



Reflection Guide

November 22-December 5

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Weekend Reflection

FRIDAY, NOV 22 -SUNDAY, NOV

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This week we talked about LIGHTening our load. Life's workload is full both inside and outside the home. This workload can oftentimes feel heavy, burdensome, and quite frankly, mundane! Work has become a four letter word that we try to simplify, fix, or get out of. It rarely feels like a gift from God or part of the abundant life to which He has called us. The Bible teaches us that work is part of the natural order of life and was part of God's plan for us long before we were created.

"The Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it."

(Genesis 2:15, CSB)

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do."

(Ephesians 2:10, CSB)

Whether you work outside of the home or not, we are all called to do good works as a spouse, mother, daughter, sister, friend, and follower of Christ. Simply put, we were created to work. However, this work was never meant to create the stressed out, hurried, and resentful version of ourselves that so often surfaces. If you're anything like me, there have been days, weeks, and even months that you've been too busy to *delight* in the world around you. You've been too hurried to see the blessing in the good works set before you.

Journal some thoughts:

- **What is the work God has currently set before you?**
- **What is the hardest/heaviest aspect of your current workload? Why?**

I'd like to encourage you to spend time praying over your answers. Ask God to reveal to you what is making your workload burdensome. Is it the work itself, or your attitude regarding the work? Is the work something God has asked you to do? Or was it society asking? If He has asked you to do it then ask Him to help you! Even Godly work will feel heavy at times, but instead of getting discouraged, I want to invite you to look at it as an opportunity to rely on Him.

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Weekday Reading

MONDAY, NOV 25 - THURSDAY, NOV

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Now that we have established what the “good works” are in your life, we need to examine what it is that makes accomplishing this work difficult. Each day we face many mental and physical obstacles that add weight to our workload. I would like for us to first look at how lightening our minds can directly cause a lightened workload. It can be so easy for our minds to be overwhelmed with different thoughts and emotions. If our *mental* load is overwhelmed, how will we ever be able to focus on our *physical* workload? Most of us process a wide range of emotions each day. Those thoughts can either be based in the past, present or future. Personally, sometimes I’m thankful for the past, weary about the present, and fearful for the future all in the same five minutes! It’s exhausting! Spend some time processing the following questions:

Journal

- **What type of thoughts tend to consume your mind, burden you, or overwhelm you?** Fear, worry, stress, grief, insecurities, parenting, relationships, vocational stress, etc.
- **Where do you think your mind spends the majority of its time?** Do you spend the majority of your day thinking about the past, present, or future?
- **How much time does your mind spend set on God?**

Are those last two questions out of order for you? Do you spend more time worried about your to-do list, your parenting struggles, and/or your marital issues more than you do on your Father? If so, I encourage you to start there... start with shifting your focus from your struggles and worries to Jesus.

*“Set your minds on things that are above,
not on things that are on the Earth”*
(Colossians 3:2, ESV)

You can do this by spending more time in the Word - reading your Bible and memorizing Scripture. By fixing our minds on the Truth, it becomes easier to keep our minds from wandering to overwhelming thoughts. Is there something that keeps you from making time to spend in the Word? Take a moment to pause and name it... You might need to make a shift so that you can create space to be more mindful of your mind and pay more attention to your thought life. We need to be *proactive* at creating a safe and healthy mental load instead of *reactive*. We need to be present, set intentions, limit distractions, and slow down long enough to give our minds and Him the time that they need to connect. Maybe it is not a matter of “busyness” that keeps you from spending time with God, but rather an issue of your own thoughts. Scripture encourages us to practice surrendering our thoughts in order to hear from Him.

*“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against
the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it
obedient to Christ.”*
(2 Corinthians 10:5 ESV)

Journal

- Do you have any thoughts that are getting in your way of spending time with God?
- What's behind these thoughts? Are there past pains that need to be dealt with or future fears that need to be surrendered?
- Are these thoughts based on fact? Do they align with God's Word?

Pray over your answers. Ask God to help you identify what is truth and what is a lie. Ask him to help you see what is it you have control over and what you don't. Pray the serenity prayer over your thought life and welcome Him into that space.

