

get your life back

EVERYDAY PRACTICES
FOR A WORLD GONE MAD

STUDY GUIDE | SIX SESSIONS

JOHN ELDREDGE



NELSON
BOOKS

An Imprint of Thomas Nelson

Get Your Life Back Study Guide
© 2020 by John Eldredge

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, scanning, or other—except for brief quotations in critical reviews or articles, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published in Nashville, Tennessee, by Nelson Books. Nelson Books is a registered trademark of HarperCollins Christian Publishing, Inc.

Published in association with Yates & Yates, LLP, www.yates2.com.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®. NIV®. Copyright 1973, 1978, 1994, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.®. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture quotations marked MSG [or The Message] are taken from *The Message*. Copyright © by Eugene H. Peterson 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress. All rights reserved. Represented by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation. © 1996, 2004, 2007, 2013, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Thomas Nelson titles may be purchased in bulk for educational, business, fundraising, or sales promotional use. For information, please e-mail SpecialMarkets@ThomasNelson.com.

ISBN 978-0-310-09702-0 (softcover)
ISBN 978-0-310-09710-5 (ebook)

First Printing January 2020 / Printed in the United States of America

CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Session 1 The One Minute Pause	9
Session 2 Simple Unplugging	37
Session 3 Get Outside	63
Session 4 Caring for Neglected Places in Your Soul	91
Session 5 The Hidden Life of God in You	117
Session 6 The Simple Daily Things	147
Leader's Guide	173
Endnotes	181

INTRODUCTION



There's a madness to our moment, and we need to name it for the lunacy it is. Because it's taking our lives hostage.

First, there's the blistering pace of life. Everyone I talk to says they feel busier than ever. Then there's the deluge of media coming at us in a sort of mesmerizing digital spell. This is all very hard on the soul. But what got my attention was what was happening to me *as a person*.

I found myself flinching when a friend texted and asked for some time. I didn't want to open email for fear of the demands I'd find there. I had a shorter and shorter fuse in traffic. I felt numb to tragic news reports. It made me wonder—*am I becoming a less loving person?* I had little capacity for relationships and the things that bring me life—a walk in the woods, dinner with friends, a cold plunge in a mountain lake. When I did steal a moment for something life-giving, I was so distracted I couldn't enjoy it.

Then I realized—it wasn't a failure of love or compassion. These were symptoms of a soul pushed too hard, strung out,

haggard, fried. My soul just can't do life at the speed of smart-phones. But I was asking it to; everybody's asking theirs to.

I'm guessing you've experienced something similar. It's likely why you've picked up this study—your soul is looking for something. Are you aware of what it is?

If we had more of God, that would really help. We could draw upon his love and strength, his wisdom and resilience. After all, God is the fountain of life (Psalm 36:9). If we had more of his lavish life bubbling up in us, it would be a rescue in this soul-scorching hour.

Jesus heard even my surface prayers; he came to my rescue and began to lead me into a number of helps and practices, what I would call graces. Simple things, like a One Minute Pause, that were accessible and surprising in their power to restore. Learning “Benevolent Detachment”—the ability to let things go. Allowing for some transition in my day, instead of just blasting from one thing to the next. Drinking in the beauty God was providing in quiet moments. My soul began to recover, feel better, do better. I began to enjoy my life with God so much more. I began to get my life back.

This study guide is a companion to the book *Get Your Life Back*. You can do this series as part of a group—or on your own. Either way, you'll want to have a copy of the book and video. You'll note that the book has fourteen chapters and this is a six-session study guide. Several sessions combine two chapters; others focus on one. Some chapters of the book are not included due to space. That's why we highly recommend reading the book in full in addition to being part of this study.

