



The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry

Sermon Series
Study Booklet



THE RUTHLESS ELIMINATION OF HURRY

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WEEK 1 | DIAGNOSIS

Definition:

John Ortberg defines the essence of hurry quite simply as ‘too much to do’. John Mark Comer says that hurry is the enemy of a spiritual life.

Bible Reading - Romans 12:1-2

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Questions:

1. Do you ever feel ‘weary and heavy-laden’? Do you recognise hurry as a problem in your own life? What might life look like if you were not so hurried?
2. What does healthy busyness look like and what does unhealthy busyness look like?
3. John Mark Comer argues that, in the world of technology, ‘everything is being intentionally designed for distraction and addiction.’ Do you agree with this?

Action:

- Consider the 10 symptoms of ‘Hurry Sickness’: irritability, hyper-sensitivity, restlessness, workaholism, emotional numbness, out of order priorities, lack of care for your body, escapist behaviours, slippage of spiritual disciplines and isolation. Do you recognise any of these in your life?
- Consider prayerfully in what ways your life conforms to the patterns of this world? Then consider what it might mean for you to truly ‘be transformed by the renewing of your mind’.

WEEK 2 | INVITATION

Definition:

In Jesus, we have a solution to the hurry problem. It begins with Jesus' invitation to those who are 'weary and heavy-laden' to come to him.

Bible Reading - Matthew 11:28-30

28 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. **29** 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. **30** For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Questions:

1. John Mark Comer writes, 'If you want to experience the life of Jesus, you have to adopt the lifestyle of Jesus.' Do you agree? In our Christian discipleship, how do we translate the life of Jesus to the lifestyle of Jesus?
2. Would you say your life is currently organised around the three primary goals that John Mark identifies as being apprenticed to Jesus:
 - a. to be with him;
 - b. to become like him;
 - c. to do what he would do if he were you?
3. If you truly believe Jesus offers you rest, are you ready to arrange (or rearrange) your days so that Jesus' life becomes your new normal?

WEEK 2 | INVITATION

Action:

- John Mark suggests these to unhurry your life: try one or two of these this week as a way of connecting with God:
 - Take up journaling
 - Set a time and a time limit for social media
 - Show up ten minutes early for an appointment, and use the time to pray
 - Drive the speed limit
 - Find 15 minutes each day to be alone for silence and solitude

WEEK 3 | SILENCE & SOLITUDE

Definition:

Intentional time in the quiet to be alone with God, and our own soul. It's the space we make for God to love us, and to transform us into people of love.

Bible Reading - Mark 1:21-37

21 They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. **22** The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. **23** Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, **24** “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

25 “Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. “Come out of him!” **26** The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. **27** The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.” **28** News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

29 As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. **30** Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her. **31** So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

32 That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. **33** The whole town gathered at the door, **34** and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. **36** Simon and his companions went to look for him, **37** and when they found him, they exclaimed: “Everyone is looking for you!”

WEEK 3 | SILENCE & SOLITUDE

Questions:

1. Consider the two dimensions of silence – external and internal. External is when we get away from all the people and noise and stimuli and let our body come to quiet. Internal – which is harder to do – is when we calm and centre on our mind on God, we come to a kind of mental and emotional rest in God. Identify the areas where you need an increased sense of silence in your life.
2. Where can you go to find solitude – consider the best time of day, your favourite place.
3. What modest goals can you set yourself? Remember to begin with where you're at, not where you think you should be. It is better to begin small and work your way up, than start big and give up!

Action:

- Breath Prayers using Scripture. The idea is to breath in and out, slowly and deeply, repeating a passage of scripture several times.
For example:
 Breathe in '*The Lord is my Shepherd*.'
 Breathe out '*I shall not want*'.
- Practice Lectio Divina:

How to do the Lectio Divina (adapted from 24/7 prayer resources)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6Z2T2X5_60

What?

The Lectio Divina is a simple method of praying and meditating on scripture. Lectio Divina is a Latin phrase meaning 'divine reading'. It is a form of meditation on the word of God that trains us to listen to His whisper speaking personally to our hearts, allowing His word to become one with us. It is a reflective and repetitive way to read the Bible that is not focused on becoming informed by the text but being transformed by it. It does not replace the other types of Bible reading. Instead, Lectio Divina adds depth and value to all other forms of Bible reading, facilitating a movement from our hearts to more active ways of wrestling with scripture. This prayer tool will show you how to practice it individually and in a group in six steps.

