



2024 | Week 31

Beyond Recharging Batteries

Blog Contributors:

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Have you explored the vital concept of recharging your spiritual batteries and its impact on your marital challenges? We'll dig into the challenges we face in our marriages and lives, and uncover the deeper meaning of finding true rest in Christ.

DAY 1

We all know that life's challenges, even in marriage, are inevitable. There will always be seasons when we must navigate rough roads and painful turns. Each difficult path we travel leaves a certain mark on us or on our marital relationship. This mark can serve as a reminder of the lessons learned and the wisdom gained, which contribute to our strength as individuals and as a couple. On the other hand, this mark could also represent an unhealed wound that constantly reminds us of pain and the desire for space to avoid further hurt. Either way, we look forward to opportunities to recharge our "batteries," so we have the courage to move forward.

As Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott mention in their book "Love Talk, Couple's Devotional":

"It is good, very good, for a couple to recharge their spiritual batteries. So many times we forget that an important part of marital communication takes place in

silence—giving our souls time to catch up with each other simply by being present and at peace."

The truth is, it's not just about the challenges we face; it's how we view these challenges that significantly impact our responses. We don't underestimate the pain and difficulties you may be experiencing right now. We pray that in these written words, you feel our sincere compassion. Just like you, we're also navigating life's challenges. Even as we actively share Jesus, we still encounter obstacles. Through these experiences, we learn to faithfully live under the grace of God and view challenges from a different perspective.

We wish we could provide a specific timeline for how to progress in this area, but the truth is it's a continuous learning process—a journey of relearning—until God completes His work in us and in our marriage.

Returning to the topic of "recharging our spiritual batteries," we believe it's fitting to frame this week's focus as "Beyond Recharging Batteries." We feel it's crucial to acknowledge that many of us may lack a strong understanding of what "spiritual batteries" truly are, whether we are new to our faith or have been journeying for some time. Sadly, we often only recognize our moral blindness when we face challenging situations, particularly in marriage, where even our religious activities may not bring substantial clarity.

We hope you will join us this week as we dig deeper into how to recharge our spiritual batteries. Furthermore, reflect on Jesus' words in Matthew 11:28-30, and discover that this wonderful message goes beyond merely recharging.

Keep Journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Couple,

Rey & Annie

DAY 2

Matthew 11:28-30 is a well-known verse often referenced for encouragement during life's difficulties and challenges. As believers, we are quick to share this verse confidently on social media. It is indeed a beautiful invitation from Jesus Christ, but do we truly understand its meaning?

Reflecting on this week's topic of "recharging our batteries" and meditating on Matthew 11:28-30, it prompts us to assess whether we genuinely comprehend Jesus' invitation. After years of intentionally seeking Christ, have we sincerely responded to His call?

One particular phrase in these verses that resonated with us is "all who are weary and heavy-laden," as stated in verse 28. We both agree that this invitation applies to "all of us." The main point we considered is that we find ourselves in such situations because we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Our discussion then turned to the issue of pride. We're not talking about "arrogance" here, but rather the pridefulness that prevents us from recognizing and submitting to God's authority. Many of us (including both of us at times) can be too prideful to admit that we are burdened and heavy-laden. As a result, we miss the full impact of Jesus' message.

"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

Reflecting on that crucial point, we returned to the phrase "weary and heavy-laden." In Matthew Henry's concise commentary on this part of Matthew 11, he offers an interesting perspective on these two descriptive words: "The convinced sinner is heavy-laden with guilt and terror, and the afflicted believer has labors and burdens." [1] Henry's remark about the convinced sinner being heavy-laden with guilt and terror refers to individuals aware of their sinful nature and wrongdoing. The term "heavy-laden" denotes a deep sense of burden, particularly the weight of guilt and fear of judgment. On the other hand, Henry's comment about the "tempted and afflicted believer having labors and burdens" speaks to those who already believe in Jesus Christ but face temptations, trials, or sufferings.

We understand that even as believers, we can experience challenges that weigh us down, such as doubts, spiritual struggles, and hardships in life. The word "labors" suggests the effort and struggle involved in maintaining faith amid these difficulties, while "burdens" reflects the emotional and spiritual strains we often choose to carry.