If you're leading a group, a guide has been provided for you in the back of this study. Each session in this guide has these distinct offerings:

INTRODUCTION

- Welcome / Introduction
- “Getting Started” Questions
- Scripture Reading
- Video Summary
- Group Session Questions
- Closing Prayer Topics
- Giving It a Try—Personal Practice / Exercise
- Between-Sessions Personal Study (Five Days)
- Recommended Reading for Next Session

God *wants* to come to us and restore our lives. He really does. But the process needs to be accessible and sustainable. We’ve all tried exercise, diets, Bible study programs that began with vim and verve but over time got shoved to the side, lost in the chaos. I have a gym membership; I rarely use it. There are those books I haven’t finished, loads of podcasts too. Rest assured—the graces I am offering here are within reach of a normal life. I think you’ll find them simple, sustainable, and refreshing.

God wants to strengthen and renew your soul; Jesus longs to give you more of himself. “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life . . . and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly” (Matthew 11:28–30, MSG). You can get your life back; you can live freely and lightly. The world may be harsh, but God is gentle; he knows what your life is like.

What we need to do is put ourselves in places that allow us to receive his help. This six-week study will show you how.



SESSION 1

THE ONE MINUTE PAUSE

"I have calmed and quieted myself."

DAVID, PSALM 131:2

WELCOME

Wonder how many people in your office, your gym, your daily commute could say they've cultivated a quiet heart? What we assume is a normal lifestyle is absolute insanity to the God-given nature of our heart and soul.

Nonetheless, this is the world we live in, raise our kids in, navigate our careers in, and so we need to find things that are simple and accessible to begin to take back our souls.

My premise is simple. The world is nuts. It's gone off the rails and is trying to take our hearts and souls with it. If you're doing this study in a group, I bet you barely made it here. If you're watching this by yourself, you're likely squeezing it into some narrow window of margin. Everyone I know, all my friends, are so busy these days.

Part of the problem is we're trying to keep up with the pace of technology. We're asking our souls to live at the speed of the smartphone and the laptop and it can't be done. It's brutal. So there's the pace of life, right?

And then there is this tsunami of information coming at us. We're spending four hours a day on our mobile devices, three hours using apps of various kinds, ten hours a day

consuming media of some sort. That's more information in one week than would crash a laptop. Right? And it's not just information. It's scandal and chaos and politics and gossip and the trauma of the world. This is hard on the soul. There's very little room left to be human anymore.

My musician friends tell me that they're not playing much music these days, and my gardening friends didn't have a chance to plant this year what they wanted to plant. We're all just living right at the edge of our margin.

Most of us get home on most days in a state of exhaustion, numb on our good days, fried more often than we'd like to admit. It's like what Bilbo said: "We feel thin and stretched like butter, scraped over too much, bread."¹

That's why I wrote this series. So we can get our lives back. Jesus has a way out. Jesus can show you the escape hatch to this madness that we're living in. He began to show me the way out through a number of simple daily practices that helped me breathe again and restore my soul. He will do the same for you.

GETTING STARTED

If you or any of your group members are just getting to know one another, take a few minutes to introduce yourselves. Then, to kick things off, discuss one of the following questions:

1. Are you happy and carefree most of the time? Why or why not?
2. Would you describe yourself as rested and refreshed? Why or why not?
3. Do you look forward to your future? Why or why not?

CORE SCRIPTURE

Invite someone to read aloud the following passage. Listen for fresh insight and share any new thoughts with the group through the questions that follow.

Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life . . . and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.

—MATTHEW 11:28–30, MSG

1. What is Jesus' general assumption about us within his three questions? How accurately does this describe you?
2. What is his core invitation?
3. What are the results dependent on?

VIDEO TEACHING

Play the video segment for session 1. A summary of the key points is provided for your benefit as well as space to take additional notes.

Summary

- We tend to go through our days with no margin—racing from one thing to the next. As the pace in which we’re living accelerates, we don’t seem to have even one minute to just pause, breathe, and release it all to Jesus.
- The big lie is how technology was supposed to create room in our lives for all those things that we enjoy. It’s done the exact opposite, increasing our workload as we try to keep up to the pace of a world gone completely mad.
- On average, we spend four hours a day on our mobile devices, three hours using apps of various kinds, and ten hours a day consuming media of some sort.
- It’s not just the tsunami of information that is coming at us but also the trauma of the world. It’s hard on the soul. There’s very little room left to be human anymore.

