

THE BIG IDEA: In order to establish rhythm, we must accept the beat.

The Take-Off

Over the past 6 months or so, the Lord has had me on a journey that is going to influence this series. I want to be clear that I'm still on the journey, and so I'm not going to teach you all of this as an expert, but as an explorer.

I'm inviting you to join me on the journey. the same journey that Jesus invites us all on. Listen to his invitation, found in [Matthew 11:28-30](#).

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

These are some powerful, life-altering words. But one day, they became even more powerful. That day, I read those verses in Eugene Patterson's translation called The Message.

*"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."*

That translation really captures where most of us are, doesn't it? So many ARE tired. ARE worn out. ARE burned out. That's the real news, but the good news is that Jesus didn't say those words to indict us, but to invite us. There is something far better than tired, worn out, burned out religion. There are rhythms that lead us to rest.

Real rest.

This series is all about discovering some of them and learning how to live in them.

But before we jump into the 3 invitations that Jesus offers, let me give you a warning: establishing rhythms can feel more frustrating than freeing at first.

Look at this picture [\[IMAGE / Traffic in Sweden after switching driving sides\]](#)

This looks chaotic, like a mess. It might even remind you of your life!

But it's the day after Sweden went from driving on the left side of the road to the right side.

It's a picture of change and progress even though it doesn't look like it.

Over the next month, we're going to talk about some of these "unforced rhythms of grace" - solitude, serving, Scripture, Sabbath - and they may not feel unforced at first.

Stay with it. There may be some unlearning to do, some mistakes to correct.

Rhythms take practice.

1. Everyone is following someone

- a. I'm not a music teacher, but my understanding is that the most foundational component of music is the beat - everything is built off of that
- b. **In order to establish rhythm, we must accept the beat.**
- c. You already know this is true, because when you see someone that can't clap on time, you'll say that he or she doesn't have rhythm.
- d. The truth is that everyone is following someone, and because that's true, the leader matters
- e. Most of us want to lead ourselves - we want to determine the beat
- f. The problem is that we're too given to whims - heck, half the time we can't even decide what we want to eat or what we should wear.
- g. In fact, when we try to establish our own rhythms, things can tend to look a little off
- h. [\[VIDEO / Elaine dancing\]](#)
- i. See, it looks kind of like dancing, but then again, not really

- j. Why? She can't hear the beat and dances with no rhythm.
- k. In our verses, Jesus is going to invite us to allow HIM to establish the beat
- l. Here's why that matters: he never changes, and without a consistent beat, we'll never learn the rhythms
- m. Do you know what this is?
- n. **[IMAGE / Metronome]**
- o. It's a tool that is used to set the beat in music
- p. It's the constant reminder that we're in rhythm or out of rhythm
- q. Again, we can't be that for ourselves - we're too given to whims and fancies
- r. We need Jesus to lead, to establish the beat:
 - **Hebrews 13:8** / He never changes
 - **James 1:17** / No variation or shadows with God
 - **Psalms 102:25-27** / Everything else perishes, but God remains

2. Let Jesus lead

- a. We already saw the horrible dancing by Elaine from Seinfeld and we don't want our lives to look like that!
- b. There's nothing worse on the dance floor than 2 people trying to lead, and before we can learn the unforced rhythms of grace, we need to make the decision to let Jesus lead
- c. Listen to the 3 invitations he extends: come to me, take from me, learn from me.
- d. He didn't say, "I understand how tired you are. Try something new. Figure it out. Good luck!"
- e. He offers to lead us to a new place of rest and freedom, and every single rhythm that we'll talk about during this series is pointless if it isn't ABOUT HIM and if we aren't led to them BY HIM
- f. When we allow Jesus to lead us, we'll find ourselves saying yes to...
 - His **presence** (Come to me)
 - Greek word implies now!
 - Why would we wait any longer?
 - **James 4:8** / "Come close to God, and God will come close to you."
 - His **provision** (Take from me)
 - Something we do - we take what he gives
 - Greek word carries the flavor of drawing up like reeling in a fish
 - What are we catching? Rest for our souls and fruitful partnership with our Lord
 - His **principles** (Learn from me)
 - Related to the Greek word for disciple
 - It means to learn information but also by use and practice
 - In other words, learn these principles and rhythms and then make them your habit
 - The Great Commission in **Matthew 28:19** tells us to go and make disciples (same word)
 - Basically, we're extending to the nations the invitation that Jesus extends to us
 - What are we inviting them to: tired, worn out religion or life?

The Landing

"Walk with me and work with me - watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace."

Anyone who feels stressed, overwhelmed, exhausted or under appreciated hears those words as a vacation, but Jesus isn't calling us to Cancun.

He's calling us to himself.

The rhythms of grace can only be learned in the classroom where Jesus teaches.

They can only follow the beat that he sets.

Remember, everyone follows someone, and so the most important question this morning isn't "Are you tired?" but rather, "Are you willing to let Jesus lead?"

Let's pray.