

Soul Care

SESSION #6:

Slowing your Soul Through the Seasons

SESSION GOALS

The point of every session is a main idea with the goal of informing our knowing, feeling, and doing.

MAIN IDEA: For the garden of your inner life to flourish, you need to slow down.

HEAD CHANGE: To know that faster isn't necessarily better.

HEART CHANGE: To feel grateful that life is not a race, so you can go at a slower pace.

LIFE CHANGE: To let go of your need to rush and learn to walk at the pace of grace.

CONNECT

Have you ever been caught speeding? How fast were you going? How much was the fine?

You may have been penalised for driving too fast, but in every other arena of your life, you've probably been rewarded for your speed. We live in a society that celebrates those who are rapid and efficient. What gets rewarded gets repeated, which is why our lives just seem to go faster and faster. And yet Jesus' life tells a different story. In this last session of the series, we'll see that Jesus never hurried, and if we are to tend the gardens of our inner lives, we need to slow down to His pace of grace.

LEARN

As you watch, write down how Jason answers these questions.

1. Why did people run to Jesus?
2. What slowed Jesus down on His way to heal Jairus's daughter?
3. What are the four practical steps we can take to slow down?

Show SESSION #6: Slowing your Soul Through the Seasons (16 minutes)

REVIEW

Our culture is fanatical about speed. We love fast cars, celebrate fast athletes, and reward efficient workers. Jason points out that for most of us, the obsession with speed starts when we're kids. **At school, did your teacher ever reward those who finished first? Did your parents hurry you into the car, out of the car, into bed, and to the breakfast table each morning? Do you find yourself hurrying your own kids? Does your boss put pressure on you to go faster? What are you in a hurry to get or achieve?**

Jason says that the faster-is-better mentality is perhaps the greatest hurdle a follower of Jesus must overcome when tending to the garden of the soul, because growing a garden is a slow process. Jesus Himself was never rushed to get anywhere. He walked. **Do you ever get frustrated by the pace at which God works in your life? Do you wish He would hurry up?**

Though Jesus never lived at a frenetic pace, there are accounts of desperate people hurrying to Him for help, as we should too. **Do you currently have an urgent need? Have you rushed straight to God in prayer?**

In Mark 5, we read the account of Jesus healing a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years and raising a twelve-year-old girl from the dead. It's a stunning example of how Jesus is always right on time. He knows our needs. He knows the end from the beginning. He has appointed the day and the hour for every event in our lives, and we can trust Him. **Can you relate to the probable frustration of Jairus and the disciples? How do you typically handle delays or the derailment of your efficient plans for speedy outcomes? In which area of your life do you feel God is moving too slowly? Are you angry with God because things could've been so different if He had worked more quickly? (It's ok to take your anger to God. He knows you're angry anyway. He is infinitely big enough to handle your emotions.) What's your next step in terms of trusting God, slowing down, and matching His pace?**

Walking through the jostling crowd, Jesus is going slowly enough to notice that the woman has touched Him and been healed. **Considering that Jesus' pace of grace is indicative of His awareness of your every movement, how might you reframe the delays in your life as opportunities to thank Him?**

Jairus's daughter dies before Jesus gets to her. He has taken too long – or so it seems. He raises her from the dead, which demonstrates His power even more than if He had simply healed her. **Can you think of a time in your life when God's apparent slowness made for an incredible – even miraculous – story to tell?**

Jesus walks at the pace of grace, and we should too. Dallas Willard famously said that the secret to living the Christian life is to 'ruthlessly eliminate hurry'. **When and where are you prone to hurry? How can you change your habits in those environments? What would it look like for you to slow down in those moments and focus your attention on God's love for you, or even ask Him how you can show love to others? How might it help you to record those times of slowing down, experiencing God's love, and extending it to others? How would it change your life – your relationships, your work – if you slowed down habitually?**

BIBLE EXPLORATION

In Psalm 37:7 and Psalm 46:10 we're urged to be still and patient – not to fret or worry – and we'll see God's greatness. **Share about a time when slowing down to be still in God's presence helped you to see the great work He was doing.**

If time allows, read John 4, in which Jesus meets a Samaritan woman at a well. **How would the woman's destiny (and the destiny of her entire hometown) have been different if Jesus had been in a hurry?**

Jason closes this session with Numbers 6:24–26: 'The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make **His face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn His face toward you and give you peace.**' **Would you be able to experience this blessing if you were in a hurry?**

REVIEW

Peter Kreeft writes, 'If you can't take time to do nothing, you're a slave to doing. Doing nothing is a radical, revolutionary act. It frees you from the universal slavery of our age: slavery to the clock. The clock measures doing but not being.' As you learn to walk at the pace of grace, imagine the impact it will have on every area of your life. The truth is: life is not a race so we can live at a slower pace. May you live the present moment to the full, trusting God's unhurried schedule, and remembering that love and hurry are fundamentally incompatible.

BEFORE NEXT TIME

Select at least one activity below to complete before watching the next session.

READ: Choose one of the Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John – and read through a few chapters over the next few days. Take note of the pace of Jesus' life. What is God saying to you about slowing down?

WRITE: Write down your hurry triggers – the people, events, situations, or obligations that immediately send you into overdrive and make you rush. Be specific. Write down ideas of accountability measures you could put in place to slow you down.

PRAY: Spend some time breathing deeply and praying slowly through the day that lies before you. Ask God for the grace to move at His pace.