

Last week we discussed the secret of the easy yoke of Jesus. As a talmidin of Jesus, we allow Him to lead us at his pace, full of love, joy, and peace. Have you been allowing yourself to experience the yoke of Jesus and His guidance?

Jesus was rarely in a hurry.

John 11:5-7 – “Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days. Then he said to his disciples, **“Let us go back to Judea.”** Why was Jesus in no hurry to see Lazarus?

Jesus would not allow any interruption to rush him into the next moment. His schedule was full, but he never came off as hurried.

Margin – the space between our load and our limits

What are some of the things Jesus would do to create margin into his life?

1. Get up early and go off to a quiet place to be with his Father.
2. Go away for a few days or weeks to gather himself to God.
3. Sleep in.
4. Enjoy a nice long meal with friends over a bottle of wine and have in-depth conversations.
5. Practice Sabbath every week for rest and worship.
6. Live freely and lightly without care of material things and image.

Living this lifestyle allowed Jesus to make time for God and to make time for friends. What challenges do you face to live like this?

Stephen Covey wrote in “7 Habits” that we achieve inner peace when our schedule is aligned with our values. What are your values? In other words, what do you value in life that makes you feel whole and at peace?

John 15:1-4 – Jesus said: **“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.”**

What is Jesus telling us here? Why does He say, “true vine”?

“He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every ranch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.”

What are the branches that bear no fruit and what are the branches that bear fruit? What does pruning do?

“You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me and I will remain in you.”

The word “clean” is referenced 25 times in the Bible. What does being clean mean to you?

Matthew 8:1-3 – Matthew wrote: “When he came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, “Lord, if you are willing, you can made me clean.” Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. **“I am willing,”** he said. **“Be clean!”** Immediately he was cured of his leprosy.”

What is the order of events in this story? What does being clean mean to the man? What does being clean mean to Jesus?

John 15:4-8 – Jesus said: **“No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and. I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothering. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”**

The Latin word for “rule” is “regula” which means a straight piece of wood. Think of Jesus’s rule of life as a trellis that guides a thriving vine. It’s a structure that allows you to bear fruit. A vine without a structure to climb will die.

Do you have a structure for living your life today? How would you describe it?

Matthew 6:31-34 – Jesus said: **“So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things,”**

Why does Jesus say the pagans run after these things? Why does he use the word “run”?

“and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

God knows that we need food, drink, and clothing. But instead of providing for ourselves, what is Jesus telling us to do? How does this differ from what the world tells us to do? Why is this so difficult for us to do and to accept in our lives?

“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Jesus knows that we live in troubled days. We have physical, mental, financial, and spiritual hardships just to name a few. Do you find yourself worrying about your troubles? Do you find yourself worrying about the future? What does Jesus tell us to do?

Why is worrying a sin?

“Are you ready to arrange (or rearrange) your days so that Jesus’ life becomes your new normal”, the trellis for your vine?

Intermission

In reading the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we see stories that we are to learn from and emulate. Jesus’ life rhythms have come to be called the “spiritual disciplines”, or “practices of Jesus”.

Discipline – any activity I can do by direct effort that will eventually enable me to do that which, currently, I cannot do by direct effort. As a spiritual discipline, you are not only striving to improve your ability to accomplish a lifestyle similar to Jesus, you are opening yourself up to a power far beyond your own – that of the Holy Spirit. Can you see this?