Henry continues, saying, "Christ invites all to come to him for rest for their souls. He alone gives this invitation; men come to him when, feeling their guilt and misery, and believing his love and power to help, they seek him in fervent prayer. Thus it is the duty and interest of weary and heavy-laden sinners to come to Jesus Christ. This is the gospel call; whoever will, let him come. All who thus come will receive rest as Christ's gift and obtain peace and comfort in their hearts." [2]

This invitation is indeed a blessing—a blessing that can change the course of our lives. However, without genuine recognition and acceptance of our actions leading us to be "weary and heavy-laden," this invitation may simply become another "religious act." It should instead lead to a life-changing conviction that touches our hearts and minds, motivating us to reconcile with Christ. Whether you are new to coming to Christ or have been a believer for years, this invitation plays a significant role in every season of our lives. Honest recognition and acceptance of our shortcomings is the first step toward the humility that builds our dependence on God. Only through Him and the help of the Holy Spirit can we navigate the inevitable challenges of being weary and heavy-laden.

In the context of marriage, we're often quick to focus on our spouse's shortcomings, which can lead us to deny our own contributions. This attitude affects our approach and can prevent genuine resolution or restoration of the smallest brokenness that exists. This is not to say we are speaking about narcissism; rather, we genuinely and wholeheartedly accept the reality that all of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). If we continue to deny this truth, we risk missing the opportunity for a great partnership that could lead us down the path of unity. In times like this, we surely need Jesus Christ, for only He can transform our natural tendency to focus on others' faults. Only He can truly humble our hearts, reveal our shortcomings, and provide salvation.

Keep Journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Couple,

Rey & Annie

DAY 3 | For Husbands

It is very common for us men (husbands) to pay a lot of attention to our responsibilities. There's nothing wrong with that, but we put ourselves in a dangerous zone when we become more dependent on ourselves than on God. My life circumstances led me to be independent from a very young age, and my knowledge of God existed within the boundaries of being religious. For a long time, I became a hard charger, relying heavily on myself until I realized that I needed a Savior and became dependent on Christ. There are still instances when I am tempted to revert to that condition, but it's only by His grace that I am constantly reminded to whom I should surrender and rely on. In times of failure, His grace and mercy are sufficient to bring me back to Him so I can continue onward.

In seasons of life where we live without recognizing God's authority, we view our lives and challenges from a different perspective. Although we may have a "certain" knowledge of a "Higher Power," whom we consider God, our disconnection with Him leaves us unaware of what true life is, along with the challenges that come with it. This ignorance often leads us to depend more on ourselves when facing difficult times. We try to find comfort and strength in the resolutions we formulate for ourselves, sometimes blaming others along the way. When we reach a point of hopelessness and have no one else to blame, we may sadly fall into addiction (alcohol, drugs, or other vices) that temporarily eases the pain marked by hopelessness. Little do we know that the road we perceive as a dead-end has a crossing that opens up a different journey—this time with Christ—where we can surrender our burdens and learn from Him.

When Annie and I found ourselves in a very challenging situation and felt hopeless, it became God's way of getting our attention. This attention led us to seek a Savior and discover a living hope for a life we thought we

had full control of. It wasn't an easy transition for me due to many questions rooted in my heart from the challenges I faced. Eventually, God used various means to answer those questions. Today, we are faithfully living under God's grace, mercy, and love. It's not that we no longer face challenges in this life; we still do! Yet, this time our responses are no longer anchored in personal preferences but aim to seek God's guidance, will, and purpose.

Has it been easy? It hasn't! But with Christ, there is genuine peace and joy. In moments when Annie and I seek help from God, we bring our requests in prayer and boldly ask for His guidance. It's not always that we receive clear answers. There are times when we feel like God is silent or diverting our attention to other matters. These vulnerable situations sometimes lead us to the temptations of stubbornness or impatience. It is only by His grace and the influence of the Holy Spirit that we are reminded of God's sovereignty and power. He is the ultimate controller of our lives. What we have is our will—the will to make choices—and if those choices are anchored in our restored relationship with Christ, they bring rest to our souls, even in challenging times (Matthew 11:29).

