



*Doing Busy
Better*
L

STUDY GUIDE

Glynnis Whitwer



Doing Busy Better Study Guide



We live in a generation that could work non-stop if we wanted to. We can access most anything online, any time of the night or day. Technology has obliterated the line between work and personal life. The expectations of others can feel like a constant hum of demand.

Is this the life God desires for us?

I don't think so. I believe God calls us to a productive life, but in a healthy way. He modeled this at creation with six days of work and one day of rest. But why is it so hard for most of us to rest?

As you read my book, *Doing Busy Better*, and work through this study guide, I pray you have some aha moments. My hope and prayer is the Lord shows you the following:

- If you are wired to work, that's okay. You don't have to feel guilty for enjoying work.
- Being busy isn't wrong if we do it in the right way.
- Rest is a promise, command and reward that we don't have to earn.
- Physical rest was always meant to lead us to soul rest.

I've designed this study by chapter, 13 in all. If you do this study in a group, feel free to combine the chapters according to the time you want to spend. Also, if you only have a short time for the study, just pick the questions that appeal most to you. I've included more than you'll probably need for a group.

Thank you for joining me on this journey. I'd love to hear from you along the way. You can find me at GlynnisWhitwer.com, and send me a note in the Contact section. Also, if you haven't subscribed to my blog, I'd love to have you join my community. I will be sharing more encouragement for your *Doing Busy Better* journey, along with book giveaways, over the coming months. As a subscriber you will also receive five free mobile lockscreens to download and be reminded of what God's Word says about rest.

In His Love,

Glynnis Whitwer

***** Thank yous are needed!** I had help putting this study guide together. First, I'm thankful for **Kim Stewart**, who led my launch team and helps me with ministry work. Kim is truly a gift from God! Next, I'm grateful for the following women on my book launch team who took the time to read my book, and suggest questions: Desiree Taylor, Tondi Wheat, Kristi Woods, Betsy DeCruz, Kelly Smith, Christina Hubbard, Christy Pearce. What a talented group of women! Thank you so much.



Chapter One
The Undercurrent of Unease



1. Imagine an ideal day. What would you do?

2. Can you think of a time when you felt overwhelmed? What were some of the contributing factors?

3. Have you ever said “yes” to something that you didn’t really have time for, thinking this opportunity might not come again? Share what that was.

4. Read Matthew 11:28-30: *“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.”*
 - Weariness can be physical and/or mental. Are you feeling weary now? If so, which kind of weariness?

5. When we take Jesus’ yoke on, He helps carry the weight of our responsibilities. How have you experienced this in your life?

6. God wants our schedules to be healthy, but our hearts are more important. Take an honest assessment of your heart, and identify what needs to come more in alignment with God’s heart.



Chapter Two

What Drives Us to An Overbusy Life?

1. Is there one optional task or responsibility you would like to remove from your to-do list? What is it and what keeps it on your to-do list?
2. Do you long to push the pause button on life some days? What keeps you from doing that?
3. What unrealistic expectations do you have about yourself?
4. Can you identify a “benefit” you might receive by living a life that’s busy all the time?
5. What fuels your inner motor and drives you to make the choices you make?
6. Have you ever felt the false guilt Glynnis mentions in chapter 2? How has false guilt affected you?



Chapter Three
Being Versus Doing



1. In what ways do you **need** God? Spend some time sharing the ways God meets your needs.

2. Have you ever experienced a drastic change of life like Glynnis did (hers was in a move across country)? What happened? How did you respond?

3. It can be hard to adapt when God changes our circumstances. Why is it difficult to change our priorities and our practices when God presents a new season in our lives?

4. Why is it so easy for women to attach our identity to our accomplishments?

5. Read John 1:12: *“Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”*
 - None of us have a perfect earthly father. What are some ways our understanding of God is affected by our experience with our earthly father?

 - Imagine a perfect heavenly Father. What does He think of you? How does He act toward you?



Chapter Four
God's Original Design for Work



1. God intentionally designed Adam with strength, intelligence and creativity to work and give him purpose. In what ways has God designed you?
2. God trusted Adam with His creation. Have you ever thought that God has trusted you with your gifts, family, life, etc? Does this idea cause you to think differently about your responsibilities?
3. God designed us to use our God-given talents in our work (whether that is paid or unpaid). How can you use your talents and gifts for your work?
4. Have you ever considered our tendency to over-work might be connected with our trust in God? How have you seen this true in your life?
5. What can we learn from the biblical account of creation that can help us manage our workloads?

