

Daily Discipleship

(A) – Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Tips of Discipleship: *Take Rest*

Focus Question: *When and how do you take rest in God?*

word of life

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28 (NRSV)

Read Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Sometimes it feels like no matter what you do – you cannot win. That’s a frustrating place to be. Jesus knows that. He describes his generation as children in the marketplace who are surrounded by important activities, but are not seriously engaged in purchasing food, making a living, or visiting with others.

Jesus is frustrated at his generation who do not have joy to play the flute at a wedding or compassion to cry at a funeral. They criticize John for eating too little and Jesus for eating too much. No matter what the situation, the people criticize and reject.

1. *What do people want?*
2. *Would it be a compliment or a criticism to be described as “children in the marketplace”?*

There is an important lesson to be learned in the way Jesus handles his frustration. Despite it all, Jesus finds a way to praise God. Despite it all! (See Matthew 11:25-26)

3. *When are we to praise God?*
4. *How can people praise God when they are discouraged?*

It seems to help Jesus to acknowledge God has not fully revealed all things to the people. That takes a certain amount of responsibility off the shoulders of the people, but they are not without some blame. God chooses to be revealed through Jesus, yet some reject him.

5. *If people have not been given full understanding about God, then how can people be responsible to come to faith?*
6. *Is it fair to hold people accountable when God has not been fully revealed? Explain.*

It actually sounds quite confusing. It is enough to make a person’s head and heart spin in confusion and exhaustion. No wonder Jesus offers to take the burdens from those who weary. Jesus says, “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30 NRSV)

7. *What kind of burdens is Jesus able to carry for us?*
8. *How might dealing with people make a person weary?*

Animals who are expected to pull heavy weight are sometimes yoked together to increase their capacity to carry a load. Jesus invites his followers to be yoked with himself. That is quite a partner to assist in carrying weight. No wonder he predicts the burden will lighten. He promises rest for our souls – a deep rest for our weariness. Thanks be to God.

9. *What does it mean to be yoked with Jesus?*
10. *How might that connection help us through difficulty?*

word among us

The ninety-year woman sank in her chair, holding the mail from the week. How was she to wade through the mail, especially the bills? Slowly, she opened the letters and rubbed her head. She could feel a headache coming on. By the time her daughter arrived, she was barely moving. She explained to her daughter, “I am weary in the head.”

1. *What does it mean to be “weary in the head”?*
2. *What is the cure?*
3. *How would you advise the ninety-year old woman?*

The woman’s daughter listened, nodded, and kept silent as she fought back tears. Today, she needed to tell her beloved mother about her own divorce. She would spare her mother the ugly and painful details, but she did not know where to begin. Her mother would not understand, but times were different now. With love she looked at her mother and felt a deep sigh released from the depths of her heart. There was no doubt about it, she felt weary in the heart and did not know what to do next.

4. *What does it mean to be “weary in the heart”?*
5. *What is the cure?*
6. *How would you advise the daughter?*

The nurse who often cared for this woman walked by the room and saw the two women huddled together. It was clear each was burdened by worry and discouraged by life’s problems. That scene only added to the personal despair felt by the nurse. For a long time, the nurse felt emptiness in his heart. He felt weary in his spirit and did not know how to make the pain go away.

7. *What does it mean to be “weary in the spirit”?*
8. *What is the cure?*

Jesus lived enough days on this earth to experience weariness – in body, spirit, heart, and mind. Weariness can come in all forms and can last a long time. Some weariness moves into depression and despair. Thus, for Jesus to extend rest for the weary, he is giving hope for those who are burdened. That hope is named – Jesus.

9. *What does weariness feel like to you?*
10. *How do you experience the rest given to you by Jesus?*

In his willingness to be yoked, Jesus commits to a partnership with us. We are not left alone. Jesus is a gentle and humble partner – one to value.

11. *What does it mean for you to give your burdens to Jesus?*
12. *What would have to change in your life in order for to give your burdens to Jesus?*

Prayer

Mighty one, take my burdens and free me from my weariness. Let me walk beside you as we are yoked in partnership. Thank you for providing rest for my soul – undeserving as I might be. Amen

Dig Deeper

Romans 7:15-25a

last word

Take a moment to sit and rest. Intentionally offer your burdens to Jesus.
Allow him to take those burdens.