Keep journeying with Christ Jesus.

Your Fellow Husband,

Rey

DAY 4 | For Wives

I experienced the initial impact of the Gospel's message at a very young age. Since then, coming to Christ has never felt foreign to me, even during my teenage years when I lived a "compromised" life. I still managed to maintain certain habits that I thought were the few strings connecting me to Christ. I would go to church and pray, but little did I know that what I was doing was merely a religious act, as I continued to live a "compromised" life. I didn't realize how that season had put my relationship with God in a very dangerous position until I began experiencing the consequences of my choices. Despite that, I still managed to survive, and those small victories only built pride within me.

My life changed dramatically when I became a wife, mother, and entrepreneur. While driving to our warehouse, I felt a heavy burden in my heart, crying out for relief. Our business was rapidly deteriorating, and it was heavily impacting my relationship with my husband, Rey, and our children. At a red light, I prayed, and I still remember those words felt more like a plea for help—my heart was screaming for intervention.

I asked God for help because the weight was too much to bear. I couldn't stand the guilt and shame that constantly reminded me of my mistakes. I needed a Savior, yet I realized I had somewhat lost my connection with Him after living apart from Him for so long. Returning to Him wasn't easy, especially since the genuine recognition of being weary and heavy-laden didn't resonate with me at first. I thought the challenges in our business were due to my failures to meet responsibilities and Rey's not being sincere in helping me.

I thank God that He ensured my restoration would significantly change my life. He made it clear that my heavy burdens were the result of my choice to live apart from His authority. The once strong relationship had been undermined by the temptations of this world. In recognizing that coming to Christ is not merely a declaration of being saved but a continuous journey of redemption, I understood that this redemption leads to deliverance from worldly perspectives, actions, and habits to which we have allowed ourselves to be enslaved.

On this redemptive journey, there are still challenges, but as Christ said, His yoke is easy, and we can learn from Him. It's an ongoing process of humbling ourselves, recognizing when we've strayed, acknowledging our sins, and committing to choose Christ. If we think we are lone rangers on this journey, we are mistaken. Our restored relationship with God comes with the gift of the Holy Spirit, who edifies and encourages us to continue on this path.

It is indeed more than just recharging our batteries. We may come to Christ when we're weary and heavy-laden, but that's merely the beginning. As the verse states, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me."

'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. ' (Matthew 11:29)

Keep journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Wife,

Annie

DAY 5

Imagine the efforts many people put into wedding invitations. Beyond the meticulous details of the invitation cards, numerous organized activities take place as the wedding day approaches. The creativity and various means of connection we have today truly engage every couple who desires to give serious attention to their special event, ensuring that invited guests (or even just spectators) feel included and participate in making the occasion successful. Now, consider this invitation that may lack fancy cards but is filled with well-written words from Scripture.

"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, 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 11:28-30)

Even with the efforts of many believers, sharers, and related organizations, we see a significant difference when it comes to invitations today and how people respond. The reality is that this invitation from Jesus Christ comes with blessings of healing, hope, deliverance, and, most importantly, a transformed life. Unfortunately, the profound value surrounding this invitation fails to resonate when our hearts aren't ready to receive it. When taken out of context, with the enemy's (Satan's) influence emphasized, the humbling message may evoke feelings of self-defensiveness, rationalization, and justification, all of which mask our pride.

As we explore Jesus' invitation this week, we will dig deeper into the significance of His words. By His grace, the first four blog posts establish an understanding of just how valuable and meaningful these inviting words are. Today, we aim to provide a detailed approach to help you realize that this invitation is not merely a momentary respite but the beginning of a continuous journey with Jesus Christ. This journey has a profound significance in our faith, impacting our marriages and other relationships.

