enough for Him to set your agenda? I know as I sit in His Presence, acknowledging His Lordship, things shift in my soul. My perspective gets exchanged for His perspective and somehow the weights fall off. Freedom from fear happens. I know He who holds my life, also holds those precious others. It may take a few times of coming to do the great yoke and burden exchange, but if I keep coming, it happens. I recommend you coming to Him sooner than later!

*Father, I ask you to help us take to heart your invitation to Come! Just as we are, knowing the blessing that comes from spending time with You. Let us come with faith, humility and a teachable spirit. We choose to trust you with every heavy burden we are trying to carry. Thank you for your love, grace, and mercy. I pray for strength for my friends today, In Jesus’ Name, amen.*