

# Retreat Guide 2016



## Come to Me for **Rest**

### **Mark 6:7-13**

Jesus gave instructions and then sent the disciples out to do ministry.

**Based on His instructions, what sort of things did the disciples need to trust God? As you begin 2016, what are you trusting God for?**

### **Mark 6:14-29**

People outside the ministry were talking, and there were major disappointments to deal with.

**How would you describe the circumstances the disciples were ministering within? How would you describe your circumstances?**

### **Mark 6:30-32**

After what was undoubtedly an exciting, stressful and fruitful time of ministry Jesus gives the disciples the invitation: *"Come with Me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."* He gives us the same invitation. Grab a journal and spend time processing your realities with Jesus.

**What were some of the highlights from last year? What are some challenges in the new year? How are you doing spiritually, emotionally and physically? What do you "need" most from the Lord right now? Ask Him to meet with and refresh you during these days of retreat.**



# Come to Me for *Life*

## **John 5:17-40**

Jesus didn't do things in the way that the religious folks thought He should. He challenged their systems and made it clear He alone was the source of life.

**What captures your attention in these verses? Are there any systems that you rely on to try to find life?**

## **John 15:1-8**

Another place where Jesus makes it clear He's the source of life is when He describes Himself using the metaphor of the vine and branches.

**What is the role of each player? (The Vine, Vinedresser and branch.) What helps you to draw your life from the Vine, and not from the world around you?**

## **Colossians 3:1-11**

These verses speak of "*Jesus, who is our life*" and contrasts that with actions and idols we choose instead of Him.

**Do any of these things listed resonate with you?**

Here are some questions to help you consider if you are choosing idols rather than Jesus being your life:

**What do I worry about most? What do I rely on when things get difficult? What do I think most easily about? What do I want/expect out of life? What would make me happy?**

# Come to Me when *Weary and Burdened*

## **Matthew 11:28-30**

The context of these verses suggest we already have God's rest because we belong to Him. But often we tend to describe ourselves as busy, and therefore weary, and we live lives that imply we're more burdened than free.

**If we are already "in His rest", why do we live otherwise? Is a state of rest about lack of activity or more about a state of heart? How did Jesus live a rested and unburdened lifestyle? What was true of His life that allowed Him to live that way?**

To be perpetually weary and burdened seems to be about having/holding/carrying too much of something.

**What tends to make you weary? What burdens are you currently carrying?**

In these verses Jesus offers an experience of rest for your soul, a light burden, and a well-fitting yoke.

**Take some time to hand over to Jesus all the things that make you weary and burdened. Choose to receive His yoke rather than whatever other yoke you are currently wearing.**

**What practices can you start this year that will help you live an "available" life that is more rested and less burdened?**



# Come to Me when *Thirsty*

## **John 7:37-39**

The deepest cravings of the soul are expressed in the Old and New Testament as “thirst” and the satisfaction of those cravings as “drinking”.

**How would you describe physical thirst? Think of a time when you were very thirsty and finally you were able to drink—what was that like?**

**Look at the following verses and note what they say about thirst, about circumstances surrounding thirst, and about quenching your thirst.**

## **Psalm 63:1**

## **Isaiah 55:1-3**

## **John 4:1-26**

Thirst is a sign that you are already mildly dehydrated. Dehydration occurs when your body loses more fluid than you take in.

**Consider the effects of spiritual dehydration. What are the symptoms for you when you aren't coming to Jesus to quench your soul? How will you finish your race?**



# Come to Me to *Learn* to *Fish for Men*

## **Matthew 4:18-22**

Jesus called a bunch of professional fishermen (and assorted other blokes) to follow Him to learn to fish for men.

**What do you think was true of Jesus for them to follow and trust His training? What needed to be true of the disciples for them to be willing to leave their trades to follow Him?**

## **Mark 1:17**

Same story as above, only in this one Mark adds the word "become" which implies a prolonged process of causing to be i.e. this training takes time.

**Think about your own story. How did God call you to become a fisher of men? What has your growth process looked like so far? How have you seen Him "show up"? What "next steps" is He inviting you into?**

## **Luke 5:1-11 and John 21:1-14**

Jesus makes it clear that He knows when and where to throw out the nets to catch fish.

**What stands out to you in how Peter reacts to Jesus and His invitation? How do you tend to react to God's invitation to use you to introduce others to Him? Ask the Lord to show you when and where He'd like you to toss out His nets in your surroundings.**



# Keep Coming

Jesus first called the disciples to Himself and for Himself. He sent them out in ministry only after first calling them to know Him. If we desire to bear much fruit for Jesus, we must first be tenaciously intentional about “coming to” Jesus regularly. Here are some book suggestions to help you keep coming to Him:

- Growth in desiring and knowing God is about God's wooing and our responding and surrendering. *The Pursuit of God* by A.W. Tozer
- You know some ways of connecting with God. Why not expand your spiritual practices and try new ways of engaging with the Lord? *The Life You've Always Wanted* by John Ortberg
- Prayer is foundational as we grow in knowing and trusting God, but too often we focus on what we can get *from Him* rather than how we can grow in relating *with Him*. *The Papa Prayer* by Larry Crabb
- Sadly, being active in ministry can too easily mean that we're “too busy in the mission” to nurture our souls. *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership* by Ruth Haley Barton
- Walking with the Lord over a lifetime includes many different seasons of growth. It can be helpful to understand the big picture of how we grow in faith. *Seasons of the Soul* by Bruce Demerest