

HOW TO USE THIS GROUP GUIDE

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 2 : REST IS TO REMEMBER

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE



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CONNECT

- ▶ If you had two hours to yourself in cold weather (no work allowed) what would you do? What would you do in warm weather?
- ▶ On a scale of 1-10, how well do you think you practice rest? (One being not well at all, 10 being very well.) Why did you pick that number?

TRUTH

Read Ezekiel 20:12-21

In this passage, God is giving Ezekiel's generation a history lesson. He explains how the Israelites who left Egypt failed to observe the Sabbath and God prohibited them from entering the promised land. The Sabbath was far more than a required day off – it was a weekly moment to pause, rest, and remember that they were the people of God. When they stopped pausing to remember, they forgot who they were and became as violent and corrupt as the nations around them. If you fail to practice rest, you'll forget too. But if you will trust God and rest, here are four truths that will continue to help you be who God has called you to be.

REST IS TO REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE

Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them. (v. 12)

God meant for the Sabbath to be a “sign” pointing to the truth that God loved, chose, and rescued Israel. We will all get our identity somewhere, and if we won’t get it from God, the usual substitute is our accomplishments. When we rest, however, we’re reminded that regardless of where we are on culture’s ladder of success, we are made in God’s image, and he loves us. No amount of success or failure changes that.

DISCUSS

- ▶ Why is it so tempting to find our identity in what we accomplish?

REST IS TO REMEMBER OUR NEED

Moreover, I swore to them in the wilderness that I would not bring them into the land that I had given them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands... (v. 16)

Imagine you're a parent in the desert between Egypt and the promised land. Resting sounds to you like a sure recipe for letting your family starve. Rather than trust God and rest on the Sabbath, you continue scavenging for food. God kept Israel in the desert, waiting for them to trust him. If we think our ability to "hustle" is the only thing standing between us and hunger, poverty, or failure, we'll never stop working. In rest we remember that God is the one who promised to meet our needs. It's never been up to us.

DISCUSS

- ▶ What are some good needs that people overwork to provide for?

REST IS TO REMEMBER MEANING

“I am the Lord your God; walk in my statutes, and be careful to obey my rules, and keep my Sabbaths holy that they may be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God.” (v. 19–20)

Ironically, something that keeps us from practicing rest is the desire for happiness. If happiness becomes the goal of life, then we'll keep running after things that make us happy. And there's always something bigger, shinier, and more expensive that will make us happier. God gives us a greater life pursuit – himself. When we have him, we have something far greater than happiness. We have joy.

GRACE

REST IS TO REMEMBER GRACE

There's a popular storyline out there that says we can save the world. If we just keep working, all our development, effort, and endurance will inevitably lead to a better world. But God is the one who saves the world. When we practice rest we remember the grace of the gospel, that God sent his Son to save the world. God welcomes us to share in his rescue mission for the world, but it doesn't depend on us.

CHANGE

- ▶ What do you tend to let define your identity other than God? Why is God's given identity better?
- ▶ In what areas do you find it difficult to trust God to meet your needs? What can help you trust him more in those areas?
- ▶ What could it look like for you to embrace the biblical meaning of life which is to know God?

Spend some time in prayer together.



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