

Popular Women's Author Shaunti Feldhahn: What We're Misunderstanding About Matthew 11

In her first devotional book, popular women's author and speaker Shaunti Feldhahn is blowing the myth of rest wide open, starting with the touchstone verse in Matthew 11.

"Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me. For I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls," the disciple writes (Matt. 11:29).

"I realize there's something really crucial here," Feldhahn says. "It won't always be rest for your body. But even when you're busy, you cannot be stressed by it. You can feel rested, you don't have to be frazzled and worried and have that feeling of craziness, because look at the imagery that he gives us."

Despite what Christians may think, this verse is not about stopping work and going back to the barn for a nap.

"What He says is, 'No, while you're plowing the field in the heat of the day, you can find rest for your soul,'" Feldhahn says. "And to me, that was profound to realize I can be busy and find rest."

Find Rest, a 60-day devotional, is a first for Feldhahn, who is known for popular books like *For Women Only*, *The Kindness Challenge* and *The Surprising Secrets of Highly Happy Marriages*.

Given a choice, Feldhahn says she would have approached her latest project the same way she did all the others—with mass

amounts of research crammed into hundreds of pages that require time to process and digest.

But the Holy Spirit had a different idea.

"It's exactly what God set up, which is sort of a bite-size take one step a day," Feldhahn says. "[You read] one little thing that you didn't realize would matter and soak in it and [say], how does this apply to me? And then it just sort of soaks in instead of you having to work hard at it."

And the next day, and the next day. Until something is different.

"At the end of 60 days, you look back and go, 'My life is completely different.' It wouldn't have worked this way if I had set out to force myself to do everything different. Little habits of mine, little changes that come day by day. So I wish I could have said I was smart enough to have set it up this way, but the reality is, God set it up this way," she says.

Part of that process identifies eight key elements to avoiding stress and living peaceful life: Build only on rock, live according to your design, set aside Superwoman, connect with God, shift your perspective, create life-giving relationships, walk in obedience and have no fear.

When women focus on these eight elements, Feldhahn says, they can find sustainable rest to last them a lifetime.

Feldhan says element one, build only on rock, means basing decisions on the Word of God rather than emotions.

"It's so easy to make decisions based on our feelings, for example, and our feelings are going to change, our feelings can betray us," Feldhahn says. "And instead, I mean truly, this is such a theme in Scripture that you can't follow your feelings. And instead to make those decisions based on what you know is true and unchanging, no matter how you feel that

day.”

As for element three, setting aside Superwoman, Feldhahn busts a popular idea wide open.

“[We need to] get rid of the myth that we can have it all and do it all and be it all, all at the same time. But to some degree, we are just going to be busy in some manner or another. But it doesn’t mean I have to feel like it. It doesn’t mean I have to feel frazzled. That is not what God has for us.”

Instead, the Lord wants to share the burden with His followers. Believers do not have to shoulder their lives on their own.

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest,” Jesus says (Matt. 11:28).