WEEK 3 | SILENCE & SOLITUDE

Lectio Divina - SIX SIMPLE STEPS

- 1. Read.** Pick a passage. To begin with, choose any of the Psalms, a passage in one of the Gospels or perhaps last Sunday's Bible reading. After inviting the Holy Spirit to come and guide you, read the passage slowly, out loud if you can. Read it twice with one minute of silence in between.
Group: Ask a couple of different people to read the passage with a minute of silence in between.
- 2. Relish.** We could also use the word 'reflect' here, but relish describes more what we're aiming for at this stage. Meditating on the passage you have read, savour one word or phrase that you have noticed more than others during your reading. Write this word down and begin pondering what God might be saying to you through this. How is this word speaking to your life?
Group: After a moment of resting in the passage, encourage the group to say the word/phrase they noticed – nothing more and nothing less. As they do, encourage them to ponder what God might be saying to them or the group (but at this stage, no one speaks out anything more than one word or phrase.)
- 3. Re-read.** Read the passage one more time.
- 4. Respond.** Speak out in prayer what you sense God is saying to you. Tell Him how you feel encouraged, challenged by what He is saying to you and ask that the seed of His word in your heart would develop deep-rooted truth that would lead to fruitfulness in your life.
Group: Allow space for people to pray out short prayers, speaking out what God is saying through the particular passage.
- 5. Rest.** Take some time to allow God to wrap you in His love and let the word He has given you rest on you.
Group: Encourage the group to rest in God's presence together.
- 6. Resolve.** Finish by articulating one way you might be able to live out the word that has penetrated your heart in your daily life.

WEEK 4 | SABBATH (Part 1)

Definition:

A 24-hour time period of restful worship, by which we cultivate a restful spirit in all of our life. Time to stop, rest, delight and worship.

Bible Reading - Genesis 2:1-3

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. 2 By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Questions:

1. Adam's first day on earth was a day of rest. Consider the difference of working from a place of rest, as opposed to resting (or collapsing) at the end of your week at work.
2. Sabbath rest is so counter-cultural. What are the things that crowd in on your life and stop you from taking Sabbath rest?

Action:

- Consider a ritual to clearly begin and end your Sabbath. Maybe lighting a candle or reading a particular Psalm.
- Be intentional and plan your day, don't just let it happen.

WEEK 5 | SABBATH (Part 2)

Definition:

A 24-hour time period of restful worship, by which we cultivate a restful spirit in all of our life. Time to stop, rest, delight and worship.

Bible Reading - Exodus 20:8-11

“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. **9** Six days you shall labor and do all your work, **10** but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. **11** For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Questions:

1. Do you view Sabbath as a command or an invitation? How do these views differ and how do they influence your observation of Sabbath Rest?
2. Sabbath will look different for all of us because of our differing personalities. What might the terms: Stop, Rest, Delight and Worship look like for you?
3. What activities are truly life giving for you? Walking, gardening, coffee with friends.

Action:

- Sabbath is not just about alone time, consider who you might invite for a meal or a cup of tea.
- Try a ‘digital detox’ – no emails, no mobile!

WEEK 6 | SIMPLICITY

Definition:

Stripping life back to what really matters most. Intentionally living with less in order to make space for more of what we most value before God.

Bible Reading - Philippians 4:11-12

11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

Questions:

1. How much 'stuff' do you have that is serving only to clutter up your life? Are you ready for some serious sorting and recycling?
2. Simplicity is not just the number of "things" in our wardrobe or home, but our activities, our schedule, our budget, and how we spend our time. Where might God be challenging you?

Action:

- Check out the Project 333 challenge www.bemorewithless.com/project-333/
- Have an intentional sort through your wardrobe. What do you genuinely need to keep? What can you sell or recycle?
- Do the same exercise with household 'stuff'.
- Take an inventory of how you spend your time and ask God to speak to you clearly about any changes you need to make to simplify your calendar.

WEEK 7 | SLOWING

Definition:

“Cultivating patience by deliberately choosing to place ourselves in positions where we simply have to wait.” John Ortberg

Bible Reading - Luke 10:38-42

38 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. **39** She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. **40** But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!” **41** “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, **42** but few things are needed—or indeed only one.^[a] Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

Questions:

1. Jesus was never in a hurry. His slow, deliberate pace created room in his life for the interruptions that became the stories of the four gospels. What is God saying to you about slowing the pace of your life?
2. What spiritual practices are already an established part of your life?
3. What one habit might you practice for the next month in order to slow your life?

Action:

- Take up some creative practise through which you can engage with the presence of God ... painting, journaling, poetry, etc.
- Remove news-alerts, text and emails alerts from your phone. These are a constant distraction and will pull you away from presence with God and with others.
- Consider establishing a ‘rule of life’. Here are some resources: www.theemmausway.uk/crafting-a-rule-of-life-course



St Mark's Church Gillingham



24-7 PRAYER

"It was good to have time and space in the peace of the church to just be in the quiet, either reading or going round the various prayer areas."

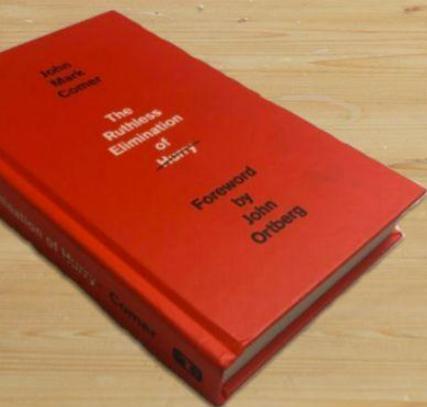
"Being in the quiet church for varying periods of time was a joy each time and being able to spend so much time with God was amazing."

"The positive atmosphere and shared joy was really great."

"I felt as though the church had a common sense of purpose[...] I learned a lot about myself and prayer and how I like to pray."

**21st-28th
November 2021
In Church**

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