

Instructions:

Group leaders, take some time before your gathering to look over these questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you pick 3-5 questions to discuss that pertain to your group's unique style and needs.



Series: In a Hurry

We live in the digital age with access to more information and modes of communication than ever before. There is always more to read, see, watch, and do in the deluge of news, social media, streaming platforms, and alerts. Many of us are left feeling behind, hurried, stressed, and just plain rundown.

But what is this hurried pace of life doing to our souls?

Join us this fall as we explore "how to stay emotionally healthy and spiritually alive in the chaos of the modern world." That is, how to slow down and connect with our God, our community, and even our souls. Jesus invites us to follow a way of love that is incompatible with a hurried lifestyle. Join us, as we adopt practices that will help us slow down and experience rest and life with Jesus.

Message description:

So many of us feel tired, burnt out, overwhelmed, and stressed by all the things that demand our time and attention in the fast-paced, digital world we live in. Even when we have time to slow down and rest, we can feel so overwhelmed by the problems of our world and family that we remain restless and anxious, feeling disconnected from God and our very own souls.

Jesus teaches us a different way of being that invites us to take up his yoke of abiding with God that allows us to shoulder the loads we carry differently. The first habit of Jesus that can help us slow down and experience health and life with him is silence and solitude. We see Jesus first practice this in the wilderness for 40 days where he learned how to trust in God and remain obedient to his mission, in the face of many temptations, through quiet time with God: that is, prayer and fasting. This became a habit throughout his ministry, to go away to a desolate or quiet place to pray, ground himself in God's presence and power, and refocus on his mission. In fact, the busier Jesus became, the more he practiced time apart.

To practice this habit today, we must find time and space to silence the external and internal noise of our lives and to focus ourselves on God's presence.

Key Scriptures

Mark 1:35-39; Luke 5:15-16

Questions Related to This Week's Message:

1. At this point in your life, what demands the most of your time and/or attention?
2. In her first teaching of this series, Rachel shared a definition of "hurry sickness" as a behavior pattern characterized by continual rushing and anxiousness.
 - a. Where do you observe this hurry sickness today, either within yourself or in our world?
 - b. Do you ever feel this rushed, hurried, or anxious?
 - c. Have you experienced any symptoms of hurry sickness [irritability, hypersensitivity, restlessness, workaholism, emotional numbness, out of order priorities, lack of care for your body, escapist behaviors, slippage of spiritual disciplines, isolation]?
3. What do you hope to gain from this series and study?
4. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus needed regular time apart in a quiet place to rest and reconnect with God?
5. Have you ever regularly practiced time apart for silence and solitude? What did you think?
6. What is some of the external and internal noise you face daily? Which is harder for you to silence? Why?
7. What is the biggest barrier for you finding quiet time alone with God? What changes could you make in your daily or weekly schedule to begin practicing?
8. Where is one place you can go to find peace and stillness?

Going Deeper:

From the companion guide of John Mark Comer's "The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry"

Consider this guide for how to un-hurry your life, brain, and spirit with the practice of silence and solitude:

1. Find your quiet place.
2. Take your time. [start with 10 minutes and build to more as needed.]
3. Slow down. Breathe. Come back to the present. [Become aware of God's presence around you.]
4. Start to feel.
 - a. The whole range of emotions- sadness, anger, doubt, anxiety to gratitude, joy, celebration, restfulness.
 - b. All that's going on internally- exposed in the safety and love of the presence of God.
5. Sense the voice of God cut through the cacophony of all the other voices, which slowly fade to the deafening roar of silence. Hear God speak love over us, speak truth and our identities and callings into being.
6. Come to a place of freedom.

Questions for reflection:

- Which of these steps do you find the most challenging?
- What intrigues you about this process?
- How could you begin to practice silence and solitude in your daily life?

*If you are more of a doer than a thinker, and being still is torture for you, consider experimenting with one of **the spiritual exercises linked on our website** while also doing something with your hands or body (like walking or stretching or even folding laundry), allowing your mind comes to rest in God.*