



Group Discussion Guide: Rhythms | April 24, 2022

Start with an introduction to the Rhythms series (15 minutes).

Ask the following questions:

1. At the beginning of his sermon, Gary mentioned how we all have life rhythms. Would you say your rhythms help you love God and love others? Or do they detract from that mission? Explain.
2. What are you hoping to get out of this sermon series?

Do the “Prayerful Rest Inventory” individually (20 minutes).

For this week, you’ll begin by having people split off individually and prayerfully reflect on the questions in the Prayerful Rest Inventory found on page 16 of your Rhythms books (or using the questions listed below). Have people take 15-20 minutes to assess where their rest levels are right now.

- How exhausted is my **heart**? Am I pouring out a lot of emotions that are leaving me feeling empty? Is the state of the world or painful experiences of loved ones leaving me feeling drained?
- How exhausted is my **soul**? Do I feel distant from God due to an over-crowded schedule or as a result of mental or physical exhaustion? Do I feel drained emotionally or spiritually?
- How exhausted is my **mind**? Do I often suffer fatigue from decision-making or the stress of keeping up with my calendar? Does my mind wander or have a hard time focusing?
- How exhausted is my **strength** (body)? How tired do I feel when I get up and go through the day? Do I fall asleep when reading or watching TV? Am I too tired to do the things I want or need to do?



Come back as a large group to center yourselves, pray, and debrief (20 minutes).

As you transition from your reflection time back into your large group, begin your debrief time by reading **Matthew 11:28-30** from *The Message* version of the Bible out loud for your group:

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

After you finish reading, pause for a few brief moments of silence. Use this silence to slow down and to pause from the day’s demands. Use this time to breathe. Use this time to acknowledge God’s presence with you. After a couple seconds of centering, pray to open your time together. Ask God for help in guiding your time together, for people to listen well, for people to speak honestly, and for the Holy Spirit to use this gathered time to shape you and mold you into Jesus’ likeness.

After your prayer, debrief the reflection time with the following questions:

1. How was that prayerful reflection experience for you?
2. After that period of reflection, how exhausted would you say you are overall on a scale from 1-10, with 1 being “not tired at all” and 10 being “utterly and entirely exhausted”?

After you finish debriefing, read Scripture, go over the sermon, and share your thoughts and reflections (45 minutes).

- Share about your experience of practicing Sabbath growing up. Did your family practice it? Explain.
- Have you ever practiced Sabbath before? What was that experience like for you?
- **Re-read Exodus 20:8-11.**
 - What does it mean for the Sabbath to be “holy?”
 - What are the different commands given in this passage regarding the Sabbath?
 - Who or what does the Sabbath affect?
 - What is the *reasoning* given in this passage for why the Sabbath should be practiced?



- In this sermon, Gary talked about Sabbath. He began by talking about how we need to admit our inability to stop. Do you think our culture has a problem stopping and resting? Why do you think that is?
- Go around in a circle and share how you feel like you're doing when it comes to stopping and resting. If you have a hard time with "stopping" share why that is. If you feel like you're good at stopping, what helps you in that?
- **Read Genesis 2:1-3.** What did God do *to* the seventh day to set it apart as holy? What did God do *on* the seventh day?
- In this message, Gary mentioned how following God's rhythm for Sabbath is *better* for us. In what ways do you see this to be true? How would a rhythm of stopping and ceasing from work benefit you spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically?
- What would it look like for you and your family to implement a rhythm of Sabbath in your life?

Finish with intercessory prayer (10 minutes).

Finally, like each week, finish your group session with prayer. You might designate someone in your group to write down everyone's prayer requests and then send them to the whole group for everyone to be praying about through the week.

- What is on your heart that you need prayer for?
- Who in your life needs prayer?

Have someone close in prayer.