- The One Minute Pause is the practice of taking sixty seconds to simply breathe, be quiet, and let your soul catch up to you. This isn't a time to pray, process, or be productive—but simply to breathe.
- Benevolent Detachment is the practice of releasing everyone and everything to God. “Benevolent” because it's not angry or cynical but done in love and kindness. “Detachment” because it's a recognition we can't carry the world. We are not God.
- Jesus is actually really serious about us turning things over to him on a regular basis (Matthew 11:28–30). The One Minute Pause and Benevolent Detachment are two great ways to do so.

Notes

GROUP DISCUSSION

Take a few minutes to go through the following questions with your group.

1. In what specific ways has the pace of your life accelerated in the past few years?
2. Are there certain things you've had to give up recently—such as hobbies or simple pleasures—just to keep up?
3. Were you surprised to hear we spend ten hours a day consuming media of some sort? What has the effect of this been on your soul?

4. What was the experience of the One Minute Pause like for you? Was it difficult to not try to be productive during that time—or easy to simply let your soul breathe?

5. What does 1 Peter 5 say we should do with our worries and cares? How good are you at practicing this?

6. Benevolent Detachment involves learning to release everyone and everything to God. What are the hardest things for you to release to God? Why?

CLOSING PRAYER

Wrap up your time together with prayer. Remember, prayer is simply talking to God. Here are a few ideas of what you could pray about based on the topics of this first session:

- Ask God to reveal the ways that you are running on empty—physically and spiritually.
- Pray for God to help you learn how to live freely and lightly.
- Commit to doing the One Minute Pause each day.
- Cast all your cares and burdens to God and leave them there.
- Release everyone and everything to the Father through Benevolent Detachment.

GIVING IT A TRY

Your first weekly practice involves the One Minute Pause. It can be used in many ways: for prayer or silence, to find your heart again, or to enjoy a moment of beauty. We'll develop this practice throughout this study.

To get started:

- Pick one or two moments each day when you are least likely to be interrupted.
- Set your phone alarm to remind you. Pick a notification sound that is gracious, not adrenaline producing (“Bell,” or better “Silk.” Not “Suspense” or “News Flash” for you iPhone users). You are not

THE ONE MINUTE PAUSE

sounding an alarm; you are inviting your soul to a gracious pause.

In these sixty seconds:

- Be still and simply breathe.
- Let everyone and everything go.
- Ask for more of God: Jesus—I need more of you; fill me with more of you, God. Restore our union; fill me with your life.

I have developed an app to help you practice the One Minute Pause; it's beautiful, and I think it will be of great service to you. You can find it for free in the app store.

This one simple practice will open the door to many others. Your soul is going to thank you.

SESSION 1



BETWEEN-SESSIONS PERSONAL STUDY

In this section, you can further explore the material we've covered this week. If you haven't already done so, we encourage you to read chapter 1, "The One Minute Pause," and chapter 2, "Benevolent Detachment," of *Get Your Life Back* at this time. Each day offers a short reading from the book—along with reflection questions designed to take you deeper into the themes of this week's study. Journal or just jot a few thoughts after each question. At the start of the next session, there will be a few minutes to share any insights . . . but the primary goal of these questions is for your personal growth and private reflection.

DAY ONE: FIGHT OR FLIGHT

We live in a world that triggers our souls into vigilance far too often. The complexity of modern life is mind-boggling: the constantly changing social terrain of what's appropriate, the level of trauma we navigate in people's lives. The typical sounds

of a city trigger adrenaline responses in us all day long; that deep throbbing bass *whump* coming from the car four lanes over, the one you feel all through your body, is not that different from the sound of distant artillery. Thanks to the smartphone and the web, you are confronted on a daily basis with more information than any previous generation had to deal with! And it's not just information; it's the suffering of the entire planet, in minute detail, served up on your feed daily. Add to this the pace at which most of us are required to live our lives.

