



Lesson 3: “An Invitation to Rest”

3-5 In-Person Crew Club Plan

<u>Key Teaching Point</u>	I’m invited to find rest in what Jesus has done for me.
<u>Bible Verse</u>	“Then Jesus said, ‘Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.’” (Matthew 11:28, NLT)
<u>Bible Passage</u>	“Jesus offers us rest” (Matthew 11:28-30, NLT)
<u>Materials</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A Bible ● Two backpacks ● Twenty random heavy objects (books, rocks, metal water bottles, etc.) ● Images 1 and 2 ● Two decks of cards ● A device with a timer

Relate (20 minutes)

Welcome students with a snack.

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following icebreaker activities to do together while children eat their snack:

Icebreaker Options (Choose one.):

- Ask children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).
- Have children take turns sharing how they’re feeling today using the “How Are You Feeling?” chart (from the CKC Games Bag).
- Open a discussion with a question: “Have you ever done something that was difficult for you to do all on your own? Describe what happened.”

Play a game.

Backpack relay

Set-up: Divide crew members into two teams. Designate a start line and a finish line and ask each team to form a line behind the start line. The start and finish line should be approximately twenty large steps apart, but this can vary depending on the amount of space you have available. Give the first person in each line an empty backpack. Place the heavy objects on the ground just beside the first person in each line. Each team should have ten heavy objects.

To start the game, the first person in line puts the empty backpack on their back and runs to the finish line and then back to the start line. This student will then pass the backpack to the next person in line, who will put one of the objects into the backpack and run across to the finish line and then back to the start line to pass off the backpack again. This process will continue until all ten objects are placed into the backpack. One object should be added each time the backpack returns to the start line. The student who places the tenth object in the backpack will ONLY run across the finish line. The first team to run across the finish line with all ten objects in their backpack wins the game!

We are people who carry heavy burdens or weights every day. What weights do we carry? I'm not talking about physical weights we carry like backpacks filled with books or a giant gallon of milk. I'm talking about the weights we carry in our hearts. What things weigh heavy in your heart?

Take student responses.

Our hearts carry pain when others hurt us. Our hearts also feel heavy by our sins, when we disobey God, because we know that our sin separates us from God. Our hearts can feel heavy when we make mistakes, or when other people ignore us or make us feel bad about ourselves. We carry a lot of heavy things in our hearts, don't we?

Today we are going to learn that Jesus has an invitation for all of us who carry these heavy weights in our hearts. He invites us to find rest from these heavy burdens by coming to him.



Receive (20 minutes)

Receive God's Word.

Ask students: **What are some things that you have done that were hard to do? What happened and how did it make you feel? How did you get it done?**

Take student responses.

We need help to do things that are difficult, or even impossible, for us to do. Jesus offers to help us do the things that are hard for us to do or deal with in our lives. One thing that we find hard to do is to follow all of God's commands because of the sin in our hearts. In fact, the Bible says that all have sinned and fallen short...except Jesus. For that reason, Jesus is the perfect person to help us!

Activity: Rules, Rules and MORE Rules!

Pass out two decks of cards and ask students to spread them out on the floor, ground or a table.

Here's the task. I want you all to work together to sort these two decks of cards. I need to match cards by color and number, so for example, all the red kings need to be piled together, and all the black two's need to be piled together. This task needs to be accomplished in five minutes. One more thing, I have some rules for you to follow, so make sure you follow my instructions as you go!

Set a timer for five minutes. After each one minute interval, communicate each rule students will need to follow:

- After one minute: **Only use your left hand, put your right hand behind your back.**
- After two minutes: **You cannot speak to each other.**
- After three minutes: **Freeze! Do not move. You can only pass a card to the person who is the closest to you.**
- After four minutes: **Close both of your eyes.**

Discuss:

- **How did this game make you feel? How did this game make you feel about yourself?**
- **Do you think it was possible to accomplish this task?**

In Jesus' day, religious leaders made extra rules that made it impossible for people to get to heaven or to have a relationship with God, just like it was impossible for you all to accomplish this task.

How many of you felt frustrated or tired from this game?

Take student responses.

That's probably what people were feeling under the rules of the religious leaders, including a feeling of guilt and failure because no matter how hard they tried, they couldn't make themselves good enough to have a relationship with God or to receive life forever with him!

This is a burden, or a heavy weight that we all carry in our hearts. We can never be good enough to get to heaven or to have a relationship with God on our own, it's impossible!

This is why Jesus came to the people and gave them this invitation, and why Jesus still gives us this invitation today:

“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)

We don't earn heaven or a relationship with God by doing or saying the right things or by obeying all of God's commands, in fact, it's impossible for us to do everything perfectly! We only receive these things through faith as a gift that Jesus has won for us because he perfectly obeyed all of God's commands! Jesus invites us to come to him and find rest from trying to earn both of these things. True rest comes from receiving what Jesus has done for us! Will you receive Jesus's invitation of rest?

Close in prayer with students as you feel led.



Respond (20 minutes)

Apply God's truth.

Jesus invites us to find rest in him, but how do we receive this rest? Jesus

says we have to receive his yoke. What is a yoke? Does anybody know?

Is this the kind of yoke I'm talking about?

Show Image 1.

Nope! I'm talking about this kind of yoke.

Show Image 2.

This is a tool that is used to connect two farm animals together. These animals are called oxen. This yoke is a big wooden bar that connects these two oxen together. The two oxen work together to plow farm fields. Have any of you needed someone to help you carry something heavy or to accomplish a difficult task? This is exactly what a yoke does. A yoke helps the oxen plow the fields together!

So when Jesus invites us to take his yoke, he's asking us to take his help! He doesn't take the work away from us or tell us that we can continue to sin and disobey God. Instead, Jesus offers to carry the burdens in our hearts for us and with us! Jesus offers to walk with us and to teach us how to walk in God's ways. This is great news because Jesus perfectly obeyed God in every way, so he will be able to teach us to obey God in our words and actions as we follow and walk with him! Jesus promises that if we respond to his invitation and take his help, we will find and experience rest!

Sing and worship together.

Pick a song from the [Praise and Worship Guide](#), or choose one of your own. Incorporate movement into the songs whenever possible.

Pray together.

Every single person carries heavy weights in their hearts because we all sin against God and against one another. Let's spend some time in prayer for those we know and even those we don't know and ask Jesus to help them carry the burdens in their hearts.

Teach kids how to pray using the five finger prayer. Depending on your group, you may want to encourage students to pray aloud as a group or silently on their own. Give student guidance on when to move onto the next prayer point. Take thirty seconds to a

minute on each prayer point.

- Thumb: **Pray for those closest to you.**
- The pointer finger: **Pray for those that point the way: teachers, doctors and pastors.**
- The tallest finger: **Pray for leaders and authority figures.**
- The weakest finger: **Pray for the weak, sick and hurting.**
- The pinky: **Pray for yourself.**

Then, take prayer requests and close in prayer together.

Image 1



Image 2

