



HOW TO Simplify LIFE

MESSAGE NEXT STEPS

ICE CREAM DINNER

AUGUST 29

Remember that sense of fun, adventure, and creativity? A time in life when the possibilities were endless? God wants kids to grow up fiercely alive. We can rediscover that sense of excitement in life by discovering our uniqueness, sense of worth, and value.

Work through the following questions and scriptures on your own, and get together with your running partner, life group, or friends and family to talk through what you are learning.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1.) Read **Matthew 11:28-30**. In this season of your life are you actively finding rest for your soul in your relationship with God? If so what is that looking like? If not, why do you think that is?
- 2.) What rhythms of rest do you have to stay connected to God and what's most important?
- 3.) Read **Matthew 16: 27-37**.
 - a. Make some observations about the passage:
 - i. Who is Jesus talking to?
 - ii. How does Jesus reply?
 - iii. What surprises you or stands out as important?
 - b. Interpret what you read:
 - i. What questions do you have?
 - ii. What do you think is going on in this story?
 - iii. What do you learn about the nature and character of God as you read this? What do you learn about the nature of people?
 - c. Apply what you read:
 - i. How do you respond to what you are reading?
 - ii. What is the central truth that you could put into practice from this?
 - iii. Who could be encouraged by this truth that you could share this with?
- 4.) Too often we don't take risks because we are too afraid to lose what we have, but when we choose to lose everything - surrendering everything to God- that is when we truly live! What needs to die in your life? What do you need to sacrifice and surrender? What is it time to trust God with knowing He will give us back only what's best for us?
- 5.) Are you risk-averse? What does hearing that God wants to adventure through life with you do to your thoughts about what it means to be in a "relationship with God"?
- 6.) If you are a parent, where do you need to create rhythms of rest for your kids? Where can you encourage them to step out in spirit-led risks?

KEY SCRIPTURE

Matthew 11:28-30 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, 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 16: 27-37 Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way, he asked them, “Who do people say I am?” They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Messiah.” Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him. He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the law and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.” Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?.”

DIGGING DEEPER

- 1.) Often times what holds us back from living powerfully with God in our lives is our past. If you find yourself stuck in life right now, consider signing up for the Your Story Matters class at our North, South, or Buda campus. - gatewaychurch.com/connect
- 2.) If you don't have anyone around you cheering you on in your faith, consider joining a group this fall – gatewaychurch.com/groups
- 3.) If you have gone through a hardship this past year or noticed a habit or way of relating that you know isn't bringing life, consider joining a Restore class (marriage, personal boundaries, grief, divorce, etc) – gatewaychurch.com/restore

More Resources

Fruitful: Becoming the Person God Created You to Be by Eric Michael Bryant
Available at Amazon.com

The Fruitful Life Assessment - free copy if you send an email to info@ericbryant.org or sign up at www.ericbryant.org.

The Assessment will help you determine if where your strengths and weaknesses are when it comes to being Receptive, Tenacious, Intentional, and Proactive - the four characteristics that help us become who God created us to be.

Parenting Insights available on Eric's "The Post Christian Podcast" on Apple Podcasts or Spotify.

“How Every Child Can Thrive by Five.” by Molly Wright (Age 7) at Ted.com

Raising Great Kids by Dr. Henry Cloud