This morning I can't tell whether my soul is more in flight or flight. But I do know this—I don't like the state I'm in. I didn't sleep well last night (one of the many consequences of living in a hyper-charged world), and after I finally conked out, I overslept, woke up late, and ever since I've felt behind on everything.

I rushed through breakfast, dashed out the door to get to some meetings, and now I'm rattled. I don't like that feeling, and I don't like the consequences. When I'm rattled, I'm easily irritated with people. I didn't have the patience to listen to what my wife was trying to say this morning. I find it hard to hear from God, and I don't like feeling untethered from him.

I notice now in my rattled state that I want to eat something fatty and sugary; I want something that's going to make me feel better *now*. When we're unsettled, unnerved, unhinged, it's human nature to seek a sense of equilibrium, stability, and I find myself wondering—how many addictions begin here, with just wanting a little comfort? Get out of the rattled place and soothe ourselves with “a little something”?

We live in a crazy-making world. So much stimulation rushes at us with such unrelenting fury, we are overstimulated most of the time. Things that nourish us—a lingering

conversation, a leisurely stroll through the park, time to savor both making and then enjoying dinner—these are being lost at an alarming rate; we simply don't have room for them. Honestly, I think most people live their daily lives along a spectrum from slightly rattled to completely fried as their normal state of being.

In the late morning, I finally do what I should have from the beginning—I pause, get quiet, settle down. I give myself permission to simply pause, a little breathing room to come back to myself and God. My breathing returns to normal (I didn't even notice I was holding my breath). A little bit of space begins to clear around me. Suddenly, somewhere outside, someone has just fired up a leaf blower—one of the great pariahs of the human race, the enemy of all tranquility. My body tenses, the stress returns, and because I'm paying attention, I see for myself how the constant stimulation of our chaotic world causes us to live in a state of hypervigilance.

Notice—are your muscles relaxed right now or tense? Is your breathing deep and relaxed, or are you taking short, shallow breaths? Are you able to read this leisurely, or do you feel you need to get through it quickly? Most of the day we simply plow through a myriad of diverse tasks, checking boxes, “getting stuff done.” It frazzles the soul, so we look to all our “comforters” to calm down. But I know my salvation is not in the Frappuccino nor the fudge.

1. Does your soul feel like it's in fight or flight mode now? What are the signs that help you know this?

2. When you're in a rattled state, what do you look to for temporary relief or a little comfort? How helpful has that been in the long term?

3. When was the last time you gave yourself permission to simply pause? Given how helpful it is, why does this seem so unattainable most days?

DAY TWO: THE ONE MINUTE PAUSE

A practice that's become an absolute lifesaver is the One Minute Pause. I simply take sixty seconds to be still and let everything go.

As I enter the pause, I begin with release. I let it all go—the meetings, what I know is coming next, the fact I'm totally behind on everything, all of it. I simply let it go. I pray, *Jesus—I give everyone and everything to you*. I keep repeating it until I feel like I'm actually releasing and detaching. *I give everyone and everything to you, God*. All I'm trying to accomplish right now is a little bit of soul-space. I'm not trying to fix anything or figure anything out. I'm not trying to release everything

perfectly or permanently. That takes a level of maturity most of us haven't found. But I can let it go for sixty seconds. (That's the brilliance of the pause—all we are asking ourselves to do is let go for sixty seconds.) And as I do, even as I say it out loud—*I give everyone and everything to you*—my soul cooperates a good bit. I'm settling down.

I even sigh, that good sigh.

Then I ask for more of God: *Jesus—I need more of you; fill me with more of you, God. Restore our union; fill me with your life.*

You'll be surprised what a minute can do for you. Even more so as you get practiced at it. Honestly, you can do this pause nearly anytime, anywhere—in your car, on the train, after you get off your phone. I know it seems small, but we have to start somewhere. This pause is accessible; it's doable.