*"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference."*

(The Serenity Prayer)

Setting your mind on God will help you lighten your mental load, which will directly impact your physical workload. You will allow God to transform the way you think and the way you work.

"Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think."

(Romans 12:2, NLT)

Spend the remainder of your week meditating on [Philippians 4:4-9](#). Here are some ideas for how to do that:

- Look up the passage in various translations ([biblegateway.com](#) allows you to view multiple translations side by side to compare wording).
- Write out words or phrases that stand out to you in your journal. Use colored pens or pencils to color or doodle around them.
- Write out what these verses prompt you to think about.
- Write the verses in the form of a prayer.
- Talk about the verses with a friend or family member, sharing what each of you think.
- Listen to the [recent sermon on this passage](#) Jonathan Cliff shared at Grace Community.

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Weekend Reflection

FRIDAY, NOV 29 - SUNDAY, DEC 1

When the weekend comes, we know a change in routine comes as well. Use the weekend to rest and to enjoy your family and who God is and maybe even catch up on reading any Scriptures you didn't get to during the week.

I'd love for you to take a look at the lyrics of one of my favorite hymns: *I Need Thee Every Hour*. It is such a beautiful description of why we need to lighten our load and fix our minds on Him. The hymn was written in 1872 by Annie Sherwood. At the time, she was consumed by her day-to-day tasks as a

wife and a mother. I find so much comfort in knowing it is a shared feeling for women throughout history.

Even throughout the mundane tasks at hand, she felt overwhelmed with nearness to the Lord. That is my prayer for each of us. That in the midst of our workload and the hundreds of thoughts racing through our minds that we can feel *overwhelming nearness* to our Father.

I need thee every hour,
Most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like thine
Can peace afford.
I need thee, O I need thee,
Every hour I need thee!
O bless me now, my Savior,
I come to thee.
I need thee every hour,
Stay thou nearby;
Temptations lose their power
When thou art nigh.
I need thee every hour,
In joy or pain;
Come quickly, and abide,
Or life is vain.
I need thee every hour;
Teach me thy will,
And thy rich promises
In me fulfill.

Read [2 Corinthians 3:5](#). What are some ways that you are prone to find sufficiency in yourself rather than in God?

Read [Psalm 16:1](#). How does this verse make you feel a deeper understanding for why you need the Lord in your life?

Take some time this weekend to share your thoughts about the work the Lord has set before you. Talk about what makes this work feel heavy and whether or not you are prioritizing your time with the Lord prior to conducting your daily workload. If you aren't, express to your family some of the ways you are going to change that.

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Last week we worked on removing the mental hindrances keeping us from completing the good works the Lord has set before us. This week we will be looking at the physical hindrances standing in our way. Schedules and tasks can easily keep us from God's will for our lives. We need to work on finding our "best yes". We will not be able to say "yes" to whatever God has for us if we don't first have room in our schedules. We also need room in our schedules to listen for what He is calling us to in the first place. In Lysa Terkeurst's book, *The Best Yes*, she writes about how every time we say "yes" to something, we are inadvertently saying "no" to something else. We have to practice discernment to figure out what our yeses and our noes should be. The first step in practicing discernment is to spend time with the Lord - pray, read your Bible, and memorize Scripture. Try to do this daily. If you're struggling to carve intentional time with the Lord each day, find a way to welcome Him into your daily tasks! Challenge yourself to grow, but balance it with personal grace. The very fact that you are reading and working through this Reflection Guide means that you are making an effort! You can feel good about that! I encourage you to keep leaning in to God and pressing into time with Him.

"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."

(Romans 12:2)

My good friend Darin says, "The world says the busier you are, the more important and valued you are. But God puts value on rest and time for renewal, so we can know the will of God. When we stay so busy we can't hear God, how will we ever know what His will is for us?" Lysa Terkeurst states that "evaluation eliminates frustration." By evaluating what we are being asked to do before giving our answer, we are helping eliminate frustration from our lives. Here are a few things to evaluate when deciding whether or not we should say yes or no to something:

1. Does saying "yes" to this align with our family goals/priorities in THIS season?
Seasons will change - a "no" now doesn't mean a "no" forever.
2. Does saying "yes" to this align with my goals/priorities?
Will I still be available to my spouse, kids, family and friends in the way that I want to be if I say "yes" to this?
3. Will saying "yes" to this move me closer to my goals and God's will for my life?
Not every assignment is my assignment.
4. If I say "yes" to this opportunity what am I saying "no" to? And am I ok with that?

