



Living Hope Alliance Church Group Leader's Guide

For the week of May 8, 2016

Preparing for your week.

What an interesting time of year to talk about Sloth. For many of us this is a busy time of year and you may be noticing this in your group. Are people getting busy and may miss a week or two? Don't be discouraged.

When we're in groups such as this, every time together is planting seeds that bring more of God and more of community into every person's life, whether we see it or not. Be encouraged that your sharing and caring for other people is showing Jesus' love to them and that's God's second greatest commandment to us. To love others.

We love them in good times and hard, in all stages of life.

This week we're speaking about sloth and how we can be the busiest people in the world but don't feel rested. As you are together with your group this week, let's have an attitude of encouragement, emphasizing that it's not about what they're not doing, but about where they're getting their rest from. If we're not relying on God, our capacity for true soul rest is limited.

What an opportunity we have to be encouraged and encourage others that we can have true rest if we turn our focus toward God.

And don't forget that the greatest gift you can offer your group is you! Creating an atmosphere where we recognize that we're all in this journey together is something that blesses everyone in your group, leaders included!

Getting to Know Each Other

Take the time to check in with people to see how their week has gone so far. If prayer requests come up, feel free to pray for them immediately or at a time of prayer of your choosing during the evening.

Suggested Questions:

What makes you feel rested? If you could have the perfect, restful day, what would it look like?

Sermon Discussion Time

- 1.) Sloth can take two forms: laziness or misdirected busyness. Which one do you believe reflects you more?
- 2.) So often we are busy in so many areas of our lives that we feel we don't have time for God or just feel too tired to invest in our relationship with him. Have you ever had a time when being spiritually active (reading the Bible, praying, serving others) has felt more tiring than life-giving?

Follow up Question: Why does our spiritual activity seem to be the first thing to get put by the wayside?

Read or have someone else read Matthew 11:28-30

- 3.) The image of the yoke can bring about different responses in different people. Does this passage comfort you? Does it sound like work? Why?

Follow up Question: If this sounds like work, what are your concerns if you come to Jesus in this way, to be yoked to Him? What do you think He's asking of you with these verses?

Read or have someone else read Mark 4:3-20

- 4.) Where do you see yourself in this parable of the sower? Is there something in your life that prevents you from having deep spiritual roots?
- 5.) Take a moment and examine areas in your life where your busyness may be misdirected. Are there steps you can take this week to begin to make changes in how you direct your energy?

Going Deeper

- 1.) Often on the outside we seem busy for God but our personal relationship with him suffers. Or we may have a growing personal relationship with God but we haven't made our faith active in serving Him. Does one of these describe your situation? What do you wish were different in either your personal relationship with God or your activity for Him?
- 2.) Of the four focussing habits (reading God's word, practicing solitude and listening, participating in community, and placing ourselves in 'uncomfortable' places for God) which one holds most promise for you? How can we incorporate that spiritual practice into our lives this week?