

ReFocus Guide: The Way of Forgiveness

Focus:

Jesus doesn't ignore our exhaustion. He sees it, names it, and meets us in it. When life feels heavy, He doesn't offer escape but invites us to rest through a relationship with Him. This week, we explore what it means to lay down our burdens and walk in the grace of His easy yoke.

Day 1: The Invitation to Rest

Scripture: Matthew 11:28(CEB)

Come to me, all you who are struggling hard and carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest.

Reflection:

Jesus begins with a call, not a command. He doesn't say, "Fix yourself first," or "Do more." Instead, He invites us into rest by being in relationship with Him. True rest is not disengagement from life but engagement in life with Him. We are not alone, and we don't have to continue to carry the burdens we bear.

Questions:

What load are you carrying that feels heaviest right now? What does it mean for you to hear Jesus say, "Come to me"? What is one step you can take to put down your heaviest burden by going to Jesus?

Prayer:

Jesus, You see the burdens I carry. Help me to stop running and turn to You so I may lay my burdens down. Give me rest in Your presence today. Amen.

Day 2: Rest Through the Old Ways

Scripture: Jeremiah 6:16 (CEB)

The Lord proclaims: Stand at the crossroads and look. Ask for the ancient paths. Where is the good way? Then walk in it and find rest for yourselves." – Jeremiah 6:16a (CEB)

Reflection:

Rest is not just about stopping. It is about choosing the right path. Jeremiah reminds us that rest comes from walking in the ways of God, not in wandering our own. Sometimes the hardest parts are pausing long enough to ask, "Which way, Lord?" and then going in

the way that brings us the true rest rather than continuing on our own way.

Questions:

Where do you sense yourself standing at a place where you are choosing to let go of a burden or holding on to it? What does it look like to return to God's way so you can lay that burden down? What is one step you can take to put down your burden and go in the Way of God rather than your own?

Prayer:

Faithful God, show me the ancient path that you created from the beginning of time. Help me walk in Your way and find rest for my soul. Amen.

Day 3: The Weight of Religion

Scripture: Matthew 23:1-4

They tie together heavy packs that are impossible to carry and put them on the shoulders of others. But they are unwilling to lift a finger to move them." -Matthew 23:4 (CEB)

Reflection:

Some burdens don't come from life's circumstances, but from spiritual pressure. The people Jesus spoke about added rules without offering love. Jesus offers something different: grace. We are not meant to carry the weight of religious performance. Rather, we to understand why we do the religious actions we do so that they are done in a way that brings rest to our souls.

Questions:

In what ways have you felt pressure to "measure up" spiritually? Where is God calling you to show mercy this week? Where might Jesus be inviting you to lay that burden down? What is one small step you can take to live into Jesus' invitation?

Prayer:

Jesus, remove from me the weight that others try to make me carry. Teach me to walk with You, not perform for You. Amen.

Day 4: Learning a Different Way

Scripture: Matthew 11:29 (CEB)

Put on my yoke, and learn from me. I'm gentle and humble. And you will find rest for yourselves.

Reflection:

Jesus doesn't just give rest; He teaches us a new way of living. To come to him is to carry the load that is not burdensome. His way is rooted in gentleness and grace, not pressure.

Questions:

What rhythms in your life feel rushed or overwhelming? How might you slow down and learn from Jesus this week?

Prayer:

Gentle Savior, teach me to walk at Your pace. Let my soul rest as I move with You. Amen.

Day 5: Receiving What Is Light

Scripture: Matthew 11:30 (CEB)

My yoke is easy to bear, and my burden is light.

Reflection:

Jesus does not promise a burden-free life, but He promises one where the burdens we do carry are not heavier than necessary. His burden is light because it contains no excess, only what is required to live an abundant life. Following Jesus is not about adding more pressure but discovering a life of peace and purpose.

Questions:

What does the "light burden" promise look like for you? What would change if you truly trusted that Jesus' yoke led to the way of an abundant life?

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You for Your yoke and burden. Help me to lay down what I have picked up, so I am carrying only what you give to me. Amen.

Closing Prayer:

God of rest, You see the weight I carry, even when I hide it well. Thank You for inviting me to come to You. Teach me to walk in Your way, to ask for help, and to trust Your heart. Let this week be a turning point as I take on Your easy yoke and leave behind what I was never meant to carry. Amen.