

The background features large, flowing, wavy shapes in shades of blue and green. In the lower-left quadrant, there is a circular icon composed of two arrows: a blue arrow pointing clockwise and a green arrow pointing counter-clockwise, creating a circular motion effect.

Daily Journal &
Group Workbook
for

UNLOCKING THE
RHYTHMS
OF **GRACE**

Discover how to partner
with God in a new way
for your next season.

PATRICK A. HEGARTY

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Using the Daily Journal & Workbook

This Daily Journal & Workbook is a companion of the book *Unlocking the Rhythms of Grace*.

At the end of each chapter of the book, a response question is asked which assists you in the personal application of the principles mentioned.

This journal provides an easy way to log your responses, and have quick access to them during small group meetings.

FOR USE AS A DAILY JOURNAL

Each chapter of the book has a dedicated section in this workbook. Simply look up the appropriate chapter number in the Contents section, and write down your thoughts and responses.

FOR USE AS A SMALL GROUP WORKBOOK

If you are working through this material as a group, there are Group Session notes included to guide your discussion. The Daily Journal pages are sandwiched within these group sessions to ensure easy reference to your responses during group meetings.

[Group Session 1]

Introductions

NOTE: BEFORE THE MEETING

Take time to read the introduction to *Unlocking the Rhythms of Grace* as preparation for the meeting.

PRAYER & WORSHIP

Spend some time thanking God for who He is; for each group member; and for what He will be doing amongst you for the duration of this material.

IF YOUR GROUP IS NEW

Spend some time getting to know each member of the group. Ask each to share with the group their name and other key information about family and history. Then ask one or more of the following discussion starters:

1. When did you most rapidly grow as a Christian? What circumstances and people contributed to that?
2. What has been the major thread of your spiritual story over the last few years?
3. If God was focusing on one area of your life to change, what would it be?

FORM A GROUP AGREEMENT

If your group does not already have a list of agreed guidelines, consider implementing them now. Discuss together the sort of group culture you would like. Some of the agreed guidelines for the duration of this material might include:

- **Punctuality:** Group members agree to attend for the duration of the material, or provide advance notice of absence.
- **Confidentiality:** What is said in the group stays in the group.
- **Faithfulness:** Group members will honor the group by doing pre-readings and application questions prior to arrival.
- **Appropriate Candor:** A degree of personal transparency is needed if issues raised in the material are to be processed well.
- **Make room for all to speak:** No one should dominate discussion at the exclusion of other group members.
- **No “advice giving”:** Group members are to listen and support without telling others how to change their life, unless that advice is requested.
- **Drawing out the best in each other:** Members are to look for potential in each other, not problems. They should encourage without criticism.
- **Prayer support:** Keep a list of prayer points so group members can support each other.

READ TOGETHER:

JESUS RADICAL OFFER

Jesus said: "*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*" (Matthew 11:28-30)

Jesus began His profound offer by qualifying who should receive it. He called for the weary and burdened.

The reality is that all of us are burdened to some degree, but many are unaware of it and therefore not seeking a solution. The endemic burdens of pride, lust, isolationism, competition, fear and even selfish ambition can place on us a residual strain that we have become accustomed to, and perhaps even cherish.

Jesus calls to those who know they are in need, and want to do something about it. He knows that we only embrace change when we actually have a personal desire to do so.

SHARE TOGETHER:

What do you consider to be the greatest burdens that people of your community are bearing? Think especially of issues and circumstances that consume people's thoughts, and perhaps fuel their anxiety.

What solutions might Jesus offer them if He were walking with them today?

READ TOGETHER:

THE BURDENS THAT MAKE US WEARY

Most of us remain largely unaware of the inner stress levels we endure. We normally focus on the strain caused by external circumstances. And yet it is our internal stress, and our bodies response to it, that results in up to one third of westerners (including committed Christ-followers) having to rely on anxiety or depression related medication at some point in their lifetime.

Jesus' call was to those who felt the burden of religion – rules that couldn't be kept, and shame that couldn't be resolved. We might wrongly assume that these burdens have disappeared, when in fact they continue to be pervasive. Consider the following list of common stress-builders:

- **Performance mentality:** A condition that is actually rewarded by our society, but one which destroys far more people than it elevates. It often takes the form of a competitive mindset, exemplified by: a needs to achieve perfect appearance; or a need for elevated status among peers; or the “perfect parent” syndrome; or an obsessive drive to achieve.
- **Shame management:** The pervasive awareness of our continued failure and apparent inability to overcome sin. Being unable to embrace the forgiveness and empowerment of God's grace binds people to a perceived obligation to experience guilt. This tends to drive them from God's presence, thus exacerbating the issue.
- **Worldly entanglements:** In the absence of radical faith in God to provide all we need, the “worries, cares and riches of this world” (Luke 8:14) become idols to which we bow. Rather than being free to make clear kingdom choices about our priorities, money and relationships - people feel bound to accommodate the demands of worldly concerns.
- **Anxiety:** The fears of death; lack; failure; aloneness etc. feed a drive to control our lives. People believe wrongly that they will not be able to cope if that which they fear comes upon them.

DISCUSS TOGETHER:

At what level do these stressors impact your own life? Can you think of any other burdens which are particularly common to God's people?

What creates the biggest internal burden in your own inner world?

READ TOGETHER:

THE BURDEN THAT SETS US FREE

After calling to those who were aware of their burden, Jesus promised rest in the form of an easy yoke. Every yoke has some degree of weight to bear, but Jesus declared that His was easy. He wasn't inferring that life's problems would disappear, but rather that the unattainable expectation of perfection could be removed from our shoulders.

Jesus' yoke carries with it a very simple and light expectation – that of surrendering to His Lordship and trusting in Him. A yoke is a neck harness for two, and by taking on Jesus' yoke, we bind ourselves to Him. We allow His strength to guide, and provide what is needed.

This yoking brings us in to the world's most uneven partnership – one where Jesus determines to have His will enacted on earth with us as His co-laborers.

DISCUSS TOGETHER:

Consider the burdens you have just discussed that bear down on you and your community. In what ways would yoking yourself to Jesus change that burden?

READ TOGETHER:

In exchanging the yoke of religion for the yoke of Jesus we lose a burden, and gain a grander vision for life. The energy, emotion and striving that were previously spent on temporal and unachievable goals, can now be invested into that which brings life to us and the world.

We were created to make a difference – to bear fruit as we grow into maturity. We all carry within us seeds of replication, but our life can only multiply as it should if we are yoked to Jesus as our Source.

“Remain in me”, Jesus said, “... as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:4-5)

The principles found in this book help you to intentionally abide in Jesus in a fruitful and developing partnership. Relying on your own strength only results in weariness and fruitlessness. You are made for so much more than that.

DISCUSS TOGETHER:

What does it mean to you in real terms to “abide in Jesus”? How do relate to Him? How do you intentionally rely on Him? What fruit has come from that form of abiding?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER:

Spend some time closing the meeting by praying specifically for the needs of the group members. In particular, pray that God would help them release their burdens to Him, so they might find rest.

PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT MEETING:

Through the next week, read through chapters 1.1 – 1.5.

Limit your reading to one chapter per day. At the end of each chapter is a response question. Write out your response on the corresponding pages in this Journal & Workbook.

Your responses will make up the majority of the discussion at the next meeting.

[Group Session 2]

Walking & Working



OPEN IN PRAYER & WORSHIP

Spend some time thanking God for His interaction in your life. Have the group members each praise Him for a specific moment in the week where His presence made a difference in their life.

READ TOGETHER:

Matthew 11:28-30 (MSG)

“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.”

DISCUSS TOGETHER:

If you heard Jesus personally make that offer as you walked by and while you were in the middle of a busy life-season, what would be your reflexive response. Discuss your responses and reasons behind them?

Now share your responses from this week’s readings.

[1.1]



Breathing on Dust

CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- Spiritual dehydration comes when we try to live out our faith in our own strength.
- We are the best of who we are created to be when the breath of God's Spirit is empowering us through grace.
- Walking and working in God is a rhythm that invites His help to both be and do.
- To grow spiritually, we should intentionally extend ourselves and then pull-back so God can recreate us.

YOUR RESPONSE:

How have you managed to find balance between the demands of your life, and your rest in God? Do your days and weeks have a rhythm where you oscillate from output to input? Or do you perhaps feel like you have flat-lined in to a life of constant output? How would you describe your levels of rest?

[illegible]

[1.2]

Room to Breathe



CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- The rest Jesus offers is found in Himself.
- We grow best in our spiritual journey by engaging with God personally.
- We struggle to breathe spiritually when we over-reach the capacity of our inner world.

YOUR RESPONSE:

Have you had moments along your journey of faith where you became aware that your inner walk with God is not keeping up with the demands of your life? If so, what caused you to over-reach in that way?

How did you adapt to match that challenge? And if you could not, what have been the long term effects of the internal deficit that resulted?

[illegible]

[1.3]

Moments of Transition



CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- Adopting a new form of surrender, submission or sacrifice for God is sometimes a trigger for spiritual transformation.
- Personal hungers are like fuel for a potential new fire in our hearts. We should in particular long to **know** God, **grow** more like Jesus, and **go** into the world in the power of the Spirit

YOUR RESPONSE:

Are you able to identify any key moments of spiritual transition in your life? Choose one of significance and make a note of the following:
What were the factors that brought you to the point of transition?
What were the evidences of transformation?

This image shows a single page from a notebook or ledger. It features a series of evenly spaced, thin grey horizontal lines running across the width of the page. The background is a light cream color. There are no vertical margin lines, text, or other markings present on the page.

[1.4]

Walking with God



CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- The core and eternal elements that God is growing in us relate to faith, hope and love.
- God calls us on from being unsaved (natural) to carnal, and eventually to being spirit led.
- Each transition highlights a different Rhythm of Grace.

YOUR RESPONSE:

What is God actually developing in you in this season? Is it a specific fruit of the Spirit, or might it be a specific form of surrender or submission to His will? Write down your thoughts and include any of the circumstances which have contributed to this issue coming to the fore.

[illegible]

[1.5]

Working with God



CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- Walking with God should always result in us working with God to bring about His purposes.
- God does all the hard work, and yet we still contribute inasmuch as we expend energy being faithful.
- Every season of life has opportunities to bear spiritual fruit.
- God has assignments for us that work together to fulfil our true north.

YOUR RESPONSE:

What assignment has God got you on right now? In what ways do you need His strength to be fruitful in that work?

[illegible]

TO CONCLUDE THIS MEETING

SHARE TOGETHER:



What is the verdict for you personally? Are you:

1. Growing steadily with God's help?
2. Stuck in your walk – unable to break-free of habits and thoughts that bind you?
3. Stale – going around the same spiritual mountains year-after-year, dissatisfied in your faith, but hanging in there?
4. Spiritually fruitful – able to live predominantly from the empowering grace of God and bearing spiritual fruit?

What do you see as your next step in your spiritual journey with Christ?

PRAY TOGETHER:

Spend some time praying with thanksgiving for each person.
Acknowledge and affirm their past growth and future possibilities in Him.

[Group Session 3]

Spirit & Truth



OPEN IN PRAYER & WORSHIP

Spend some time thanking God for His interaction in your life. Have the group members each praise Him for a specific reason to have faith in Him in all things.

READ TOGETHER:

Read out loud Genesis 22:1-12

Faith is not something we simply profess – it is to bring about a response of some sort. That action can take many forms. Abraham's journey of faith had included seasons where he was simply to believe in God's promise, waiting expectantly for a son. The required response in that case was to not try and take matters into his own hands.

In the passage just read, the opposite was expected – Abraham was this time told to take Isaac in his hands and sacrifice him on the altar.

To determine the faith response God is looking for, we must be listening to His voice. There is no rigid formula, faith only works in the context of an active relationship with God. He wants us to rely on Him through His word – not rely on what we think we know of His ways.

Now share together your responses from this week's readings.

[2.1]



Faith Foundations

CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- Faith is an active word – one that has an accompanying action.
- We are to have faith in: God's existence; character; word; atoning work; and sufficiency in all things.
 - We grow in faith by engaging with God, the Faithful One.

YOUR RESPONSE:

In what area of your life do you most strongly rely on God? How does that faith make you differ from those around you that have no faith? Are your choices and priorities different? How does your faith direct your life?

[illegible]

[2.2]

Spirit and Truth



SUMMARY:

- God is looking to grow our faith in Him constantly.
- Faith comes from knowing the truth about God, and the personal revelation He gives in our Spirit.

YOUR RESPONSE:

Our faith in God grows when we know the truth about who He is, and engage with Him through his powerful Holy Spirit. Romans 8:16 says that the Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God. In regard to Spirit & Truth, which of the two elements does your personality type more naturally embrace? What are some ways that you could develop the other facet of this rhythm of grace?

[illegible]

[2.3]

Faith to Walk



CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- During our life this side of heaven, we need faith to *endure* tough circumstances rather than faith to *remove* tough circumstances.
- Sustaining grace is always available and yet not automatically embraced, we can choose to reject it.
- To walk in the Spirit our logic must agree with His about the attributes of God.
- God builds within us the fruit of the Spirit.
- God also grants us an awareness of our spiritual adoption which builds our identity and security.

YOUR RESPONSE:

Your daily walk with God is a relationship, not a theory. Spirit and truth are both powerfully developed when we invest in a regular time of reading His word, reflecting on its truth, and talking to Him about its ramifications to our life. This week, before your next small group session, jot down a scripture that you have meditated on in your own devotional times. Then talk through with the group the ways God spoke to you about it and helped you apply it to your life.

[illegible]

[2.4]

Faith to Work



CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- We are all expected to both walk in faithfulness, and work in faith.
- Jesus expects our reasoning to be based in His unlimited resources.
- We are to have faith in what God is doing and saying.
- Jesus taught that we are to see, hear and remember the works of God.

YOUR RESPONSE:

There is a key principle to take from this session – our most fruitful work for God comes from us listening and following what He is saying. Our spiritual ears are grown during our time alone with Him. A powerful walk with God produces powerful work with God. What has been one of the most memorable moments when God did something in or through you that only His power could achieve?

[illegible]

[2.5]

Igniting the Engine of faith



CHAPTER SUMMARY:

- Hunger to know God is the fuel for the spiritual engine we call Spirit & Truth.
- Radical surrender to God is the catalyzing spark which sets the process in motion.

YOUR RESPONSE:

We have seen today that hunger for God and radical surrender combine to kick-start our journey into greater faith. As you contemplate that, is there any other desire that you might be pursuing that stands in opposition to seeking God fully?

Many such personal pursuits are an attempt to find fulfillment outside of our relationship with God. Come before Him now and pray as King David once did: "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts" (Psalm 139:23). What stands between you and me right now Lord?

[illegible]

TO CONCLUDE THIS MEETING

READ TOGETHER:

For faith to grow it needs to be stretched. This will look different for everyone. For the more contemplative disciple it might require time to be spent amongst the needy, asking God to show who needs blessing that day. For the doer, it might mean they spend more time reflecting on God's word, waiting for Him to speak.

What can you do this week that would stretch your faith, without compromising your ability to rest in God? At your group meeting, you will discuss together how that went for you.

PRAY TOGETHER:

Spend some time praying with thanksgiving for each person. Ask God to reveal new ways in which they can rely on Jesus more.

For a more comprehensive understanding and experience of the dynamic of Spirit & Truth, go to www.hegarty.com.au. There you will find articles, blogs, courses and other resources to take your next steps.

[Group Session 4]

Repent & Believe



DISCUSS TOGETHER:

Begin by having each member of the group feedback the outcome of their faith-based exercise from the end of last week's group meeting.

Prayer & worship

Thank God together for what He is doing among you, and what He has planned for each group member's future.

Now share together your responses from this week's readings.

[3.1]

A Hopeful Mind



SUMMARY:

- Hope is the language of heaven.
- We have permission in Christ to reason from His perspective.
- The hurt and disappointments of our past are not the determinants of our future.
- The spiritual engine of hope is to repent of Satan's lies, and believe on God's truth.

YOUR RESPONSE:

You have probably had your fair share of disappointments in life. How greatly has this effected your level of hope in God? Is there any area where you need help to believe that God has a plan for redemption and transformation? How would life look if God actually did intervene in that situation?

[illegible]

[3.2]

An Engine of Change



SUMMARY:

- To begin personal transformation, it helps to have a clear and preferred future in mind.
- Fear of loss, and lack of inner resource keep us from transitioning to a preferred future.
- Behavioral change and intimacy with God form a symbiotic relationship

YOUR RESPONSE:

In the last session you identified an issue in your life that would benefit from God's redemptive power. How much do you really want to address that? If you knew it could change, would you pursue that path? Are you willing to submit again to God's will for your life in that area?

[illegible]

[3.3]

Repenting from Religion



SUMMARY:

- A religious framework of regulations and rituals that was intended for good, should never replace a deep and personal relationship with God.
- A deep sense of identity and security come from our personal engagement with God.
- We are to be regarded in a positional sense as “sons”, not “slaves”.

YOUR RESPONSE:

Think back again to the area in which you would like to see God bring real change. What thinking needs to change there? What lie about yourself and God might you have bought in to? Most sinful and negative fruit in our life is caused by a corrupt root. What lies at the heart of the problem for you?

[illegible]

[3.4]

Believing for Today



SUMMARY:

- To change direction, we need God's grace to give what we cannot give ourselves.
- The transition from belief to repentance is "Kairos" – an opportunity to change based on a preferred future.
- The transition from repentance to belief is that of surrendering totally to God, relying on Him to provide and "blowing up the bridge" back to old behavior.
- God gives sufficient grace to meet every need, and works with our godly choices to follow His best path in the limited strength we have.

YOUR RESPONSE:

2 Peter 1:3 says that God's divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life. What is it then that you need? Is it strength, wisdom, encouragement, or perhaps peace? If you know what you need, and can be sure from scripture that it is God's plan to give it, then you can ask for it with confidence.

[illegible]

[3.5]

Believing for Tomorrow



SUMMARY:

- God is calling you by name – in accordance with the character He is building you in to.
- God is determined to break the equilibrium of life that keeps us stagnant.
- God's calling for us is most comprehensively fulfilled through our relationship with Him.

YOUR RESPONSE:

Have you noticed that God seems intent on developing a specific area in your life? Patience, vision, skills ... love perhaps? He knows where He is taking you and who He has designed for you to become. Look back on your walk with Him so far, what has He been growing in you that you would not have instigated on your own?

[illegible]

IN CONCLUSION

TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING EXERCISE

In regard to the area of development you raised in response 3.1, consider the following:

- Are there any lies you have believed about yourself or God that you have become aware of, and that need to be repented of?
- Are you ready to turn to God, relying on Him to give you what you really need?
- Is there anything you need to either cease or start doing which would be your step of obedience in the process?
- How might you engage with God in a new way that would help you receive His grace more comprehensively?
- Who could you ask to walk accountably with you on your journey?

Next week the group meeting will commence with members giving any feedback on progress with this process.

PRAY TOGETHER:

Spend some time praying with thanksgiving for each person. Ask God to give insights into where and how He is working to grow them.

For a more comprehensive understanding and experience of the dynamic of Repentance & Belief, go to www.hegarty.com.au. There you will find articles, blogs, courses and other resources to take your next steps.

[Group Session 5]

Faith & Deeds



DISCUSS TOGETHER:

Begin by having each member of the group feedback any progress.

PRAYER & WORSHIP

Thank God together for what He is doing among you, and the future breakthroughs He will continue to bring.

Now share together your responses from this week's readings.

[4.1]



Primary Love

SUMMARY:

- A personal and corporate experience of God's love is central to an effective witness for Christ.
- Love is the foremost among the three core elements of effective Christian living.
- Love reflects the nature of God, and is His primary mechanism for impacting the world.

YOUR RESPONSE:

What are the things in life that you love the most? List down the top five. But before you, make sure it is the list of "actual" not "aspirational" loves. Aspirational things are those you want to do, or know you should do, without necessarily being what you actually do.

Write the list as if your closest relative or friend, or even God wrote it for you. What would they say are the five things you love most?

[illegible]

[4.2]

Faith & Deeds



SUMMARY:

- An awareness of God's love progressively eradicates fear and shame.
- Love received and given is God's Plan A for advancing the kingdom.
- A hunger to go in God's name is the fuel for this dynamic of Faith & Deeds.
- Willingness to sacrifice for God and other people catalyzes the process.
- Our level of faith will determine the capacity of our spiritual gifts and subsequent deeds.

YOUR RESPONSE:

Do you know where God has gifted you? As part of the Body of Christ your focus on those gifts is vital. Write down your three primary spiritual gifts, or ask a close friend what they believe your gifts may be.

[illegible]

[4.3]

Seasonal Assignments



SUMMARY:

- In every season of life, we are positioned to take up God's assignment to be fruitful.
- We are mandated to: Love the world; Love God & people; Love the family of believers; Love unreached people groups.
- The lights are always green for us in these four areas.

YOUR RESPONSE:

Of the four mandates just mentioned, which might be the area of focus that God has positioned you for the currently? Enthusiasm thrives on intentionality ... what could be your next step in the direction you see?

[illegible]

[4.4]



Rest for the Weary

SUMMARY:

- Even within the midst of our challenging work for God, we are still invited to experience rest.
- Rest is an act of faith, believing that God sees our flawed efforts and yet blesses our faithfulness.
- God also offers rest for the restless – those who are excessively driven to see circumstances change.
- God calls us to go deeper in our calling, and wider in our impact. Kingdom ladders go down, not up.

YOUR RESPONSE:

Are you weary or restless? Both are conditions that atrophy our soul. What is it that has drained you?

For every drain, there simply must be a complimentary replenishment, otherwise some form of death is imminent. What do you need that will fill your soul again?

[illegible]

[4.5]

Crossing Jordan



SUMMARY:

- Being called of God is no guarantee that we will arrive in our Promised Land.
- The ongoing choice to cooperate with God's ways remains ours to make.
- Our wilderness season equips us with the faith to work with God.
- Our calling isn't a place or position; it is a condition of the heart.
- It is our relationship with God that molds our calling and character.

YOUR RESPONSE:

Where do you believe you are at on your spiritual journey in regard to faith, hope and love? Are you at the beginning; in a worshipful wilderness; or in your Promised Land? Faith, hope and love belong in all of those places of course, it is just a matter of which one rises to the surface at different times. Describe the season that God has you in right now, and what He is growing in you.

[illegible]

IN CONCLUSION

DISCUSS TOGETHER

In the first group meeting of this series, we discussed the various burdens that people in our culture endure. These loads that we bear make us weary inside and out.

The Promised Land that each of us are called to will be a place where we bear great fruit, both for God and through God.

Discuss together the viability of your group working together to ease the burdens your friends, neighbors and work associates.

What are their real and present needs?

How would Jesus address those needs?

How could He use you to be the answer they need?

PRAY TOGETHER:

Spend some time praying with thanksgiving for each person. Commit your dreams and goals to Him in faith that He wants to bless the world through you.

[Next Steps]

“How do I more deeply apply the principles found in this book?”

Unlocking the Rhythms of Grace is merely an introduction to the concepts relating to each of the major phases of spiritual development.

For more in-depth material, courses and other resources pertaining to growing faith, hope, and love – visit the website.

WWW.HEGARTY.COM.AU