The desert fathers of the third and fourth century were a courageous, ragtag group, followers of Jesus who fled the madness of their world to seek a life of beauty and simplicity with God in the silent desert. For they saw the world as “a shipwreck from which every man has to swim for their life.”² And think of it: they had no cell phones, no internet, no media per se, not one automobile, Starbucks, or leaf blower. The news that came their way was local; they did not carry the burdens of every community in the world. They walked everywhere they went. Therefore, they lived at the pace of *three miles an hour* (!). Yet they felt the world sucking the life out of them, and they decided to do something about it.

And so we who live in a far more insane hour and who want to find a better life in God ought to be the first to adopt a few practices that get us out of the madness and into a more settled way of living. Most of us would be happy simply to be a little less rattled.

1. How was your first attempt at the One Minute Pause? Where did your thoughts go? How long did the minute seem to last?
2. Part of the One Minute Pause is asking for more of Jesus and to be filled with his life. Is this request of greater union with God something you've asked for before? How do you think that might help the state of your soul to do so regularly?
3. The desert fathers described this world as "a shipwreck from which every man has to swim for their life." Would you agree or disagree? Why?

DAY THREE: FREEDOM OF HEART

I'm sitting on a bluff in the wild southwest corner of Wyoming, sweeping the horizon with my binoculars. The view up here is staggering—only sagebrush and coarse grasses for hundreds of miles in every direction; I can see the curve of

the earth. It's going to be a hot August day. Heat waves are already shimmering in my view, making it hard to spot my quarry. Most folks would probably call these the badlands. Blistering in summer, freezing all winter, nearly always windy—but I come here because wild horses love this country. They feel safe out here.

There are still hundreds of herds of wild horses running through the American West, a fact that makes my soul happy. Wildness, open spaces, and animals living in utter freedom are all good for our humanity. Sometimes we need geography to usher our soul into spaciousness, lightheartedness. And so I've come.

A golden eagle is sitting only twenty yards downslope in front of me. Golden eagles are massive raptors, with seven-foot wingspans and the strength to carry off fawns and lambs. This one is perched on the edge of a cliff, scanning the alkaline landscape for prey. It's a perfect perch for him; with the updrafts coming up the bluff, all he has to do is spread his wings, step off, and he's gone. I can't believe he hasn't seen me. Maybe he has and simply doesn't care. I sigh with peace and happiness.

At dawn this morning I got in my truck, pointed myself north, and just . . . drove away. For a blissful week of solitude. No real plans: only my camping gear, fishing rod, and maps of the Wind River range, Yellowstone, and Montana. This is an unplanned, last-minute trip—something Jesus practically insisted on. Many moons have come and gone since I took time to get away, care for my soul, find God.

And I must tell you, it's an extraordinary feeling to have your world fading in the rearview mirror, nothing but an open road before you.

It's a practice Jesus himself cherished (minus the truck). I've always been intrigued by his ability to just up and walk away from his world. Right there in the opening chapter of Mark, with excitement building and crowds swelling all round him, Jesus disappears. He just . . . leaves.

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!" Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else" (Mark 1:35-38).

Jesus models a freedom of heart I think every one of us would love to have. His ability to disengage himself from his world is so alluring.

So, like a good disciple, I've done the same. Everyone is wanting something from me, so I've followed my Master and . . . left. If I wanted to see wild horses I probably should have gotten here sooner, but ever since I left home this morning, I've been moseying, stopping to read those "points of historical interest" I usually blast by. It'll take a few days to enter in, but already I can feel that exquisite condition coming on—a rare, carefree lightheartedness.

1. How does Jesus model purposeful soul care for us?

2. What would it feel like for you to find moments to leave the madness of your world for time with God?

3. When is the last time you've felt the "rare, carefree lightness" described in today's reading? What does it do for your heart to know not only is this available but it is also God's desire for you?