6. Have you ever thought your home was the first in life of ministry? How do you use it as a ministry now? What actions will you take to make it a ministry?

7. Read Proverbs 31:30: "*Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.*"

- Glynnis explains what "fear" means in this context. What does this verse mean to you and how might it impact your life?



Chapter Five
God's Gift of Rest



1. What does rest look like for you? What are the positive connotations of rest and what are the negatives?

2. Read Exodus 34:21: *“Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even during the plowing season and harvest you must rest.”*
 - Often we determine we don't have time to rest. What is God's specific direction in this verse regarding those times?

3. Is there a season of your life, or a specific area of your life, that seemingly doesn't afford physical rest? If this is situational (like an illness), pray for God's strength to press on. If this is chronic, what changes might you make?

4. How does Glynnis describe spiritual rest? (p. 68-69) Have you felt the striving that hinders spiritual rest?

5. Read Hebrews 4:1-3. The author of Hebrews brings good news about God's gift of rest. What is our part in order to receive this rest?



Chapter Six

Four Conditions of Unhealthy Busyness



1. Consider the four types of unhealthy busyness: being busy without boundaries, being a busybody, doing work I'm not called to, and focusing on busy work over my best work. Which one causes the most problems in your life?
2. Evaluate your current level of busyness. Where do you need more white space or margin in your life, and how could you create that? What times during the week could you set aside for downtime alone or with family?
3. Do you have busybody tendencies? Where do you see this being most problematic? Work? Family? Friends? Social Media?
4. To what extent do you feel overly responsible and take on work that belongs to someone else? Can you identify some of the reasons why you overstep your boundaries at times?
5. Do you find it hard to say "no" when asked to take on a new responsibility? What can you do differently next time someone asks you to help, and you really don't want to?

6. What do you consider to be your best, most important work?

7. What busywork traps do you fall into, and how do they distract you from your best work?



Chapter Seven
Hurry is a Heart Condition



1. Do you find you are more impatient now than in years past? What tests your patience the most?
2. Describe a time when you felt loved. What did the other person do or say? How did they act?
3. What time of day or situation do you find yourself hurrying most? What can you do differently next time?
4. What is the difference between busy and hurry (p. 96-98)?
5. How did Jesus demonstrate an unhurried lifestyle?
6. What role does pausing have in combatting a hurried lifestyle?
7. Give an example of a time hurry cost you excellence. What did you learn from that experience?



Chapter Eight
A Heart at Rest



1. What would your friends say about your availability to listen and be present?

2. Read the words of Jesus: “*Martha, Martha,*” *the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”* (Luke 10:41–42)
 - What are some of the things that draw you away from sitting more at Jesus’ feet in worship and study?

3. Psalm 46:10 says: “*Be still, and know that I am God.*” We often focus on the first part of this verse, but sit with the second part for a minute: “*know that I am God.*” How does knowing who God is change your perspective on your current situation?

4. Do you ever find yourself loving God, but not people? Who in your life do you find it hard to love?

5. How can you share God’s kindness with someone today? Be very practical and specific.

6. Glynnis says, “People matter more than projects.” When you read this, what reactions and thoughts bubble up in your heart? What might God be saying to you about this?



Chapter Nine
The Sabbath Rest



1. Is there a past habit you felt enslaved to? How has Jesus brought you freedom?

2. What ways does overwork hold you in bondage? List them below.

3. As you shine a light on your to-do list, are there any tasks you assigned to yourself that weren't God's assignments? How do you determine the difference between what God has assigned and tasks you lay out for yourself?

4. Self-defeating tendencies can be at the root of our over-busy lives. Pray that God would illuminate what's going on in your heart and fill out the chart below if you identify a task or activity that has the wrong motive.

Task or Activity	Harmful Motive
1.	People pleasing <i>(see Hebrews 11:6)</i>
2.	Need for control in my life <i>(see Proverbs 19:21)</i>
3.	Desire to be important to others <i>(see Colossians 1:15-18)</i>
4.	Lack of trust in others or God to get things done <i>(see Psalm 147:5)</i>

5. Read Mark 2:23-28.

Jesus' coming fulfilled every aspect of the law. Jesus is the "*Lord of the Sabbath*." In Him, we are to cease working to earn favor with God. Observing a weekly rest from work points to the remembrance of what Christ completed on the cross. How can the idea of resting in Jesus' atoning work on the cross for our sins help inform your thinking about how you create or maintain your task lists?

