



SOUL CARE: Reviving Your Soul

Derek Sanford

February 6, 2022

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement:

-When was the last time you felt like your life was out of control and you could not keep up?

-Respond to this quote from John Ortberg?

“For most Christians, the great danger is not that we will renounce our faith. It is that we will become so distracted and rushed and preoccupied that we will settle for a mediocre version of it. We will just skim our lives instead of actually living.”

-Which warning signs appear in your life when your soul is being neglected? (Some examples: Your Passion Fades, You No Longer Feel the Highs or Lows, Little Things Make You Disproportionally Emotional, Everybody Drains You, You’re Becoming Cynical, Nothing Satisfies You, You Can’t Think Straight, Your Productivity Is Dropping, You’re Self-Medicating, You Don’t Laugh Anymore, Sleep No Longer Refuels You.)

Scripture:

Read [Matthew 11:28-29](#).

-How do we “revive” our souls according to Jesus? What does it look like to be yoked to Christ?

Read [2 Corinthians 4:13-18](#).

-What happens to our souls as we draw near to Christ and experience His grace?

-How does this passage encourage you to make soul care a priority?

Prayer: Using popcorn prayer, have your group pray for each other to daily draw near to Jesus and find refreshment for their souls. Ask for specific prayer requests as well.

Next Steps:

-Identify your current weekly rhythm and take inventory of your time and energy expenditure.

-Can you identify any pain points or areas that need some intentional planning and prayer?

-Commit to Finding Your Chair daily and using the Soul Care YouVersion reading plans every week this month. Search “whoisgrace” on YouVersion or visit www.whoisgrace.com/read.



SOUL CARE: Solitude

Derek Sanford

February 13, 2022

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement:

- Do you set aside time for solitude? What are some ways you get away and refresh?
- How do you connect to Jesus, our “Vine” (John 15)? What are some enemies of solitude in your life?

Scripture:

Read [John 15:1-8](#). In this passage, fruit refers to the fruit of the Spirit, or the good works and results that come from following Jesus and letting the Spirit of God work within us. Early Christians identified that vines and branches have a structure to grow on called a trellis. So, they also created a structure for their spiritual lives in order to create a trellis on which spiritual fruit could grow. A trellis was also called a rule, so this spiritual structure became known as a “rule of life.” It’s the set of practices and rhythms that make it possible for us to stay connected to the vine. This includes habits around things like sabbath, prayer, worship, community, money, relationships, etc.

-What does your rule (trellis) of life look like? How do you need to adjust it to help you stay more connected to Jesus?

-Is the process of growing grapes fast or slow, and what does this tell us about the process of abiding? How can we practice slowing in our abiding?

Skim through [Mark 6](#). Point out all the things going on in this chapter. The ups and downs were intense! The idea that spiritual disciplines were easier to practice in the ancient world because things were “simpler” is an example of historical snobbery.

-Now read verses 31 and 32. What does Jesus tell his disciples to do in the midst of that craziness?

-What do we learn about solitude in these verses? (“Come away [*disconnect*] by yourselves [*alone*] to a desolate place [*undistracted*] and rest a while [*be replenished*].”)

Prayer: Call out things that can get in the way of time alone with Jesus and have the group pray for their time with Jesus. Ask for the Holy Spirit’s power over those things.

Next Steps:

- Commit to finding your chair daily this week, and plan times of additional solitude weekly, biweekly, or monthly.
- Commit to Finding Your Chair daily and using the Soul Care YouVersion reading plans this week. Search “whoisgrace” on YouVersion or visit www.whoisgrace.com/read.



SOUL CARE: Silence

Derek Sanford

February 20, 2022

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Share about a time when you heard God speak to you—either through His Word or through an impression. What were the circumstances? Did it involve silence?

Scripture:

Read [Psalm 37:1-7](#)

-This passage in Psalm 37 is bookended by a command to “fret not” (i.e. “do not worry”) over those who do evil in this world. How does our preoccupation with the news sometimes interfere with our desire to be silent and hear God? What reason does verse 2 give for not being overly concerned with evil?

-Verses 3-5 detail at least three things you can do to prepare your heart to be still before the Lord. What are these and how can you apply them in your own life to make you ready to be silent and hear God?

-Verse 7 says we need to “wait patiently” for the Lord while being still. Why is it so hard for us to wait? Just as our bodies become stronger over time when we consistently exercise, we can also learn to be still and wait. How can you practice being still and waiting?

Read [Psalm 46:10-11](#)

-These verses tell us that when we are still, we can behold God’s power and rest in it. How does silence help us do both of these things?

Prayer: Set a timer and sit in silence for 3-5 minutes to practice connecting with God through being still. Every time your mind wanders off of God repeat inwardly: “Here I am, Lord. I am listening.”

The most important message God wants you to hear in the silence is that He loves you. After your time of silence, pray this simple prayer out loud together as a group.

Lord, I hear You say You love me.

I love you, too.

Amen.

Next Steps:

-Choose one way to practice the discipline of silence over the next week. Make a plan to hold each other accountable.



SOUL CARE: Sabbath

Derek Sanford

February 27, 2022

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement:

-Have you practiced taking a regular sabbath before? If so, what did you feel or experience as a result of making weekly rest a priority?

Scripture:

Read [Exodus 20:1-21](#)

-God spoke the ten commandments to Moses, but Exodus 20:18-21 says the Israelites couldn't even come close. Why was that? How does this highlight the holiness of God and the seriousness of these commandments?

-Command #4, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," required a whole paragraph of explanation. Why did God include this long discussion about Sabbath, and how does that speak to its importance?

-Pastor Derek said the Sabbath is both a gift and a test. How does God use it to bless us? How does the Sabbath test our trust in God as well as our humility?

-When you were growing up how did your family observe the Sabbath? How do you remember the Sabbath now? Despite all the other things on our schedules and to-do lists, how can you create a special Sabbath that is by, for, and about God?

Prayer: Use the ACTS method in your group to pray through your desire to follow God's commandment for a Sabbath rest:

First, ADORE or praise God for creating the Sabbath to give you rest and remind you of his holiness.

Next, CONFESS the ways you have neglected to take this gift of rest.

Then, THANK God for another chance to practice this important celebration.

Finally, SAY WHAT YOU NEED and ask God to show you how to celebrate and worship him as you rest on a Sabbath this week.

Next Steps:

-Choose one way to practice the discipline of Sabbath (for even part of a day) this week. Make a plan to hold each other accountable.