DAY FOUR: BENEVOLENT DETACHMENT

We are talking in this study about making room in our lives for God so that we might receive more of his wonderful self in us and, with that, the vibrancy and resiliency we crave as human beings. There are external ways we can do this, simple steps like the One Minute Pause. And there are internal ways we do this as well.

To make room for God to fill the vessel of our soul, we have to begin moving out some of the unnecessary clutter that continually accumulates there like the junk drawer in your kitchen. Everybody has a junk drawer, that black hole for car keys, pens, paper clips, gum, all the small flotsam and jetsam that accumulates over time. Our souls accumulate

stuff, too, pulling it in like a magnet. And so Augustine said we must empty ourselves of all that fills us so that we may be filled with what we are empty of.³ Over time I've found no better practice to help clear out my cluttered soul than the practice of Benevolent Detachment. The ability to let it go, walk away—not so much physically but emotionally, *soulfully*.

Allow me to explain. We are aiming for release, turning over into the hands of God whatever is burdening us *and leaving it there*. It's so easy to get caught up in the drama in unhealthy ways, and then we are unable to see clearly, set boundaries, respond freely.

Mature adults have learned how to create healthy distance between themselves and the thing they have become entangled with. Thus the word *detachment*. It means getting untangled, stepping out of the quagmire; it means peeling apart the Velcro by which this person, relationship, crisis, or global issue has attached itself to you. Or you to it. Detachment means getting some healthy distance. Social media overloads our empathy. So I use the word “benevolent” in referring to this necessary kind of detachment because we're not talking about cynicism or resignation. Benevolent means kindness. It means something done in love. Jesus invites us into a way of living where we are genuinely comfortable turning things over to him:

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” (Matthew 11:28–30, NLT).

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 (Matthew 11:28–30, MSG).

Millions of people are feeling massively overburdened and looking for some way to lighten their heavy emotional load. This is something Jesus is particularly good at helping us with, which is why learning Benevolent Detachment is such a timely grace.

1. To make room for God to fill the vessel of our souls, we have to begin moving out some of the unnecessary clutter that continually accumulates there like the junk drawer in your kitchen. What specific things do you need to clear from your cluttered soul?

2. Describe what Benevolent Detachment is by writing a few thoughts on the meaning of each word. How might turning things over to God in this way help you lighten your load?

3. What most stood out to you from the words in Matthew 11:28–30? Why?

DAY FIVE: GIVE EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING TO ME

Worry is only one of a hundred things that burden our souls. Genuine concern is just as dangerous, maybe more so because it's grounded in something noble—your concerns for your aging parents, a sick friend, a people group, a cause crying out for justice. A friend of mine runs a home rescuing trafficked girls. He wrote last week to say that the government facility is overcrowded, and they asked him if he could take eleven girls. The heartbreak was my friend had room for only five; he had to make the brutal call. Today a therapist colleague who does remarkable work with military men and women suffering PTSD lamented he can't see enough people. "We're losing too many to suicide," he said. "It tears me up I can't help more."

Those kinds of things can fill a backpack and make it mighty heavy.

Jesus began teaching me about Benevolent Detachment almost two years ago. Every time I would turn to him with a question, he would say, *Give everyone and everything to me*. The invitation rang so true; I knew I needed to learn this. So I began to practice it as best I could. But then Jesus kept repeating the invitation. I'd be asking about something entirely

unrelated to the people in my life—car repairs, scheduling a trip, my tax returns—and Jesus would reply, *Give everyone and everything to me*. It was irritating. I finally realized that the reason he kept repeating it was because I wasn't practicing it very well. I was carrying people. Worrying about things.

We are far more entangled with the world than we know. And the thing is, people and causes have a way of entangling themselves with *you* too.

Some of this has to do with the moment we live in and the obliteration of social boundaries.

Thanks to social media, everyone's life is open and accessible through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram—all of it. We've created an assumption that you can enter and observe, or engage, with anyone, anywhere, anytime. There are no boundaries. We've created an assumption that we're entitled to enter anyone else's private space at any time. It's very harmful. Cell phones have been a major contributor to this loss of personal space. A friend who is a successful businessman explained to me how the rules of corporate loyalty have changed: "They expect you to be available anytime, day or night, because of this," he said, holding up his phone. "They can text you, call you 24/7. You are now considered to be available anytime, all the time. Those are the new rules."

