

Finding rest for your souls
Matthew 11:26

Christ's sermon in Matthew 11 was given in the context of the multitude of Jews that was following him, v. 7.

The Jews to whom Christ spoke were loaded down with the sacrificial laws that pointed to Christ that were removed by the cross of Christ, Colossians 2:14. In addition, the **Scribes and Pharisees** had also loaded down the people with burdens that even they were unable to bear. That burden was the *traditions of the elders* as found in the Babylonian Talmud, which was very highly regarded in Christ's day.

Christ's plea was that his Jewish hearers who were still under the Old Covenant would come to him for the true freedom from those heavy burdens.

Christ's plea in Matthew 11 is much broader than just to the Jews of his day. His plea speaks to every man who is heavily *laden* with many burdens, burdens **such as** lust, guilt, false religious requirements and emotional distresses of every description.

Psalms 119:96 *I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad.*

In other words, the Command-Word of God is applicable to every man and every situation from the time of Adam until the time of the End. **It is certainly a message for our day.**

Our text is,

Matthew 11:26 *Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. 27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. 28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: **and ye shall find rest unto your souls.** 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden (i.e., load) is light.*

Our Lord's sermon in **Matthew 11:26-30** can only be properly understood in its context of **Jeremiah 6:13-19**, which we will look at shortly.

Jeremiah 6:16 *Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, **and ye shall find rest for your souls.** But they said, We will not walk therein.*

It is important that we understand that Jesus Christ quoted **Jeremiah 6:16** as he spoke to the Jews who were still under the Old Covenant. Today, when we look at these words of Jesus

Christ there is very little if any thought of their Old Testament context. Ignoring the Old Testament context of passages quoted in the New Testament means that New Testament doctrines can be changed at will.

We will look at the context of Jeremiah 6:16 shortly.

In both Matthew and Jeremiah, ***take my yoke*** means to willingly and gladly accept the yoke of the Command-Word of God; that is, one willingly submits to his commands and precepts. Then by God's grace, he lives the many implications of the law in every area of life and thought.

Yoke... is a symbol of subjection and servitude. The Lord invites the sinner to take *his* yoke upon himself, and learn of him. The sinner exchanges **self-will for God's will and** willingly submits to God's will as revealed in his word. God's call is to be **content** in whatever state the redeemed man finds himself. **Unlimited and humble submission** to his will is extremely important in our day of turmoil. Only humble submission to the sovereign God of scripture can result in rest for the soul: ***For his yoke is easy, and his burden is light.***

Christ uses ***yoke*** to mean taking on the genuine Christian religion, and following its laws as found in the **Law, Psalms and Prophets.** (John 14:15, with Pro 7:2, &c.)

Psalms 2:2 *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, 3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.*

The natural man considers the **yoke of any law, especially God's law, to be an unbearable burden.** He considers God's commands a binding cord that must be broken, for God's law prevents fallen man from being his own god. For the last 150 years, self-professed Christians have allowed humanism and anarchy to be taught to their children in the State's openly anti-Christian education system in order to break the yoke of God's law from society. The results are now upon us both in the church and in society, and we wonder why we live in such a rebellious generation. Even God's people paid for that rebellion by supporting the pagan education system.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

On the other hand, Psalms 119 tells us that the Redeemed of God find the **yoke of his law delightful**, light and joyful. His *commandments are not grievous* to his people who have been called into the New Covenant, the Gospel Church. (**Grievous...** Heavy, burdensome, severe, stern, weighty):

1 John 5:2 *By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.*

In John 13:17, 15:11, the Lord promises peace and joy for those who keep his commandments. Jacob considered 14 years' service as a day, because of his love for Rachel.

We can say with biblical certainty that those who find the **commandments of the Lord God** a heavy burden do not have the Spirit of God.

In 1846, Charles Bridges made this point: **“Truth separated from truth becomes error.”** That is, when New Testament truth is separated from its Old Testament truth, the New Testament truth becomes error.

“Truth separated from truth becomes error.” The various recorded accounts preserved in the Old Testament are for our instruction; they must not be ignored nor taken lightly, for it is the Old Testament that explains the doctrines the New Testament teachings of Christ and of the apostles. In John 5:39, Christ told his accusers to search the Old Testament Scriptures.

All fundamental errors and heresies in the church may be traced to our Lord's words in **Matthew 22:29**, *Ye do err, not knowing the (Old Testament) scriptures, nor the power of God.*

Partial truth leads to error.

Matthew 11:29 *Take my yoke ... find rest...* Corrupt theology has removed our Lord's words from their Old Testament context. Apart from the appropriate Old Testament context of New Testament passages, it is quite easy to present false teachings “in the name of the Lord,” and his *sheep* are easily led astray.

From the time of the Fall, the universal desire of man has been to remove the yoke of God's law from himself, and there are several places in the New Testament which may appear to remove that yoke. **We saw in 1 John 5** that those who desire to void the law of God are antichrist.

Christ's message in Matthew 11:26-30 is a common sermon text. Though all Scripture is given by God, and is required to fully equip the believer in his service for God, the context of Jeremiah's message in chapter 6 from which Christ quoted is seldom if ever developed. The context of *rest unto your souls* is Christ warning, rebuking, or even condemning of the cities of Matthew 11:20-24, Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum (which was exalted unto heaven) for rejecting him.

The context of our Lord's message in Matthew 11 is Jeremiah 6.

Open your Bibles to Jeremiah 6:13 and follow me as we develop some points from this passage:

Jeremiah 6:13 *For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. 14 They have*

healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. 15 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. 16 **Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.** 17 Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Harken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken. 18 Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what is among them. 19 Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even **the fruit of their thoughts**, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.

There are two things we would like to point out from this passage: **first**, *rest for your souls*. **Second**, *the fruit of their thoughts*.

The remainder of Jeremiah chapter 6 describes the **evil fruit of the thoughts** that his Old Covenant people would reap as **God sends** many evils against those who refused to “*harken to the sound of the trumpet*”. In their hardness of heart they refused to heed the warning to repent and obey.

Jeremiah 6

Jeremiah 6:16 is part of the context of Matthew 11:26-30. We see in 11:26 that regardless of how things appear, righteous judgment tells us that all things are proceeding as it seems *good in God's sight*.

In Jeremiah 6, the Tri-une God pronounces judgment against his sinful nation for its hardness of heart. The judgment would be **according to the fruit of their thoughts**. God tells the pagan nations to prepare for war against his apostate people, Judah. When Jesus Christ quoted Jeremiah 6, he issued the same warning. He came to *his own*, the Jewish nation, and called them to repentance, *But they said, We will hearken and will not walk therein*.

In Matthew 11, Jesus Christ tells the multitude of Jews that it was the fruit of their fathers' thoughts and their refusal to heed the warnings that destroyed their nation. In Matthew 11, **Christ is calling** his Old Covenant people, Israel, to a genuine conversion of the heart and attitude toward God, or judgment worse than the judgment of Sodom would come upon them.

Christ warned national Israel of the coming destruction if they would not change, and return to the old paths trodden by the godly saints of old. The Jewish Roman war was already “brewing” at the time of Christ. It was being encouraged by the Jewish nationalists who were urging rebellion against Rome. Jeremiah's warning as quoted by Christ came to pass as Rome made **the land desolate, a land not inhabited** in 70 AD.

The land remained totally desolate for several decades as Rome sought to obliterate the

memory of the city and what took place there. The Jerusalem in that area today is not the Jerusalem where Jesus walked. That city is built on top of the ruins left by Rome.

When Jesus Christ **quoted Jeremiah 6:16**, the Jews or Israelites to whom he spoke clearly understood its context. They understood that he was comparing them to their fathers of Jeremiah's day who continually ignored the warnings sent to them by God. According to Hosea 13:9, God's people under the Old Covenant knowingly and willingly committed suicide. They tore down their house with their own hands.

Follow me through Jeremiah 6:13-19:

1. V. 13, is speaking to all the inhabitants of the land. Jeremiah tells them that from the lowest to the highest of society, everyone was given to *covetousness*. They commonly used fraud for gain. **Isaiah 56:11** tells us that they were greedy dogs which could never have enough.

2. V. 13, is speaking to the religious leaders of the land, he tells them that they all were dealing falsely, or fraudulently, with his neighbor. There was no integrity, and, in Christ's words, *they were blind leaders of the blind*, as the religious leaders lead their followers into the ditch.

3. V. 14, the Geneva note says that "When the people began to fear God's judgments, the false prophets comforted them by flatterings, showing that God would send peace and not war."

The religious leaders were promising peace and safety when there was no peace nor safety. **Both 2 Peter 2:17 and Jude 1:12** describes the religious leaders who ignore the true teachings of God's word as clouds without water, trees without fruit and twice dead, yet "my people love to have it so."

