

## Hidden and Revealed Things

In Matthew 11, Jesus gave praise to the Father for having certain things hidden from the wise and the learned, and yet revealed them to the childlike (cf. Mt 11:25). What were these “hidden” things? These things include Jesus’ true identity as the Son of God, the spiritual truths of His teachings and most importantly, the Gospel message of salvation. The “wise and the learned” were the religious scholars and elite leaders of Jewish society. The main groups included the chief priests and elders, scribes (teachers of the law), the Pharisees (an influential group of middle-class laymen who were committed to the strict observance of the Mosaic Law) and the Sadducees (wealthy elite and priests who controlled the Temple in Jerusalem). Yes, the things hidden from the wise and the learned were precisely the truths about Jesus and the truths that He preached which they rejected.

On the other hand, the “childlike” referred to the common people who humbly accepted Jesus as the Messiah, the Gospel message of salvation and the spiritual truths of His teachings. The main groups included His disciples, the uneducated masses and social outcasts (sinners and tax collectors) who humbly admitted to their spiritual deficiencies; they believed in Jesus and their trust in Jesus allowed them to receive what the



proud and learned missed – the most important thing of which is salvation.

Can proud and arrogant people be saved? Yes. However, they have to let go of that pride, through the grace of God, in genuine faith and repentance. This scripture passage in Matthew 11 calls us to be humble before God – to be counted among the “childlike” rather than among the “wise and the learned.”

In verses 28-29, Jesus extended an invitation to the people to carry His yoke; He said, “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.” (Mt 11:28-30)

Why did Jesus extend this invitation to the people? Because the people have been heavily burdened by the yoke of the law as interpreted by the scribes and the Pharisees, who have placed numerous legalistic requirements on the people, such as: (1) Sabbath restrictions featuring the 39 forbidden labors, which included tying or untying knots, carrying objects, walking more than a set distance, or even spitting on the ground (because it might cultivate the earth); (2) Meticulous tithing, which was extended to include the tiniest household herbs such as mint, dill, and cumin (cf. Mt 23:23); (3) Ritual cleansing which turned into exhaustive ceremonial hand-washing rituals that mandated exactly how water should be poured and how far up the arm the washing must go before eating (cf. Mk 7:2-4); and (4) the Korban loophole, in which people can declare their property “Korban” (dedicated to God) (Mk 7:11-13) – this vow legally consecrated the property to the Temple, making it forbidden to be used for the care of elderly parents. Property or financial resources declared “Korban” were meant to be used as Temple offerings; although they were not required to give it to the Temple right away, eventually, the Temple would be able to claim it one way or another.

In rabbinical thought, yoke = teaching; i.e., the rabbi’s ethos and curriculum. Therefore, in calling the people to take His yoke upon them, Jesus was inviting them to take upon themselves His teaching. Jesus

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tells the people that His teaching is easy and His burden is light. For starters, Jesus summarized the 613 commandments of the Mosaic Law to two: “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind” and “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Mt 22:37-39) Another reason why Christ’s yoke is easy is because Jesus offered a different teaching – one that is based on love, mercy and forgiveness, rather than on legalistic rules and restrictions which prioritize the “letter of the law” over its underlying purpose, spirit and context.

Some commentaries point out this analogy: Just as a yoke is a wooden beam used to join two animals together side-by-side to pull a heavy load, putting on the “yoke” of Jesus meant that Jesus will be right next to you to carry your burden. At times when you have been going through a very difficult phase in life, have you ever surrendered your heavy load to Jesus? That would be like taking on the yoke of Jesus – not to add to our burden, but to lighten it because Jesus will be carrying it with us.

## PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fr. Bill will administer the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick in the Sanctuary after the 10:30am Mass on Sunday.

On Sunday, we need volunteers to help move some tables and chairs from the first floor to the second floor of the Education Building.

The Archdiocese of Atlanta has launched its “Rooted in Christ – Growing in Faith” campaign to raise funds for the programs and activities of the Archdiocese. Each parish and mission church in the Archdiocese is expected to participate with their individual goals. The Archdiocese has designated our parish goal of \$60,000, and has scheduled our parish to begin with a preparation period from January to March 2027 and actual campaign period from April to September 30, 2027.

Did you know that you can make donations to the church directly from your retirement account? Each time you make a distribution from your retirement account, it is counted as taxable income. However, if you make a donation (up to \$108,000), to qualified charities through QCD (Qualified Charitable Distributions), these donations, although not tax-deductible, are excluded from taxable income. Many older retired donors use this strategy to lower their taxable income, but it also satisfies Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) without increasing their adjusted gross income (AGI). Consult your financial advisor or contact your retirement account specialist.

Prayer List: Jasmine Ho, Michael Tan, Bian Meiyi, Chen Shupeng, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing and Xu Taicheng.

| Mass Schedule                  | Confessions                       | Bible Study                   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)     | By Appointment                    | Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese) |
| Sundays 2:00 PM (English)      |                                   |                               |
|                                | <b>Anointing of the Sick</b>      | <b>Eucharistic Adoration</b>  |
| Mondays 12:00 PM (English)     | First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass | Sundays 9:00 to 10:00 AM      |
| Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)    | First Fridays after 6:30 PM Mass  |                               |
| Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)  |                                   |                               |
| Fridays 12:00 PM (English)     |                                   |                               |
| First Friday 6:30 PM (English) |                                   |                               |