I told myself as I drove off into the wilderness this morning that I would turn my phone off for a few days to enforce my disengagement. But I've checked my messages several times in the last hour. It's so odd to be dialed into the technology of the world while I drive through rural countryside. This was the world of my grandmother, raised her entire life in rural America. Back in the day if you wanted to have a conversation with someone, if you wanted to enter their

world, you literally had to enter their world. You got in your car and drove to their farm and sat on their porch and had a conversation. You also understood that there are appropriate hours for doing so. People were very aware that there were public moments and private moments, public spaces and private spaces.

All that is completely gone now.

There is this unspoken assumption that anyone can enter your world anytime. It's suffocating to the soul; there's no breathing room. People are looking for some way to push this stuff back just a few feet. Gimme some space for heaven's sake.

Exactly.

Benevolent Detachment is your way out.

1. What does the invitation to release everyone and everything to Jesus provoke in you? Why?

2. How has the expectation from social media that you be available everywhere at all times affected the rhythm of your day and your ability to rest or simply breathe?

THE ONE MINUTE PAUSE

3. Who do you need to release to God now? What projects or deadlines do you need to release? Be specific . . . and then release them as you write your responses below.

RECOMMENDED READING

Before your group meets for the next session, we encourage you to read chapter 4, “Simple Unplugging,” of *Get Your Life Back*. That chapter will be the focus of session 2.



Experience the One Minute Pause App on Your Phone Today

*"I've developed an app to help you practice the
Pause. It's the beginning of a new way of living.*

Your soul is going to thank you."

John



WWW.PAUSEAPP.COM

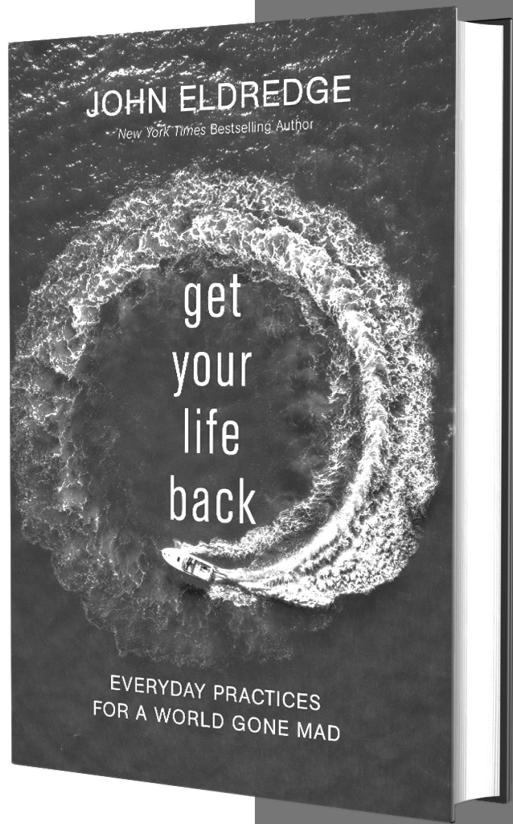
You've read *Get Your Life Back*—so you know the importance of regular soul care. For fresh weekly encouragement, listen to John Eldredge on the *Ransomed Heart* podcast. The conversations, stories, and teachings will strengthen your heart.

JOIN US FOR

John Eldredge's Weekly Podcast



Read the Book That Inspired This Study



CONGRATULATIONS ON
PARTICIPATING IN THIS
SIX-WEEK STUDY TO
GET YOUR LIFE BACK.

The good news is...there is even more!
The book *Get Your Life Back* includes
additional chapters not featured in the
video or study guide. To go deeper in
this message and discover new practices
for soul care, read *Get Your Life Back*.

www.johneldredge.com