Some years ago, there was a song that perfectly describes the ancient as well as modern religious leaders, "Don't worry, be happy!" Since around 1830, more than a few religious leaders have promised and continue to promise a rapture that will deliver God's people out of God's wrath which must come upon their sins.

They are clouds without water, trees without fruit and twice dead.

4. V. 15, though the religious leaders as well as the people were given over to wicked and shameful acts, there was no shame. **Jeremiah 5:8**, *They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife*. Their hardness in sin would not let them blush with shame—they had a whore's forehead.

5. V. 16, God sent many warnings for them to repent and return to *the old paths*, yet they said, *we will not harken*. They claimed to be the children of God, but they openly and firmly refused to obey the command-word of the God whom they claimed to worship.

6. V. 17, we see in Amos 3:6 and in Jeremiah 6:1 that God sent watchmen, or prophets and preachers to sound the trumpet of alarm of the danger at hand, yet the people were not afraid. In Ezekiel 3:17-21 and 33:1-9, Ezekiel was sent to God's people as a watchman.

7. V. 18, God calls the nations of the world to witness and take warning of his severe judgment against his disobedient people, Judah. How can the nations of the world expect to escape the wrath of God, when his covenant people cannot escape that judgment?

Calvin comments: His people would not hear, so he addresses the whole earth. That is, the whole earth is responsible to God's law-word.

8. V. 19, *Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even **the fruit of their thoughts**, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.*

Pay attention to the wording of this verse: it says that his covenant people rejected God's law-word in their thoughts, or minds. Their evil hearts spurned the law of God, and they were going to reap the results.

Psalms 2 tells us that the wicked spurned the law of God in their evil hearts because they find it binding and unbearable.

In Ezekiel chapter 8, Ezekiel is told to dig through the wall and he would see the wicked abominations that the elders of Israel were doing in their hearts

The problem was their hardness of hearts, not their ungodly actions. It was their hearts of stone which resulted in ungodly actions that brought God's judgment upon them. The wrath of God was against their hardened hearts that rejected the word of God. What would Ezekiel see in our thoughts and minds? How many times have we been warned by God that "godly" actions cannot be substituted for an ungodly heart?

The new covenant ushered in by the work of Christ promises to replace the heart of stone with a heart of flesh.

9. V. 19, ***the evil*** God sent against his people was the result of *the fruit of their thoughts*, for in their hearts they rejected the law-word of God.

That evil that came upon them was **the Chaldean army**. The evil that God sent against national Israel in 70 A.D. was **the Roman army**. The evil that God is sending against our nation today is flooding across the southern border.

There is no neutral ground, for one either loves the law of the Lord or he hates it.

Matthew 12:30 and Luke 11:23 *He that is not with me is against me...*

Psalms 119:97 *MEM. O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.*

Jeremiah told the *fathers* that the Lord would come in terrible judgment, and cast them down if they did not heed the many warning from God. (There are many such comings of the Lord in judgment throughout Scripture. See Deut 28:15ff.) At the end of the Jeremiah's scathing rebuke for their sin, he promises that they could ***find rest for your souls***. That ***rest*** was conditioned upon repenting and returning to the ***old paths, the good way*** as defined by *the law of the Lord*.

The response to Jeremiah's call to repent was *We will not walk therein*, though they knew what God had promised them if they refused. They said, "*We will not harken*, though we are assured by God that the evil will come down upon us." (Jeremiah 6:16, 17) Jesus Christ preached the same message that Jeremiah preached. That message called for God's covenant people to find rest for their souls by returning in obedience to the Lord their God. His message also brought forward Jeremiah's warning of the results of not returning to the God of their fathers.

Though the message was addressed to his people, Israel of old, the message expands to the New Covenant People, the new Israel of God, the Gospel Church.

Christ came to ***his own, but his own received him not***. He preached to his own nation in Matthew 11. They not only would not harken, but they killed the Messenger the same as their fathers killed the prophets of old who presented the message they did not want to hear. He offered to remove the heavy yoke and burden that was upon them, and replace it with his joy and peace.

Now we come to the heart issue, ***find rest for your souls***

Both Jeremiah and Christ made it clear "judgment cannot be turned aside by mere sacrifice without a change of heart"—that is to say, there must be genuine conversion of the mind, will and emotions, a life-style change that comes from the heart. (Keil-Delitzsch)

The word of God applies just as much today as it did in Jeremiah's day: **rejection of God's command**-word must result in destruction. Our beloved nation that prospered so greatly as it sought to implement God's laws is now absolutely refusing to return to those laws upon which this nation was established.

