

# HOW TO USE THIS GROUP GUIDE

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## CONNECT (10 MINS)

- Pick one or more of the warm-up questions and have all the group members give a response to the question(s).
- Make sure everybody gets a chance to speak. Don't let talkative people dominate the conversation, but graciously welcome everybody to participate.

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## TRUTH (15-20 MIN)

- Read the scriptures and paragraphs in this section to clearly communicate... what the Bible says about the week's topic.
- **"DISCUSS" sections:** These sections get people discussing the practical implications of the truth being discussed. Have one or two people give an answer, but don't spend too much time on these questions.

## GRACE (5 MINS)

- Read the grace scripture and section which shows how the passage points to Jesus Christ and God's grace.
- This section is really important, because it shows that life change begins with the grace of God and not our own efforts.

## **CHANGE (10-15 MINS)**

- Have everyone give an answer to each of the change questions.
- Take a good amount of time here. Really encourage people to think through how they can practically put truth into action.

## **PRAYER (10-15 MINS)**

- Read through the prayer focus points and have one or two people in the group pray.
- Make sure not to rush through prayer. The things we want God to change in our lives will often happen through prayer.

# THE ART OF REST



**WEEK 1 : ART HISTORY**  
GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE



ALETHEIA  
CHURCH

# CONNECT

This first week we are going to consider the “why” behind rest. As we search the Scriptures, be prepared to search your heart and your schedule for the ways in which God wants to shape you into a restful, productive, joyful creature.

- ▶ Do you feel weary and tired? If so, why?
- ▶ What good-sounding reasons do you give yourself for not resting?

# TRUTH

Read Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:8-11, and Deuteronomy 5:12-15.

(In the book *The Art of Rest*, read the introduction and chapter 1.)

We live in a fast-paced city, in a fast-paced country, in a fast-paced world. In fact, these days busyness serves as kind of cultural capital – a signal of one's importance and status. "I'm just sooooo busy" has become the new status symbol. If you're busy, you matter. So, we all scurry around drowning out our fears with more activity. Yet, when we come to faith in Jesus, we're invited – actually, commanded – to no longer live this way. Coming to faith in Christ is not only how to be saved from sin...

It's about a whole new way of being human... The Jesus way of being human. And, that way involves practicing the art of rest.

At the end of the Genesis account, God rests. At the end the exodus, God commands his people to rest. What does all this mean? In other words, rest is different than think, and more important than you've probably imagined. Briefly, let's observe three truths about rest:

- ▶ Sabbath is simply a time of rest, holy to the Lord (Gen 2:1-3).
- ▶ Sabbath is a time of rest to acknowledge God's sovereignty (Ex 20:8-11).
- ▶ Sabbath is a time of rest to remember our salvation (Deut 5:12-15).

## DISCUSS

- ▶ Re-read Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12-15. What difference do you notice between them? What two parts of God's nature did Moses see Sabbath as a chance to remember? Why is this important for us?



# GRACE

We are really good at creating great sounding reasons to not rest. “It’s a busy season.” “As soon as I finish this project, I’ll rest.” Or, “I just don’t have the time.” I’m sure Israel had their excuses, too – “As soon as this harvest is done.” Or, “As soon as we get more settled in the land.” But, God knew the people of Israel had a lot of work ahead of them. Yet, he still invited them to embrace sabbath rest.

## DISCUSS

- ▶ Does the idea of embracing a regular, weekly sabbath sound liberating and good or just like one more thing to do? Why?

Rest is more important than we've imagined, but maybe it still doesn't sound good to you. Yet, if we're going to be people in his image, then we must do what he's done. God worked, so we work. But, God also rested. How are you doing on that front?

## **DISCUSS**

- ▶ Read Psalm 127:2 aloud. How does God feel about giving rest?

# CHANGE

Today's lesson is actually not all that practical, but more theoretical. You see, all the vacations and days off in the world won't restore your soul if you don't understand the rich, biblical picture of sabbath rest. We'll just do it all wrong. So, for now, let's pause to admit: we need to rest, and we're commanded to rest. Should you work hard? Absolutely.

Christians should be the most industrious people in the world. But we cannot idolize our work. We embrace the art of rest... less rule, more rhythm – less stodgy practice, more liberating art. Are you willing to turn from overwork and embrace the art of rest?

- ▶ What's the difference between "time off" and Sabbath rest?
- ▶ What is one thing you'll have to change to embrace the art of rest?
- ▶ Do you idolize your work or education?

# PRAYER

- ▶ Pray for the rest of Jesus to become a reality in your life.



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