The invitation acknowledges the reality of brokenness and pain, but it also carries the promise of true rest. It establishes the truth that only through Jesus Christ can we find relief from the pain and confusion brought by our weariness. However, this truth cannot take root if we remain in denial about our weariness and heavy burdens. This is where many of us stumble—humility is key to acknowledging our shortcomings. It's not just human pride that obstructs this important recognition; the existence of the enemy (Satan) plays a significant role as well. Our ignorance affects our perspectives and how we perceive the amazing grace, mercy, and love of Jesus Christ. Whether we are new to this invitation or have been walking with Christ for years, Satan continues to exploit our moral blindness, making us miss the light of the Gospel (2 Corinthians 4:4). Even those of us who have sincerely embraced a new life with Christ can find ourselves snatched away from God's truths (1 Peter 5:8).

"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."

When we genuinely respond to the invitation of coming to Christ, this is only the beginning. It's an invitation into a new journey that begins with a commitment to take His yoke and learn from Him. A yoke—a wooden crosspiece fastened over the necks of two animals connected to the plow or cart—symbolizes the burdens we carry. The burdens causing our weariness and heaviness will be removed and willingly replaced with Jesus' yoke. Many theologians interpret the yoke as Christ's teachings and His rule of life. Carrying this yoke leads us on a journey of learning. It is not natural for us as humans to recognize something we cannot see—something spiritual—but Christ assures us of His gentleness and rest, which we won't discover unless we choose to experience it.

"For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

Christ reinforces our decisions through the establishment of faith—a faith that this yoke is as light as a bird's feathers, not a heavy load that constrains us.

So, if you've found this blog post while searching for answers and ways to lift the heavy burdens making you weary in life and relationships (like marriage), we pray this week's topic helps clarify your understanding. This understanding can motivate you to take serious, a life-changing decisions. You can start now with a simple prayer, acknowledging that you've lived a life apart from God and have strayed into sinful ways. As you ask for forgiveness, accept Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior.

If you wish to dig deeper into this amazing invitation from Christ, we've curated some materials to help bring further understanding and clarity. Feel free to drop us a message as well.

God bless, and let's continue journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Couple,

Rey & Annie

NOTES

[1][2] Matthew Henry Concise Commentary. *Matthew 11:25-30*. www.biblehub.com



Let's embark on a comprehensive learning experience with this week's topic by following the **D.R.A.S.H. - 5 Steps of Learning Method!**

Step 1 | Discover the Truth

- Read carefully Matthew 11:28-30. In your own words and understanding, whom is Jesus inviting? Why does He extend this invitation? What is the invitation all about?
- From other Bible verses and comments mentioned in this week's topic, "Beyond Recharging Batteries," how have they impacted your new learnings about Jesus Christ?

Step 2 | Reflect and Meditate on the Truth

- How does Jesus' invitation relate to your current faith journey, your relationship with your spouse (the status of your marriage), and your other relationships? Take a moment to meditate on these connections.

Step 3 | Apply the Truth

- Based on this week's topic and the truths that resonated with you, what actions do you plan to take in the coming days? Set a meaningful goal that supports your spouse and strengthens your marital relationship.
- Has this week's topic helped you learn more about Jesus Christ? How and in what way?
- What old habits or practices do you need to change as a result of your new discoveries and understanding of Jesus' invitation? How do you plan to implement these changes?

Step 4 | Share

- How and when do you plan to share your insights about this week's topic, "Beyond Recharging Batteries," with your spouse or your CJ² Fellows? Sharing can deepen understanding and foster accountability.

Step 5 | Help in Navigating the Truth

- Identify specific learning points from this week's topic, "Beyond Recharging Batteries," that encourage you to transform conviction into action. In what ways do you need assistance in navigating the journey to apply these learnings?

We pray that you encounter God through this week's topic. May His grace turn your learning experience into a transformative journey, leading to testimonies of breakthroughs that further strengthen your walk with Christ Jesus!

Let us know how this guide has helped you!

Our prayer is for this tool to be effective and helpful for every fellow seeker and believer who is intentionally journeying with Jesus Christ. We would be grateful to hear how this tool has significantly impacted your journey and your relationships with your spouse and others. Please share your feedback or experiences through this [link](#) (or scan QR Code)



Couples' Journey with Christ Jesus

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