Psalms 9:17 *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.*

Jeremiah 6:11, in his fury against the hard hearts that said "we will not harken," God sent the Chaldeans against Judah. **Matthew 11, in his fury against the hard hearts that said "we will not harken,"** God sent the Romans against Israel. With Christ, the Old Covenant people of God were replaced with the New Covenant people of God which is the Gospel Church as he replaced the stony heart with a fleshly heart.

Both the Chaldeans and the Romans were the just reward for *the fruit of their thought*, because they refused to hearken unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.

The basic Christian warfare is over *thoughts*. The battle to accomplish a Christian World-Order as commanded by Jesus Christ is the battle for the *thoughts* of the peoples of the nations. That conquering victory for the hearts and minds is through the preaching and teaching of the entire word of God.

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Our confidence for conquering the world for Christ is found in the promises of the new covenant:

Jeremiah 31:33 *But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 32:40* And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. **Ezekiel 11:19** *And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: 36:26* A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and **(I will)** cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Only through Christian conversion to Christ can there be rest from the heavy burdens upon the soul. Only through Christian conversion can there be any joy and peace, rest for one's soul, and for the nations.

As Christians, we must consider the war that takes place in the thoughts. Thought-control is a **never-ending battle where blessings or wrath are at stake**. Throughout both Testaments, the emphasis is on the thoughts. Psalms 47:4 tells us that it is God who determines the appropriate results for the *fruit of their thoughts*.

The weapons of battle for the preservation of our beloved nation do not consist of the largest aircraft carrier in the world, nor a powerful laser that will blast the enemy out of sky, nor who has the most destructive force at their disposal, nor a mighty standing army with the most advanced weapons on earth. (Einstein said WW IV will be fought with sticks and stones.)

Mind Control

The battle is between Christ and the spirit of the spirit of the antichrist which now seems to hold both the world and the church captive. The battle is for the control of the thoughts and intents of the heart:

2 Cor 10:3 *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*

Pr 21:30 *There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD. 31 The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD. Ps 33:17* *An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.*

Though armed might for self-protection is required by scripture, any victory depends on the Lord. Any other hope for victory is a sinful confidence, and forfeits the Lord's protection. Success in battle depends solely upon God's providence who alone gives the victory.

(Charlie Daniels: "God's in control, but owning a 12-gauge doesn't hurt. 'His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts'")

The battle for our nation and for the nations of the world is a battle for the hearts and minds, the thoughts and intents of the hearts of the nations. We are assured by God himself that the battle will be won through the preaching and teaching of the whole counsel of God.

Warning for US: for several decades now, godly preachers have proclaimed the need to return to the obedient paths of the fathers. But the people have said, even the self-professed Christians, *We will not walk therein*. The result is **that God has prepared**, and has raised up pagans such as BLM, Antifa, China, Russia, and various nations to war against us. In his fury against a nation that has turned its back on any simulates of godliness, he is now sending HIS army from the south to invade us with the intent to totally destroy our once great Christian foundation.

It pains me to even consider this: God is the one who has told this administration to not only allow, but to finance the army that is flooding across the southern border.

Proverbs 21:1 *The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.*

Jesus Christ has all power in heaven and earth, so he is must be the one Who is turning the hearts of the worldly powers against his kingdom on earth; **he is the one** giving power to the *beast* to blaspheme him in Revelation 13.

(Do we not find it interesting that the North gathered all its strength together to invade the South, and put down the Army of the South? On the other hand, the North is doing all it can to encourage this modern army from the South. This is a true saying, "Follow the money.")

We are no doubt seeing **judicial blindness** taking place against those who have turned against God, both in the church and out of the church. They have said in their heart, we will not hearken to the command word of God, and God is turning *all the nations that forget him into hell*.

History, both "secular" and Biblical, proves that it is sure suicide to ignore the command-word of God. Ignorance of the law cannot be an excuse, for it is readily available to all men.

Sadly, it has been the "powers that be" in the highest echelons of this nation that have been and are determined to destroy this nation.

Comment: a McDonald's franchise holder offered \$50 to anyone who would just come in for an interview. He had no takers, and he blamed the federal free money program identified as enhanced unemployment benefits because of the pandemic, for it made unemployment income greater than what they could earn at the store. Thus, the support of the open borders to bring in those who will work.

The goal of the wicked has been to destroy the Christian roots of this nation from the time it was founded. They have found a means here through the plannedemic to accomplish their goal. They pay Americans not to go to work and import many thousands of foreigners to do that work.

The battle is for the hearts and minds of the nations. Ephesians 4:11-14, tells us that the training of the saints for that warfare is the responsibility of God's men in the pulpits of America.

2 Kings 11:10 *And to the captains over hundreds did the priest give king David's spears and shields, that were in the temple of the LORD.*

The house of the Lord contain the armory, and the pastors/teachers are responsible for providing the weapons of our warfare which equip God's people to attack the gates of hell.

An effective army for the cause of Christ must have thorough instruction concerning God's rules of engagement. They need to know and practice the many practical applications of the law-word of God.

Our command is to go forth with the gospel, teach and convert the nations to Christ. The basic war for a Christian Culture worldwide must for the mind. The war is for the thoughts and intents of the heart of the peoples of that nations. (**Php 2:5** *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:* Ephesians chapter 6)

Sound familiar? Is it any wonder that Jeremiah is known as the "Weeping Prophet" as he saw

the coming destruction of his beloved nation? We need “Weeping Prophets” today who will weep over the destruction of the once Christian Western Civilization. The Reformation lasted 500 years. How long will the Lord allow the present descent into darkness last before another Godly reformation?

Jesus Christ's sermon in Matthew 11 is to the sinner throughout all generations to repent and turn to Christ. The call is more than simply bring their actions into conformity to his words and law. Rather, it was a call to **convert the thoughts and intents** of the heart, and find God’s *rest for your souls*. It was the unlawful, secret things of the heart that caused God to move against his people, and place *stumblingblocks* before them. And because of the uncontrolled heart, they fell and destroyed themselves. (Ez 8:8, 12:5-12, Ecc 12:14, Ho 13:9.)

Christ brought the entire thought of Jeremiah 6 forward when he offered *rest for your souls* in Matthew 11. The *rest* Christ promised in Matthew 11 is available only through repentance and faith in his finished work. Ezekiel promised that there would be a **new covenant** of a new heart where one would love the command-word of God, and find genuine rest and peace.

Isaiah 11:10 *And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.*

Habakkuk 2:14 *For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*

The promise of Psalms 110:1 shall be fulfilled through the preaching of the entire counsel of the word of God. (*The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*)

1 Corinthians 15:24 *Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*

What a glorious day lies ahead for those who have found the rest offered by Christ in Matthew 11.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden (i.e., load) is light.

There is so much more to God’s requirements upon his people than just the basic “Ten Words.” Western Civilization is passing into history as God’s people reap the *fruit of their thoughts*. However, God will not allow anarchy to prevail; he will raise up a tyrannical government to enforce an orderly society.

Ezekiel 36:22 *Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for*

your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. 23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. 24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. 25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. 28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

That new covenant is the Lord Jesus Christ. (Isa 42:6, 49:8) The work of the Spirit produces repentance and faith – a genuine **heart** conversion, which loves the Lord's **yoke**, his **word** and his **law**.

Hebrews 10:16 *This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.* (He 8:8-10)

Let me close this lengthy tome with this wonderful poem by Horatius Bonar, 1843, as found in the blue Trinity hymnal, p. 396:

- 1) I was a wandering sheep, I did not love the fold; I did not love my Shepherd's voice, I would not be controlled. I was a wayward child, I did not love my home; I did not love my Father's voice, I loved afar to roam.
- 2) The Shepherd sought His sheep, The Father sought His child; They followed me o'er vale and hill, O'er deserts waste and wild; They found me nigh to death, Famished and faint and lone; They bound me with the bands of love, They saved the wand'ring one.
- 3) They spoke in tender love, They raised my drooping head, They gently closed my bleeding wounds, My fainting soul they fed; They washed my filth away, They made me clean and fair; They brought me to my home in peace, The long sought wanderer.
- 4) Jesus my Shepherd is: 'Twas He that loved my soul; 'Twas He that washed me in His blood, 'Twas He that made me whole. 'Twas He that sought the lost, That found the wand'ring sheep, 'Twas He that brought me to the fold, 'Tis He that still doth keep.
- 5) I was a wand'ring sheep, I would not be controlled; But now I love my Shepherd's voice, I love, I love the fold. I was a wayward child, I once preferred to roam; But now I love my Father's voice, I love, I love his home.

Those who have found the rest for their souls, Matthew 11:29/Jeremiah 6:16, can sing Bonar's wonderful poem with genuine joy unspeakable and real thanksgiving regardless of the surrounding circumstances and situations.

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