



Note to Self Week 2 – Don't Rush Happiness
Spiritual Formation Guide

We hope you'll use this guide to take the teaching from Sunday's service and reflect on it with a few friends or with a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about how to take a next spiritual step, contact us at info@wschurch.org.

Scripture:

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

Matthew 11:28-30 Message paraphrase

One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, and he began to teach them.

"God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

God blesses those who mourn,
for they will be comforted."

Matthew 5:1-4

Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: "Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: 'I thank you, God, that I am not like other people—cheaters, sinners, adulterers. I'm certainly not like that tax collector! I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.'

"But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, 'O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.' I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

Luke 18:9-14

"You're blessed when you feel you've lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you."

Matthew 5:4 Message paraphrase

Reflection Questions:

- What's one blessing from God that you noticed this week?
- Read Jesus' invitation in Matthew 11:28-30 from the Message paraphrase. How do you react to those words? Is there an invitation Jesus names that resonates with you today?
- Read Matthew 5:1-4.
- What do you think Jesus means when he says, "blessed are those who mourn?" Why?
- Read the parable in Luke 18:9-14. What stands out to you in this story?
- Which of these two men knew how to mourn?
- What challenges you about the invitation to mourn your sin?
- Michael shared this quote:
"St. Ignatius of Loyola notes that sin is unwillingness to trust that what God wants is our deepest happiness. Until I am absolutely convinced of this I will do everything I can to keep my hands on the controls of my life, because I think I know better than God what I need for my fulfillment." -David Benner
Can you trust God with your happiness? What would it look like to do that?
- This week's teaching also included a reminder that mourning is a healthy part of the human experience. Have you seen this to be true in your own life? How so?
- Is there anything that you need to grieve today? What is it? Can you talk to God about it honestly?
- What is God teaching you about what it means to be blessed through this teaching?

Looking for some ways to grow and be stretched spiritually? Check out our highlighted resources at www.wschurch.org/resources. These resources can be purchased using the links or are available for a small donation at the Next Steps area on Sunday mornings.