

The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry

Session 1: The Case for an Unhurried Life

SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

Main Idea: We must re-assess the way we spend our time so that we can find a healthier, holier lifestyle.

Head Change: To know that hurry sabotages our ability to give and receive love with God and our neighbors.

Heart Change: To feel a desire to slow down, matching the rhythm of life Jesus modeled.

Life Change: To manage our daily activities in a way that makes space for loving God and loving others.

OPEN

What do you do to rest? What would you do if you had more time to rest?

We live with a hustle mentality—from jam-packed schedules, workaholic, and addiction to our phones, our lives are filled to the brim every moment of the day. Even when we find time to rest, our go-to form of relaxation consists of scrolling through social media platforms, bingeing television, and replying to the millions of notifications on our phones. So, how does living a busy lifestyle impact our ability to commune with and to be content in Christ?

In this series, pastor and author John Mark Comer is going to walk us through why eliminating hurry from our lives is the key to enhancing our spiritual lives. We will explore how to find rest through four practices of Jesus: silence and solitude, sabbath, simplicity, and slowing.

REVIEW

John Mark started the session by explaining how he was a burnt-out megachurch pastor on the verge of a midlife crisis. He then realized that his busy schedule was contributing to his diminishing relationship with Jesus. **Do you ever feel like you are overwhelmed with hurry, unable to complete everything on your to-do list? What in your life keeps you the busiest?**

Chronic busyness can sideline our relationships with God. **In what ways have you seen busyness negatively impact your relationship with God? In what ways has a full schedule stripped time away from activities like prayer and reading the Bible?**

John Mark explained that when he was first introduced to the idea of eliminating hurry, he was dealing with workaholism, jam-packed schedules, and addiction to his phone. **In what ways can you relate to him? How difficult has it been to try and eliminate hurry-inducing activities from your schedule?**

Some of us live in places that contribute to our rushed lifestyles. John Mark explained his home city of Portland, Oregon is one of the most secular and fast-paced cities in the nation. **What are some specific things contributing to hurry-culture where you live?**

We learned that psychologists have diagnosed people with something called “hurry sickness”—a feeling of being chronically short of time and a need to perform every task faster than necessary. **Are you experiencing the effects of hurry sickness John Mark described? In what ways are they affecting your physical and spiritual well-being?**

John Mark explained that there are both unhealthy and healthy types of busyness. Healthy busyness is when we have a lot to do but not “too much.” The unhealthy type of busyness is when there’s too much to do and not enough time to do it. **Which type of busyness best reflects your life? Why?**

Unhealthy busyness can negatively affect our mental health, causing increased irritability, hypersensitivity, and stress. **What other negative effects can busyness have on our mental health? Which, if any, have you had to wrestle in your own life?**

Horizontal lines for writing.

John Mark taught us the result of a hurried life and compulsive overworking is emotional numbness—using escapist behaviors like scrolling through Instagram and bingeing TV shows as distractions from our hurriedness instead of cultivating true rest. **What kind of escapist behaviors tempt you when you need to disconnect from the busyness of life? In what ways have these escapes distracted you rather than giving you the rest you need?**

What could it look like for you to readjust your busiest day next week? What activities or demands could you cut out of your schedule?

Lined writing area consisting of 25 horizontal lines.

BIBLE EXPLORATION

When we're used to over-extending ourselves, sitting down to relax or live in the moment can feel virtually impossible—especially when there's still plenty to get done. Read Luke 10:38–42.

What were the differences between Mary and Martha's behavior while Jesus was around? In what ways do they reflect the healthy and unhealthy busyness John Mark talked about?

In this passage, Martha was distracted by all the preparations while Mary took advantage of her time by sitting with Jesus. It is easy to be like Martha, annoyed with Mary. After all, there are a lot of chores and responsibilities in our lives that can't be neglected. But, in this story, Jesus wants to teach us what is most important in our lives: spending time with him. **Do Mary's actions bother you? If so, why?**

Martha's neglect of Jesus shows us how a busy schedule can disconnect us from what's important. Her hurry might have felt necessary, but she missed Jesus. **What could it look like for you to leave the things on your schedule alone for a day, and spend time in prayer?**

Many people struggle to slow down due to the anxiety and guilt that comes from not being productive every moment of the day. But we have to remember that God can replace our anxiousness with peace and rest. Read Philippians 4:6–7.

What is your initial response to hearing "be anxious for nothing"? What do you typically worry about?

What does Paul suggest we do instead of being anxious in these verses? What does he say the outcome will be?

For many of us, stopping to pray while rushing around can be difficult because we're both distracted and moving too fast. **In what ways is it difficult, or easy, to pray and give thanks to God when you're anxious and in a rush?**

Verse 7 says that the peace of God will guard our hearts and minds in Christ. This peace comes from God and is felt despite what's going on around us. **What could it look**

Horizontal lines for writing.

like for you to ask God for peace the next time your busy schedule is causing anxiety?

When you are busy this week, what could you do to make space for spending time with Jesus? What responsibilities can wait until you've spent time with the Lord?

LAST WORD

For many of us, being busy is normal—we've got work, family, friends, and even hobbies we like to tend to. But when we become so busy that our time spent with God decreases, our spiritual lives and relationship with him will start to deteriorate.

Think about what a typical week in your life looks like and assess how much of your time is filled with "things to do." Based on what you learned from John Mark in this session, ask God to help you become more aware of how you spend your time and what changes he wants you to make.

DEEPER WALK

Read: Read Part Two of John Mark's book *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*. This section of John Mark's book will outline a path toward Jesus and out of our hurried lives.

Pray: Pray over your schedule. Ask God to help you make wise decisions regarding your time and responsibilities so that you can remove constant busyness from your lifestyle.

Talk: Take some time to talk with a close friend or family member about your busyness and ask that they hold you accountable to your goals.

Memorize: Memorize Philippians 4:6–7, "Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."