



Pastor Bob Hoekstra

**A Personal Message
From
Pastor Bob Hoekstra, Director
INTERNATIONAL PRISON MINISTRY**

P.O. Box 2868 Costa Mesa, CA 92628-2868

IPM Website: www.chaplainray.com



**Founders:
Chaplain Ray & Leola Hoekstra**

June, 2010

Dear Friends of IPM,

These are days of growing unrest. These are days in which it is vitally important to consider the spiritual rest that is offered by the Lord Jesus Christ. *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light"* (Matthew 11:28-30).

The first aspect of spiritual rest spoken of here by Jesus pertains to the burden of sin and guilt. The remedy for the crushing load of our transgressions is to come to the Lord Jesus in repentance, confessing our sins. *"Come to Me."* He promises to give us rest from our load of sin. *"I will give you rest."* This is about forgiveness. This is about new birth through initial faith in Jesus. This is about first meeting the Lord. Everyone on earth must begin here with God.

The second aspect of spiritual rest spoken of here by Jesus pertains to the burden of trying to live for God by our own inadequate resources, by our flesh. The remedy for this anguish of heart is to "yoke up" with the Lord Jesus. *"Take My yoke upon you."* This is about walking daily with Christ. This is about transformation of life. This is about growing in the Lord.

This is about getting to know the Lord better and better: *"... learn from Me."* Notice what we are to be learning about Jesus. *"I am gentle and lowly in heart."* Jesus, the Son of God, walked upon this earth in gentleness and lowliness, in meekness and humility. As the perfect man,

(over please)

Jesus meekly and humbly relied upon the Father. He wants us to learn to live that way, meekly and humbly relying upon Jesus. For those who live this way, Jesus promises daily spiritual rest for our inner man: *"... you will find rest for your souls."*

This daily yoke of fellowship with Christ is a comforting yoke. It is a "heart-lifting" yoke. It is a relationship yoke, not a performance yoke: "... My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Every follower of Christ needs to be growing in this truth. "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God" (Hebrews 4:9). This rest is available to every believer every day, as we seek the Lord Jesus, as we abide in His word, as we get to know Him better and better.

This message of Jesus providing rest for the souls of humanity is particularly appreciated in the prisons of the world, where the burdens of sin and defeat press down heavily upon hearts and lives. We rejoice for your stand with us in declaring these truths.

Proclaiming with You the Spiritual Rest Found in Christ Alone,

Bob Hoekstra

Pastor Bob Hoekstra

(for all of our "Chaplain Ray Family" and the IPM Team)

P.S. Our appreciation gift for this month is one of my Bible studies, entitled "Finding Rest for Our Souls" — available in DVD (visual) or CD (audio).

P.P.S. We are still praying for the Lord's healing touch. Meanwhile, He is graciously strengthening me more and more. Also, He is working in many wonderful ways through this challenging time. I will share more on this in the months ahead.



This rest for our souls is available to every believer every day, as we seek the Lord Jesus.



FINDING REST FOR OUR SOULS

(1 Single Study with Pastor Bob Hoekstra on DVD-visual or CD-audio)

Matthew 11:28-30 *“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*

Initial Spiritual Rest

(everyone in the world must begin here)

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28).

See Psalm 38:4 “For my iniquities have gone over my head; like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.”

This is about forgiveness -- new birth -- first meeting the Lord -- justification -- an invitation to come to a Person -- believing He will fulfill His promise of rest.

Secondary Spiritual Rest

(every follower must continue here)

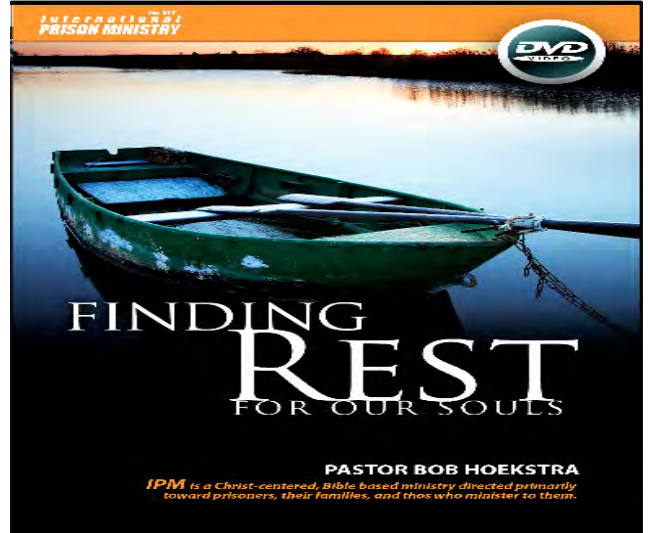
“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matt. 11:29).

