

# 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 4 :**

**REST RESTORES RELATIONSHIPS**

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE



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# CONNECT

- ▶ Describe a vacation where you felt like you grew closer in your relationship with someone.
- ▶ Describe a time in your life when it was really difficult to pause and rest. What about that time made resting so difficult?

# TRUTH

Read Psalm 116:1-7 and Mark 2:27-28

Our society today is full of relationships that have been destroyed as people ceaselessly strive in their pursuit of happiness. Without rest, relationships will only wither into a mere arrangement of duties. God has a different plan for the relationships in our lives. When we rest, our relationships are restored and preserved. In this Psalm we discover four ways resting helps us relate to God and to others.

## GRACIOUS WORK (NOT BAD REST)

"I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy. Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live." (Psalm 116:1-2)

In a culture that's based on status and merit we can fall into thinking that our relationship with God is dependent on what we do. We think that if we work hard enough and do the right things that we'll be accepted and heard by him. David understood that this wasn't true. He recognized that God was ready to hear us and be with us, so he didn't have to prove anything.

## DISCUSS

- ▶ In what ways have you tried to earn God's approval and love?



# DEEP FELLOWSHIP (NOT SHALLOW RELATIONSHIPS)

“Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful. The Lord preserves the simple; when I was brought low, he saved me.” (Psalm 116:5-6)

God sticks with us even at our lowest points. Our lives are full of mistakes and failures, but God is full of grace and mercy. Even when we mess up he is right there to receive us.

Resting with him allows us deep fellowship with him. Be vulnerable with God also gives us courage to be vulnerable with other people.

Deep friendships are the ones where you can be transparent instead of wearing a mask.

## DISCUSS

- ▶ Why do you think it's important to have friendships in which you're able to be vulnerable?

## SHARING MOMENTS (NOT MISUSING REST)

“Return, O my soul, to your rest; for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.” (Psalm 116:7)

Rest can easily be confused as a time where we need to isolate ourselves from the world and focus on ourselves. We can fall under the impression that when it comes to resting we are the most important person and our needs or desires come first. However, when David rested he drew deeper into God, as opposed to moving away. When we make rest about pressing deeper into our relationship with God and others, we will experience healing.

# GRACE

And [Jesus] said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27)

The Sabbath was made for man to be healed by God. Coming to Jesus means recognizing that we can't fix the deepest problem of our life, which is sin. Instead we recognize that the sacrifice of Jesus is the only way for us to be made right with the Father. Just as that deepest problem in our life is fixed when we rely on Jesus, he promises to take care of all the pain and hurt in our life if we rest in him.

# CHANGE

- ▶ In what areas of life do you need to slow down and stop rushing so that you can start focusing on your relationships?
- ▶ What are a couple changes you can make to be more intentional about pressing deeper into your relationship with God and others?
- ▶ How do you think God healing your life and filling you will affect your relationships with others?

Pray as a group and declare your love to God and your desire to know him, and that he would begin to restore your relationship with him and with others.



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