



INTRODUCTION

Keep Calm—and say no

The holidays are coming.

What's supposed to be a season of joy and celebration, often is not. We find ourselves distracted by preparations, overwhelmed by expectations, or depressed by our own circumstances. Let's learn how we can make the holidays enjoyable and meaningful!

We'll discover how to take a biblical approach to the holidays, and explore how we can be present, keep calm, and survive the season.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which do you tend to enjoy more - Thanksgiving or Christmas? Why?
2. Today we began a new series *Keep Calm* and we looked at Mary's example of saying no to her sister so she could sit at Jesus' feet.
 - Read the 3 main passages about Mary of Bethany. Luke 10:38-42, John 11:1-44, John 12:1-8.
 - Based on these three passages, as a group come up with a list of 3-5 words or phrases that best describe her relationship with Jesus.
 - Regarding your relationship with Jesus, in what way would you like to be more like Mary?
3. What are your "many things" going to be this holiday season?
 - Many extra events or parties?
 - Many things to decorate?
 - Many miles to drive or fly?
 - Many meals to cook or cookies to bake?
 - Many gifts to buy and wrap?
 - Many expectations to meet?
4. Which of your "many things" are you willing to give yourself permission to say no to so that you have more time to be with Jesus?
5. Practically, what does sitting at the feet of Jesus look like for you? Share ideas and encourage one another to sit at Jesus' feet each day this holiday season.

APPLICATION

The holidays are coming. What's supposed to be a season of joy and celebration, often is not. We find ourselves distracted by preparations, overwhelmed by expectations, or depressed by our own circumstances. Instead of feeling exhausted, distracted, and stressed, we can learn to feel more relaxed, present, and calm by taking a biblical approach to the holidays.

This week we are focusing on how you can give yourself permission to say no to some of the many things this season, so you don't miss the one thing that truly matters—Jesus. There are far too many demands and expectations placed on each of us. It's almost impossible to fulfill them all, even if we want to. If you can learn to say no without guilt, you will be freed from one of the biggest issues presented by an overburdened life. When we say no, we help our own balance and health. Keep calm and say no.

KEY VERSES (HCSB)

Luke 10:38-42
John 11:1-44
John 12:1-8