This is a rest from the hard path and heavy load of living for (or from) the flesh.

This is about transformation -- growth -- knowing the Lord -- sanctification -- an invitation to get to know a Person -- believing He will fulfill this promise of rest also.

He is gentle (meek/relied upon the Father) and lowly (humble/not proud) in heart. He wants us to learn to think/live like that -- becoming more and more like Him. “There remains therefore a rest for the people of God” (Hebrews 4:9).

All of us at IPM praise God for all of you who stand with us in reaching prisoners.



Why Jesus' Yoke for Us Is Easy and Light

“For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matt. 11:30).

It is a “relationship yoke” of grace -- not a “performance yoke” of law.

It is not “our pulling 1/2 the load” of life and growth and service.

It is a reminder to walk closely with Him and grow in knowing Him -- transformed by Him.

“There remains therefore a rest for the people of God” (Hebrews 4:9). It is for our hearts each day if we will but seek the Lord Jesus -- in His word to know Him better and to trust in Him.

Cut Along Dotted Line & Mail

Yes, Send Gift:
1 DVD or CD Study

FINDING REST FOR OUR SOULS

With Pastor Bob Hoekstra
Single Study of Matt. 11:28-30

DVD (visual)

OR CD (audio)

Dear Pastor Bob, My gift to help prisoners know that Jesus gives rest for their souls.

Use this gift for Bibles For Prisoners\$ _____

\$54.00 for a Library of LifeChanging Books.....\$ _____

Bibles & Books for Ukraine & India Prisons\$ _____

Use My Offering Where Needed Most.....\$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Mail to: International Prison Ministry, P.O. Box 2868, Costa Mesa, CA 92628

It is the policy of I.P.M. to use each gift as it is designated by the donor. If any project is completed, any surplus will be used where it is needed most.

INTERNATIONAL PRISON MINISTRY
Website: www.chaplainray.com



Prisoners Finding Rest for Their Souls!



Matthew 11:28-30 *“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*

Stony in a Maryland Prison Has Truly Found Rest for His Soul!

Dear Pastor Bob,

I received your letter this evening. Thank you so very much for taking the time and putting forth such effort. It is such a relief to finally get a response after writing many different organizations over the past several months. To answer your question, yes, I do anticipate being at this institution for the foreseeable future. I have only been moved one time in my 16 years.

As I am sure can be imagined, it has been a long and hard 16 years. The only thing that has kept me going is God’s Word. I have made the Word my “Rock”. It is the foundation to all I do. I am not perfect but I have come a long way from a 17-year-old, misguided kid to a 33-year-old man matured in God’s Word. If not for prison, despite attending Christian school for 10 years, I would never have become so in touch with God as I am today. I truly do feel free on the inside.

Thank you for the scriptures you quoted. Each time I open the Bible, no matter how much I have studied it, I am inspired all over again. Hebrews 13:5 is one that often heals doubters here in prison. A question often asked: “He forgot me man. Why would such a good God allow me to end up in prison.” To that, as was said to me many years ago, I ask a very simple question: “If you continued living how you were, where would you be?” And the answer is usually the same: “Probably dead.” So as bad as prison seems at times and as much as it seems that nothing good can come of it, it is part of His plan. I like Psalm 25:8-9: “The Lord is honest and good. He teaches sinners to walk in His ways. He shows those who are not proud how to do what is right. He teaches them His ways.” Unfortunately, it takes prison to teach some of us. Thanks again for your outreach. I am sure you will receive wondrous blessings. I look forward to receiving what you sent.

I will keep you, the rest of the “Chaplain Ray Family” and all the IPM Team in my prayers.
Respectfully, *Stony K. Maryland Prison*

Cut Along Dotted Line & Mail

Message or Prayer Request for IPM:
