

Leader notes are in **BLUE**.

Group member homework is in **BLACK**.

*This guide is designed for a 90-minute meeting. Use the timing guides for each section to keep your meeting on track. Depending on your group, there may be too much material in a section. Choose the questions that best fit the needs of your group.*

### Connect (10+ minutes)

Spend some time getting your group warmed up with **ONE** of the following questions:

What room in your home is the hardest to keep up? Which is the most relaxing?

As a child, what was Sunday dinner like? What do you like best about Sundays now? Least?

What is your favorite way to spend a Sunday afternoon?

### Review (10-15 minutes)

Spend time reviewing the sermon notes and any follow-up from previous discussions.

Encourage all of your group members to “Read the Bible Daily” by participating in the Life Journal Reading Plan. What is one insight you’ve had from your daily Bible reading this week?

Looking back at your notes from this week’s message, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged you, or confused you?

### Discover (20+ minutes)

*Remember to ask for general observations about each passage before getting into the questions.*

Read **Exodus 20:8-11**.

1. Who is included in the requirement to rest?
2. What is the rationale for the Sabbath (see also Ex 16:21-30; Dt 5:14-15)?

Read **Matthew 11:25-30**.

3. Why is the Gospel hidden from the “wise and learned”?
4. What does Jesus mean by taking up his “yoke”? By the “rest” he promises to those who do?

***yoke**, a wooden or iron frame for joining two oxen or other draft animals so they can pull a plow, cart, or other heavy load. Yoke was used figuratively as a symbol of hardship, submission, or servitude. Yoke may refer to other burdens or responsibilities, such as sin (Lam. 1:14), service to God (Lam. 3:27; Jer. 2:20; 5:5), slavery (Ecclus. 33:26), or obedience to Torah (Acts 15:10) or Christ (Matt. 11:29-30).<sup>1</sup>*

***a rest**, a resting place, a stopover; 1. **stop**, not cease (Rev 4:8); 2. **rest**, become physically refreshed as a result of resting from work (Mt 11:29; Rev 14:11) 3. **place to rest**, a location for resting (Mt 12:43; Lk 11:24); 4. **relief**, from anxiety and trouble (Mt 11:29; Rev 14:11)<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> *Harper's Bible dictionary* (1st ed.) (1153). San Francisco: Harper & Row. (1985).

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Greek (New Testament)* (electronic ed.). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc. (1997).

## Apply (20+ minutes)

5. What is the difference between Sabbath rest and leisure? Does your choice of leisure/amusement help or hinder your ability to engage in Sabbath rest?
6. How would a non-believer assess the “rest” in your life? Would they look at your life and see that there is a rest available that they don’t have?
7. How do you currently observe the Sabbath? What are spiritual disciplines that you could add to make your Sabbath more God-centered?

*Spiritual disciplines include meditation, prayer, fasting, study, simplicity, solitude, submission, service, confession, worship, guidance, and celebration.*

8. How often do you take time off for rest, spiritual rejuvenation, and worship?

## Serve – Go (10 minutes)

*Serve – Go helps develop ministry and leadership through missional activities. Serve is INSIDE the church and Go is OUTSIDE the church.*

How will you spend your summer vacation? We will be organizing an All-Church Work Week this summer, June 9-16. Pray about how your group can get involved with this project. We will have more information soon!

## Pray (15+ minutes)

*Gender Breakouts: At least once a month, split up the women and men for prayer time.*

Requests:

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## Announcements

*Please share these opportunities with your group.*

### Marriage Seminar: February 24-25

Intimacy: Spiritual, Emotional and Physical, Featuring Dr. Doug Weiss

Friday : 6:30 pm - 10:00 pm

Saturday: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

#### **Farmers Branch Campus**

Cost: \$85 per couple

We will be hosting **Dr. Doug Weiss** for a two-day marriage seminar at the Farmers Branch Campus. Couples attending this conference will be given the tools needed for an abundant marriage. Doug Weiss will walk couples through the three levels of intimacy - spiritual, emotional and physical - so that marriages can remain strong and resistant to divorce, which is plaguing America today. When marriages are intimate, they can last a lifetime! Dr. Doug Weiss is a Licensed Psychologist and the Executive Director of Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Dr. Weiss is a frequent guest in television, radio, and print media.

### The Men’s Retreat: March 30-31

*Riverbend Retreat Center, Glen Rose, TX*

Cost: \$75 per person

Men are called to be disciples of Jesus and leaders in our homes, church, and community. But what does that mean? Join other men of The Branch at the Riverbend Retreat Center as we explore who Jesus is and what He has called us to be. We will have time of worship, recreation, fellowship, and more.