

# Can People Really Change? “Spiritual”- Jim Burgen/James Henderson

November 18-19, 2017

## Community:

1. Who are some of your closest friends and why do you consider them to be that?
2. What are some of the things that you enjoy doing the most with your closest friends and why?

## Core:

1. **Read Matthew 9:13.** Note: Sacrifice refers to our religious works Why do you think that God desires mercy more than our religious deeds? How does what He desires differ from what you typically think of religion? What would your life look like if you lived at life of mercy as a daily habit?
2. **Read Matthew 11: 28-30.** Where in your life are you feeling heavy or burdened, and how are those burdens affecting you? What does Jesus tell you to do with your burdens in life? What does this look like as a daily practice? What does Jesus promise to do if you come to Him with your burdens? What does it look like to take Jesus’ yoke and learn from Him? What would like be like if you had the “soul rest” that He offers?
3. James talked a lot about having a friendship with Jesus in our lives. While thinking about that, what comes to your mind when you think of having a friendship with Jesus? Do you have trouble believing that Jesus actually wants to build a friendship with you? If so, what makes that hard to believe?
4. James said that, *“Everything there is, it has been given to us for friendship with God. Everything.”* With that being said, what do you think a friendship with Jesus looks like practically in your life? What are some of the things that you do to connect with or experience God? What stirs within you when you think of Jesus desiring to walk with you, as a friend, through everything you experience whether good or bad?
5. James also said that, *“what makes for great friendship, makes for great prayer”*. What does your current prayer life look like? How can you make prayer into more of a friendship builder with God instead of a “religious thing” we do?
6. James talked about how we keep God at a distance and how we constantly draw back from His love. Is this true for your life? How do you keep God at a distance? What is holding you back from experiencing his closeness and love?

## Challenge:

This week, write down the main burdens in your life that you desire to bring to Jesus. Then, spend some time journaling about: (1) Where you need to experience the **Grace** that forgives you and sets you free from the burdens that weigh you down. (2) Where you need to experience the **Grace** that spiritually empowers you to release your burdens and experiencing rest. (3) Your **vision** for what your life could look like if you formed a daily habit of entering into the rest for your soul that Jesus promises (4) Your **intent** towards seeing that change—do you want to change how you handle your burdens? (5) Your **strategy** for doing something new and different in order to change the way you see and handle the burdens that life throws on your back. Come up with a specific measurable strategy and share it in next group meeting.