

When You Are Wore Slap Out

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[0 : 00] Well, tomorrow is Labor Day, and that was started to celebrate those that labor and to give them a working man's holiday at the end of the summer.

It was intended to be there for those who were wore slap out. Well, and somebody yawned as soon as I said that.

We all need a break sometimes, especially when you wore slap out. You know what that means?

You know what it means to be wore slap out? Now, when a dog's tired, it lays down.

But when a dog's wore slap out, his tongue hangs out sideways, his heart's racing on the floor when he's laying there, and he won't move even if a squirrel goes right by his nose.

That's when you wore slap out. When I played football, I used to come in from football practice.

Couldn't even eat. I was so tired and worn out. I'd just go get a cup and put a couple of scoops of ice cream in it and some whole milk and a couple of eggs and a banana and some Joe Weider weight gain because I weighed 155 pounds, praying for 170.

[1 : 18] Some things never change. I'm praying for 170. Not really. I was skinny once. I said I'll never be skinny again, but I meant it apparently.

What I didn't read on that package was, Joe Weider weight gain is time release. And about five years later, it kicked in. And it ain't let up.

It's serious. I worked lawn maintenance for a summer between college and seminary, and I could not wait to get back in the truck because you could sleep from one stop to the next.

War slap out. If you're wore out, you want to sit down. But if you're wore slap out, you don't want to move.

Now let me just ask you, have you ever been worn slap out? I don't mean from the yard. I mean in life.

[2 : 23] Maybe your life is just too hectic. It's too busy. Maybe your marriage is not honoring God like it needs to be, and it's wearing you out, and not honoring each other, and it's wearing you out.

Maybe your children are rebelling, scaring you to death, going in the wrong direction, wearing you out. Maybe you feel dry inside, spiritually sapped, worn out.

It could be that your finances are horrible. It could be that your debt's growing. It could be that your bills are piling up. Maybe it's because you have the weight of a sin bearing down upon you.

Maybe habitual sin in your life weighing down upon you. You are unclean, and you are miserable, and you are worn slap out. Sometimes it seems like there's not an end in sight when you feel like that.

So what do you do? What do you do when you don't know what to do? How do you survive when you're worn slap out?

[3 : 42] Well, I'm glad you asked. Because today we're going to take a break from the stories that Jesus told, the parables in Luke, to hear a request of Jesus that I believe we all need to hear, at least from time to time.

It's in Matthew chapter 11, beginning in verse 28. Jesus said, come to me. All who labor and are heavy laden, I'll give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you'll find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Come to the Lord and rest, folks. Thank God he invites us to come. 1 Peter chapter 5 verse 7 says, cast all your anxieties on him because he cares for you.

Now Peter's not just saying, give him your worries one by one as they come up. No, that's not what he's saying. Peter is saying, commit your life to cast your burdens upon the Lord.

[5 : 08] I heard from a man that led Orlando Wilson to the Lord. Orlando Wilson, a famous fisherman, TV shows and those things. And he asked Orlando Wilson, asked his pastor, he said, will you teach me about Jesus?

And he asked Orlando, will you teach me how to fish? He said, I will. Sounds like a deal. He said they went fishing and he cast out of line.

And Orlando said, no, that's not how you do it. You don't just throw it out there. If you want to fish, if you want to fish, when you cast, you cast it out there.

Throw it out there. That's what that word means. That word means sling it. Sling it down at the Lord. Give it to him. I like the way the Amplified Bible puts it. It says this, casting the whole of your care, all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all on him.

[6 : 16] For he cares for you affectionately and cares for you watchfully. Too many times we want to care for us, but we want him to care for us, but we still want to carry it.

Three generations ago, there was a guy coming down the road on a cart. There was a man on the side of the road with a big old bag on his back, weighed down, wore slap out.

The cart stopped to pick him up. When the man got on the cart, he sat down, but he kept that bag over his shoulder, continued to be weighed down by that bag.

And the man driving that cart said, why don't you just lay that down? And the man said, oh no, it's good for you to carry me. I couldn't expect you to carry my burden as well.

That's about how silly we are sometimes, folks. When we continue to carry stuff that the Lord has told us to give to him. Don't pick it back up.

[7 : 26] Cast it upon the Lord. Come to the Lord and rest. Listen to the Lord and follow.

Listen to him and follow. It says, Jesus says, for my yoke is easy. Literally, that means, yoke means to walk alongside and learn from.

It's the name for that wood or iron frame that joins two oxen together or draft animals together to pull a plow or a cart or a load.

A new ox is always a yoke to an experienced ox and they pull that cart together so he can teach the younger one and to share that load.

But when he talks about yoke here, it's also talking about the yoking of students to a rabbi. Ancient rabbis saw their role in the community as one of studying, discussing, and interpreting the revealed word of God and for them at that time was the Old Testament.

[8 : 38] They were to help people understand that text and they were to live out that text before them. For instance, what does it mean when the text says to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy?

How do you do that? Well, my mama told me growing up it meant you didn't go to the movies on Sunday. That's one way you do it, you know. There's different interpretations of how you handle that.

Well, the rabbi would make that determination and some would say that if you walked over a mile in one day that it was considered work. And so therefore, and remember, we're not talking about folks who did it for exercise, we're talking about people who did it to get around, that if you went more than a mile, then it was work and you were not keeping the day holy.

Another one said you can walk a mile and a half. It was different interpretations. Now, some of those interpretations depend on how far they live from the synagogue.

Because if the synagogue is a mile and a half away and you can't walk but a mile a day, you can't go to the synagogue on the Sabbath. And so there were interpretations that were different for each one.

[9 : 53] One would say you could do this, one would say that. Different ones had different set of rules and they added to the word of God their rules. One rabbi's set of rules or his list of interpretations was considered his rabbi's yoke is what they called that.

And he would invite young men to be trained by him to become a Talmud or a Jewish scholar. And if that young man accepted that invitation, he would leave his family, he would leave his village, he would leave all that he knew and from that day forward he was devoted to the rabbi, not just teaching, not just learning his teachings but becoming like him in every way, going wherever he went, doing whatever he was doing, teaching whatever he taught.

It was a total life commitment. It was taking on his yoke. It means you see how he walks and you walk the same.

You commit to him and let him lead. And then one rabbi said, my yoke is easy. And his name is Jesus.

And when you commit your life to Christ, you're taking on as an inexperienced sheep. You're taking on the yoke of the Lord for him to train you, for him to walk with you, for him to interpret life through his word to you, and for you to have total commitment to follow him.

[11 : 31] Jesus didn't drag folks down like a rabbi would. Jesus don't belabor you with a bunch of rules like the Pharisees did.

Matter of fact, Jesus spoke against them again and again in Matthew 23. But he said in verse 4 particularly, he said, they tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger.

I know preachers like that. I do. Deacons may be like that. Church leaders may be like that. Church people sometimes will look down on you.

But I want to be clear, whatever your path has been, that is not of God, and that is not what God does, and that's not his message. Romans chapter 8 verse 1 says, there is therefore now no condemnation for those, thank God, who are in Christ Jesus.

No condemnation. In reality, it was the Pharisee type, it was the hypocritical church aristocracy that Christ was offering relief from when he said, my yoke is easy.

[12 : 54] He's talking about those that have loaded you down with rules and regulations on your shoulders, and some people make it their mission to sap the joy out of your salvation completely. I mean, if you're enjoying it, it must not be of God, right?

There's a Greek word for that, it's baloney. Some people have a persistently negative tone to what they say.

I want to be clear this morning, that's not of Christ, thank God, that's not the gospel. Christ came to give us freedom, not for riotous living, Christ came to give us freedom as a standard to be lived by, rules to guide your life by, but all of them are for our own protection.

We see people abandon them today, we see ourselves abandon them today. We go our own way, we make our own decisions, we sin against God, don't say, preacher, look at me, because I've got news for you, the word of God says we all do it, and the reality is to keep us right with God where true freedom and wholeness and fullness is found, we need to listen to Him and follow Him.

Now let me be clear, when you take that little cup that has the bread and the juice in it and we participate that in just a little bit, you know what you're saying?

[14 : 25] I commit my life to you, Lord. Your body was given for me, your blood was shed for me, and I've committed my life, I've taken you in, I've digested what you gave me.

Be sure to come to Him and rest and listen to Him and follow and trust the Lord. Trust Him, He's easy on you.

He said, my burden is light. He's not harsh, He's not overbearing, He's not oppressive, His yoke is easy, His burden is light, not because His standards are less, but because He carries your burden, because He trains you up, because He sends you out, because He accompanies you in all of your way.

He's looking out for you, He'll give you a peace. You don't have to worry about life or where He may take you, peace is resting in Him because He's worthy of it.

You can rest in Him. Don't worry about tomorrow, today has enough of its own, tomorrow worry about itself. God's already there, folks, you can rest in Him with that. He'll give you the restoration you need, He'll give you the rekindling you need, the nurture that you need, He'll give you the power that you need to face, whatever comes tomorrow.

[15 : 56] And He says, I am gentle. In other words, He comes with a loving and gentle spirit. He says, I am humble. Philippians chapter 2 says He emptied Himself.

He became a servant for us. He became obedient even to the death on the cross. He's not, He's not going to one-up you. I want you to hear me this morning.

Jesus died for you. He died for you. And He definitely lives for you.

He's making intercession for you. And He loves you dearly. I heard about a photographer who took pictures at school on picture day.

First graders lined up to get their picture made. And in order to get that picture made with a first grader that don't want to get their picture made, you got to make small talk and all that kind of stuff.

[17 : 07] I don't want to be a first grade photographer. He asked one little girl, what are you going to be when you grow up? She said, tired.

How many of you are there today? If that's the way you feel, come to the table of the Lord. Refresh yourself with a fresh reminder of what He's done for you. Confess your sins. God will save you.

Just commit your life to Him. And if He has saved you and you know that, recommit your life to Him. Commit to this church today as God leads you.

Rest in the Lord today. What's that burden that you have upon your heart today? You leave it with God. He can handle it. He already knows how it's going to turn out.

[18 : 18] We just need to rest it in His hands. With every head bowed and every eye closed, I want to ask you this morning, if there's ever been a time in your life when you've surrendered your life to the Lord Jesus Christ, you've ever confessed your sins to Him and agreed with Him that you're a sinner, needing a Savior, knowing that you're separated from God due to your sin.

If you've never done that, today's the day for you to do that. Today's the day for you to say, Lord, I want you to save me.

I want you to change me. I want you to make me what you'd have me to be. And I want you to know there's a lot of things we're going to do in the next few moments, but there's nothing more important than the opportunity that you have to surrender your life to the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you've never done that, I encourage you to come. In just a few moments, when we stand to sing, you come. I'd be happy to guide you in that process. Maybe you have done that and you know you're a Christian, but you know that you are wore out probably from your own mistakes, but maybe from somebody else's.

And today you need to be clean. The Apostle Paul said that, told the church in Corinth, he said, some of y'all are sick because you've come to the table of the Lord with unconfessed sin in your life.

[19 : 47] Because you've not acted appropriately toward each other. Because you're not clean before him and take part in that. It's making you sick. That's what he said. God takes it seriously, folks.

And so if there's matters in your life that you need to confess, repent of today, you do that before you take this bread and this cup. It is open for all who've been saved and baptized to take today. If you're a child here and that's never happened to you, your parents do something, it's not snack time. When you leave here, I encourage you to ask them about.

Ask them about what they did today and what that means. Parents, that can cause a wonderful gospel conversation to come in the home. Maybe you're here and you're not a kid, but the reality is you've never given your heart and life to the Lord.

Are there's hindrances in your life even as a Christian that cause you from being everything God would have you to be? Scripture tells us to be clean. And so I would tell you today to repent and make it right.

[20 : 51] You can do that where you are, you can do it at this altar. That's what it's here for. You just obey God and do what He tells you to do. Maybe God's drawing you to be a part of this church.

God's doing a work in this church and I'm thankful to be a part of it. If God's drawing you to be a part of that, there's no need for you to hold that off. So I encourage you to come.

We'd love to guide you in that process of what it means to be a member of Pickens First. Maybe you've been saved but never been baptized as a believer. That's the first step of obedience and it's a hindrance in your life if that's not happened.

So I encourage you to be obedient and follow Him today. We'll be happy to guide you in that. We're not doing it today, but we'll be happy to guide you and set that up for you because we do plan to do it in the near future. I don't know what God's telling you folks, but let's get right, okay?

Let's do this thing right. Let's do exactly what God tells us to do. Lord Jesus, I love you and I thank you, dear God, for your love for us. Lead us right now to be obedient to follow you as you lead.

[21 : 58] In Jesus' precious name, amen. Amen. Stand up.