

Small Group Discussion Guide

For the week of December 15 - 21, 2019

Main Thought and Scripture:

The holidays are usually the busiest time of the year for people with the additional burdens of shopping and celebrations with friends and family on top of already frantic and over stressed lives. It is also a season where depression and relational tensions are magnified. The gift that only we can give to ourselves is the gift of margin—creating space in our lives for what really matters. Jesus said:

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30 NIV)

Jesus wants us to find rest or an overall sense of well-being and tranquility in our souls—in the midst of the chaos of life. In order to do this, we need to "yoke" ourselves to Jesus to learn from Him, to value what He values, and prioritize what He prioritizes. Three areas that we need margin in particular are our **time**, our **finances**, and our **relationships**. In the midst of the busyness, we need to make sure that we make time to keep Jesus first. As He stated, "come to me..." Secondly, we need to take His "yoke." All of us, like beasts of burden pull a "yoke" of responsibilities, expectations, pressures, etc. Jesus is teaching us that we need to trade **our** "yoke" for **His**. This will inevitably adjust how we steward our time, finances, and relationships. As we take Jesus' "yoke," we will discover that He wants to be the one doing the heavy lifting of pulling our burdens with us and FOR us.

Reflection: *Break into groups of 3-4 to discuss.*

- What are some things in your life that can make you feel "weary and burdened?" Explain.
- Have you ever experienced Christ lift your burdens and give you a sense of rest? What happened and what did you learn from that?

Application:

- How do you think you need to create more margin in your time, finances, and relationships? What can you do practically to create margin in your life?

Prayer: *Break into pairs to pray.*

- What is one burden that you are carrying? Pray for one another that Jesus will help us to bear the burden.
- Pray for one unreached friend or family member who is carrying a heavy burden. Pray that they will find rest and peace in Jesus this Christmas season.