



In the last week of Jesus' life before His crucifixion we see Him clearly focused on accomplishing His purpose...His mission. In the weeks leading up to Easter we will focus in on what He did and said, who He engaged with, and how he made decisions. As we follow Him on His journey to the Cross, what lessons will there be for us?

## **Week Two: The Burden of Religion**

Text: Matthew 23:1-39

### Discussion Questions:

The following are based on the "My Application" Questions found in the bulletin this week. (Leader, urge your group members to attend worship—or watch the sermon online—and to spend time considering and answering those questions before coming to the group. This will produce a richer discussion time.)

- Are you more of a Rule Follower or a Rule Breaker? Give a short example.
- Review Matthew 23:1-32 together. Which of the seven "woes" that Jesus mentions (listed briefly in the sermon outline) do you think might apply to you? Give some examples of how you see them play out in your life.
- Why is it so easy to become an "accidental Pharisee"? (What is the appeal of Rules?)

- Read Matthew 11:28-30. How does being a Rule Follower make a person weary and burdened? How might that weariness lead to rebellion?
- What is Jesus' solution? How can He give you rest for your soul?
- How can we avoid living and thinking like a Pharisee or a Rebel?

## Prayer

As you prepare your group for prayer, read Matthew 11:28-30 slowly.

Ask group members to:

- listen carefully...prayerfully.
- Allow Jesus to show you the areas of your life where you are weary and burdened.
- Ask Him if those are areas where you are striving to Keep the Rules. Or, are they areas where you've given up on the Rules and you are going your own way?
- Ask Him for one way you can learn from Him and put into practice this week that relates to your wearying burden.

## Application

Pair up and share with a friend what the prayer time was like for you.

- What did God say to you about your weariness?
- What do you believe He wants you to learn from Jesus in this area that could give you rest?
- Plan to check in with your friend next week to see how it's going.

## Scripture Memory

*"Come to me , all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.*

Matthew 11:28