



DISCUSSION GUIDE

October 5/8, 2017

Overwhelmed by Life

BIG IDEA: You were not designed to be overwhelmed by life but to overflow with life.

GROUPS VISION

We believe life transformation happens when we engage with other people, with Jesus as our focus, and take next steps together. A next step is where we Ask, Listen, and Respond to take any action that advances our journey with Jesus.

MAIN POINTS & SCRIPTURES

Being overwhelmed has, unfortunately, become a norm for most. We are reminded, however, that Jesus overcame everything so we don't have to be overwhelmed by anything. **(John 16:33)** We are overwhelmingly busy and yet chronically unsatisfied. We are living life at a pace that is stealing, killing and destroying the life in our lives; we bear no fruit. **(Matthew 21:18-19)** When we look at the life of Jesus, we see that He was never overwhelmed, never in a hurry and always at peace because He always had time to pull away and spend time with the Father. **(John 15:1-5)** Jesus came so that we wouldn't be overwhelmed by life but so we could overflow with life and bear much fruit. **(John 10:10)** To bear fruit is to live up to our full potential in all areas of life. Here are some ways we can create space to live an overflowing life.

My Story. An encounter with Jesus leaves a story to tell. Share yours at valleycreek.org/MyStory.
FOLLOW US    @vccfamily
Find resources at valleycreek.org/vccsocial

KEY VERSE

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

John 16:33

1. **Rest in Jesus and receive from Jesus.** When we are overwhelmed, the first thing we should do ends up being the last thing we do. We have to rest and receive from Him; apart from Him, we can do nothing. **(John 15:4-5, Matthew 11:28)** When we are not receiving from the one thing, we will be stressed out by everything. Jesus invites us to make Him our one thing and He will take care of everything else. **(Matthew 6:33)**
2. **Create margin by pruning.** We don't fully realize the impact of saying 'yes'. Everything we say 'yes' to, means we are saying 'no' to something else. We need to prune wisely and choose to start saying 'no' to things. **(John 15:2, Deuteronomy 11:26)**
 - a. **Cut out dead things.** God asks us to trust Him as He cuts out the harmful/hurtful things that we allow to remain in our life. **(John 15:2)** By grace, we have new identity and we are no longer those dead things, we are righteous and holy. **(Ephesians 4:22-24)**
 - b. **Cut out leafy things.** There are things in our lives that, from a distance, look great. However, they take all our energy, effort and focus and give us nothing in return. A leafy life is full, but there is no fruit.
 - c. **Cut out good things.** Good things keep us from great things. A tree with too many branches spreads its resources too thin. Satan knows this; he will bury us in good things so we never produce great things. We have to cut out some good things if we want great things or we will miss out on those great things completely.

POTENTIAL NEXT STEP

When we feel overwhelmed, the first thing we should do ends up being the last thing we do. This week, set aside time to rest in Jesus and receive from Jesus.

God can't fill an already full life. He invites us to start with just one branch to create some space for Him to fill us with overflowing instead of overwhelming. We have to let him prune our relationships, activities, possessions, commitments and beliefs so He can fill us. **(John 15:11)**

DISCUSSION

1. In a time when busyness is our way of life, how can you stop to rest and receive from Jesus? (See point #1)
2. God is a good gardener and asks for our obedience to prune in order to have an overflowing life. What dead, leafy or good thing is God inviting you to prune out of your life? (See point #2)
3. **What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?**
4. **What is your next step?**