

9th July 2023 (Sea Sunday)

Matthew 11.16 – 19 and 25 - 30

Read through the first of today's two sections.

Note the tone of the parable of Jesus – memorable, charming even, simple, gentle, everyday – but a rebuke!

Compare Luke 6. 26a for a sharper comment. (Note that in Bible study, a lower case "a" or "b" (or sometimes even "c") denotes a subsection of a long verse.)

What modern saying also repeats and sums up this dilemma, especially as faced by public figures?

To whom does verse 18 refer? Look up Luke 1.15 for the evidence for this sketch of him. Look for similar evidence in Matthew 3.

In verse 19, Jesus speaks in the third person of himself. Where in Matthew 9 is the evidence for this short-hand criticism?

Read through the second of today's sections.

In the prayer of Jesus (vv. 25 – 27), by what two titles does he address God? Which title do you think is the more weighty?

What types of healing does Jesus offer to his hearers in his appeal, verses 28 – 30?

In what sense is life a burden?

Does Jesus claim to remove the whole burden of life?

Thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts know no rest until they may repose in thee.
(St. Augustine, "Confessions" about A.D. 400)



Some Background

What is the spur of land to the far west on the map above?

In the Turkish/Syrian earthquake of last February, among the casualties was a premiership footballer, living in Antakya.

Look up Acts 11.26. "Antakya" is the modern name for the New Testament "Antioch." (If you have a retired naval person in your house group or among your acquaintances, they may well once have docked at Antakya.)

Some scholars today advance the view that St. Matthew's Gospel was compiled in Antioch.

"When I was of the age to receive confirmation and full membership of the Church, I was told to choose a passage from the Bible as the expression of my personal approach to the Christ-in-Church. I chose the words "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." "

Paul Tillich, "The Shaking of the Foundations" p.99.