Read the following Scriptures (one a day or a couple at a time) about God's plan for you:

- [Psalm 119:105-112](#)
- [Proverbs 3:1-6](#)
- [Jeremiah 29:11](#)
- [Hebrews 13:20-21](#)
- [James 1:5](#)

Journal

- **How do these verses help you process or pray through how you should say “yes” or “no?”**
- **Have you ever said “yes” to an opportunity only to realize later that you should have said “no?”** If so, why? Did saying that “yes” cause you to say “no” elsewhere? What did that look like?
- **Is there a “yes” in your current life that you feel like needs to become a “no” in this season?** Conversely, is there a “no” in your life where you feel God pushing you towards a “yes?”
- **Get PRACTICAL:** As you process all of these things, in what areas of your life do you feel God speaking the most? Are you needing to reprioritize your mental load and spend more time with Him? Have you allowed yourself and your family to become too busy to fulfill God’s will for your life? Maybe you’re too busy to even recognize it? What steps do you plan to take in order to lighten both your mental and physical load?
- **How are you moved to PRAY today?** Take a few moments to pray over opportunities to practice discernment in lightening both your mental and physical loads. Ask God to show you what your next steps should be in pursuit of doing the good works He has set before you.

Optional Family Activity

Get your kids and/or spouse involved in what you are learning, reading, and reflecting on through MomLife! Each Reflection Guide will include a space like this with ideas and notes for how to read and have discussion/activities with your family around Scripture.

Family Mission Statement

Before you write your family’s mission statement, ask each member of your family the following questions:

- What should the family’s top priority be? Essentially, what is the purpose of our family? *To have fun? To be successful? To know Christ?*
- What are the responsibilities of being a member of this family? Are there any guidelines or rules you think each of us should follow? *In other words, what are your family’s “non-negotiable” conditions?*
- What do you like most about our family? What makes you want to invite your friends over to our home?
- What would you like to accomplish in the next 5 years? 10 years?
- What does our family value? *Kindness, honesty, health, fun, etc.*

The process of answering the above questions is just as important as, if not more so, crafting the statement itself. As you each share your vision for your family together you will have a direct insight into the values of each member of your family. Now, think of ten or more phrases that encompass what you’ve answered in the above questions. Give each family member three votes to

help you limit your phrases. Then, combine the remaining phrases to create your family mission statement. This statement can be in paragraph or list form. Be creative! This is, after all, YOUR family statement - it can be as unique as you want it to be. Here are a few examples:

*We love and serve God.
 We strive to make our home a refuge from the cares and troubles of the world.
 We do hard things.
 We're creators, not consumers.
 We stay hungry and humble.
 We face adversity with stoicism.
 We show kindness to our family members and others.
 We help each other reach our potential.
 We're devoted to life-long learning.
 We know that sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven.
 We face life with a sense of humor and a lot of laughter.*

*"Our family mission is:
 To love each other...
 To help each other...
 To believe in each other...
 To wisely use our time, talents, and resources to bless others...
 To worship together...
 Forever."*

Additional Resources [links also found @ graceclarksville.com/momlife-resources/]:

Books:

- [The Best Yes](#) by Lysa Terkeurst
- [The Simplified Life](#) by Emily Ley

Tools:

- [The Simplified Planner](#)
- [Menu Organizer](#) OR [Meal Planning Pad](#)
- [30 Day Simplicity Challenge](#)

Bible Studies:

- [What Happens When Women Walk in Faith](#) by Lysa Terkeurst

Podcasts:

- [That Sounds Fun with Annie F. Downs Episode 182: Emily Ley](#)

Organizational Apps:

- [Grocery/M Meal Planning](#)
- [Paprika App](#)
- [Tody Cleaning App](#)
- [Spotless Cleaning App](#)

- [The Habit Hub App](#)

Scripture Meditation Apps:

- [Dwell App](#)
- [Live From Rest app](#)

