

Family Bible Study

7/5/2026

9. The last few verses in this passage are words of comfort, but they don't seem to follow what comes before, are a non sequitur. What relationship do you see between Christ's promise to reveal God and his offer of comfort? Or, to put it another way, are there ideas or pictures that might someone have of God that do not produce comfort but rather *discomfort* and distress? What are some examples?
10. What do you suppose are the "burdens" that Jesus' listeners are carrying? What burdens do you carry? What would it mean for you to share those burdens with Jesus?
11. "Yoke" have several connotations in the Bible. First of all, the literal meaning is of a farming tool that allowed two horses, or more likely oxen, to work together to pull a plow. Given that oxen or any living creature are rarely of equal size or strength or endurance, yokes had to be made and fitted with care to make the fullest use of both the stronger and weaker animal. In fact, often a bull would be yoked with a bullock (baby bull). In this way, the bullock is being broken in to the yoke, but he is not actually pulling any weight. How does this image help to illuminate Jesus' words? Who would be the "oxen" here? Who is the "stronger" ox?
12. Also, Jews spoke of being "yoked" to the Law. Yet, there is often the implication of completeness – if you are yoked to the Law, you are required to keep it all. How does this connotation help to understand the meaning of Jesus' words?
13. How does Jesus' "Law" found in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7), for instance, compare with the Jewish Law (Law of Moses)? Which is more demanding? Why does Jesus claim that his is easy/easier? Compare Acts 15:10.
14. Jesus says that he is "gentle and humble in heart." Those are characteristics that Jesus listed among the Beatitudes (Matt 5:5). What relation do you see between these verses and the Beatitudes, the declaration of what it is like when God's will rules on earth?
15. Does Jesus offer to take off all our yokes? Why or why not?



Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Rest for the Weary

¹⁶ Jesus said to the crowd, "To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,
¹⁷ 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.'

¹⁸ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; ¹⁹ the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her children."

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Questions to Wonder with Kids

- In this passage, Jesus is responding to some critics who are upset that Jesus isn't doing what they expect a "holy man" to do. He says they're like children who complain when the other kids won't play their make-believe game. I wonder what they expected Jesus to do?
- Jesus says something strange to his critics here: "wisdom is known by her children." I wonder what in the world Jesus meant by that... Who are the "children" of wisdom?
- In the next few verses, Jesus is praying to God. What does he thank God for? Why would he thank God for *that*? What is being "hidden"? I wonder why God would want to "hide" things from the "wise and intelligent"...
- Where does Jesus say he gets his teaching from? What makes his teachings different from others?
- Jesus says that he "reveals" God. I wonder how Jesus does that...
- In vs28-30, Jesus invites anyone who is tired to come to him and find rest with him. But then he tells them to put on his "yoke." Do you know what a yoke is? It's a farming tool that goes between two oxen to help them pull a plow together. How would putting on a yoke be "restful"?
- Did you know that all yokes aren't the same? Farmers had to carve each yoke especially for each pair of oxen or bulls, because no two animals are the same. Some are stronger than others, some are taller, some tire out faster. So a farmer had to design a yoke to fit his particular oxen or bulls, to make the fullest use of both the stronger and weaker animals. In fact, when an ox is young, a baby ox would be yoked with an adult ox. In this way, the baby ox would get used to the yoke, but he is not actually pulling any weight. I wonder if that isn't like the yoke we carry with Jesus...

Questions for Adults

1. In the first part of this lesson, Jesus is responding to criticism that he has failed to live up to expectations of how a "holy man" should act. To them, Jesus could do nothing right. To what does Jesus compare his critics (v16-17)? In what way are his critics like the children?
2. What did they accuse John the Baptist of (v18)? Why do you think they made that accusation?
3. What did they accuse "the Son of Man" (Jesus) of (v19)? Why do you think they made that accusation?
4. What does the expression "wisdom is vindicated by her children" (v19) mean? The Old Testament sometimes personified wisdom as a person, who was semi-divine. In Proverbs 8-9, God's wisdom is portrayed as a woman calling out to the people from the street and squares of the city to come and learn from her, and to avoid giving in to the temptations of another woman, the prostitute who wants to seduce them. Who or what do you suppose are the "children" of Wisdom?
5. Do you think the crowds and religious leaders understood what Jesus was saying here? Have you ever been misunderstood, your motives questioned? What was that like? What did you do about it?
6. Jesus thanks God in v25 for "hiding these things from the wise and intelligent." What are "these things"? Why has God hidden them? For what purpose? Who are the "wise and intelligent"? Compare this verse to Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 1:18-25.
7. How is it "gracious" (v26) that God hides things from the wise and intelligent?
8. What is Jesus claiming in v27? How would those around have taken this claim, prior to the resurrection?