

JOYFUL AGAIN

DISCUSSION GUIDE

FREEDOM FROM RELIGION

Discuss Together

- Who is someone in your life that radiates joy? What have you learned about joy from them?
- Read **Matthew 23:1-4** and **Matthew 11:28-30**. Compare and contrast what Jesus came to bring versus what the religious leaders of the day taught.
- If religious activities can feel so burdensome, why do you think so many approach spirituality this way?
- Where might you be placing a big burden on yourself, or where are others placing a big burden on you? Where are you weary and in need of rest for your soul?
- Read **Colossians 1:9-14**. Take a look at verse 12 and 13. Where does Paul use the past tense to describe what is already true of those who have trusted in Jesus?
- Now look at the passage again, especially the beginning verses. How does starting from a place of grace and acceptance change the way we approach spiritual activity?
- Jeff shared how the math of the Gospel is Jesus + nothing = everything. But all of us are tempted to make the formula Jesus + something = everything. Where are you tempted to add something? Were you taught or did you learn somewhere that you needed more than God's grace to get God's acceptance?
- Jeff talked about different symptoms that show up when we slip from grace into religion: shame, pressure, pride, or disillusionment with God. Are you feeling any of those symptoms right now? Where and how?

Next Steps

Grace is a gift from God. It can't be earned, only received. But when we receive gifts, what do we do? We say, "Thanks!" So, whether God's grace is new to you or you've experienced it for a while now, take time to express your gratitude to God for what He has done. Pray about it with your group or on your own. You may even decide to journal, writing a "thank you" letter to God.