6. Read the following paragraph and as you do, wrestle with the words as if they are God talking about you. How would you describe the love and commitment of God to you? (Remember, He demonstrated that love and commitment through the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.) Do you trust God deep down? Why or why not?

"So many times I asked her to trust me. She'd only seen goodness at my hand, she'd only been loved and cared for with tenderness. I'd never abandoned her or neglected her. And yet she didn't trust me. Countless times a day, in small and big ways, she did the opposite of what I asked."

7. How would you describe your trust level in God? Circle the phrase that describes you best below or write your own:

Strong trust, rarely doubt Him

Moderate trust, doubt Him frequently

Weak trust

Virtually no trust in God's ability to take care of me

8. Glynnis talked about how her fear of flying revealed a lack of trust in God. Are there areas of fear or stress in your life where you might be trusting things or people other than God?



Chapter Ten
Is it Ever Okay to Quit?



1. What is your attitude towards quitting? Where did this belief come from?

2. Read Matthew 5:29-30: *“If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.”*
 - Jesus was using exaggeration here, but His point is clear. Is there an area of your life where your thoughts, words or actions aren't where you'd like them to be? If so, what can you do to make a change immediately?

3. Are you involved in something where there is ongoing conflict? Take some time to consider how you might contribute to the problem.

4. Consider your emotional resources at this point in your life. Where would you be on a scale from 0 to 10, if 10 were full?

5. If you are feeling at a 5 or less, you might want to reconsider some of your commitments outside your home. Is there something you can remove from your schedule?

6. What skills come naturally to you? What skills are difficult? Consider your current commitments and see if any of them require a skillset that falls into your difficult category. If so, pray about whether that's where God wants you long-term. (Note: Good things like our core committed relationships are difficult at times. This question applies to other commitments.)



Chapter Eleven
How to Find Sustainable Balance



1. Do you ever feel “not enough”? If so, take a few minutes to share that area (if in a group). Whether in a group or alone, start by praying for God to show you His pleasure in you, and to help fill those gaps.

2. Does Glynnis’ explanation of how to find true balance make sense? (Internal resources equaling external demand) Is there an activity that is taking more out of you than you had expected? What is it?

3. What brings you joy? What is life-giving? Take some time and make a list of the things you love to do.

4. List your strongest internal assets using the SHAPE acronym. In other words, what are your strengths?

Spiritual Gifts

Heart

Abilities

Personality

Experience



Chapter Twelve
How to Be Peaceful and Productive



1. What are some common results of a self-directed life? Give specific examples.

2. Why would God hold back success in an area of our lives? Consider the story of Jesus and the disciples as told in John 21 as you answer this question.

3. Is there an area in your life where you feel you've given your all, and yet nothing changes? Consider if this area has been self-directed more than God-directed.

4. Read James 1:5-8: *"If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do."*
 - How is wisdom different from knowledge?

 - What is the condition for receiving wisdom from the Lord?

 - Do you need to hear from the Lord about something? If the answer is yes, consider if doubt might be an issue.

5. List the responsibilities in your life that only you can do.

6. How well are you stewarding the responsibilities the Lord has given you? Identify areas that need more attention.

7. If there's an area of your life that feels more out of control than others, how could taking time to plan make a difference?

8. Do you have a master to-do list as Glynnis mentions? If not, take time this week to create one.



Chapter Thirteen
Finding True Soul Rest



1. As we come to the end of our study, take some time to read Jesus’ words again found in Matthew 11:28-30: *“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.”*
 - What does it mean to take on Jesus’ “yoke”?
 - How does the gentleness and humbleness of Jesus impact your life?

2. The ancients defined the “soul” as our entire being – our mind, spirit and body. How does following Jesus offer rest for each of those areas?

3. Glynnis talks about the difference between saying we trust God, and really trusting Him. Have you experienced this difference in your life? In what area is God calling you to trust Him with your whole heart?

4. What can *not* knowing and accepting our identity in Christ lead us to do?

5. Is there an area of your life where you feel insecure? Perhaps its finances or how you look. List those areas where you feel most insecure, identify a false belief and the truth.

Area of Insecurity	False Belief	Truth of God
<i>EX. I worry about losing my job.</i>	<i>My financial security lies with me.</i>	<i>God is my ultimate provider.</i>

6. As we close our time together, consider the lessons the Lord has taught you through *Doing Busy Better*.

- What are a few things you have learned? This could be about yourself, about God, etc.

- With the Lord's help, what will you do differently?

Glynnis Whitwer is Executive Director of Communications for Proverbs 31 Ministries, and contributor to their *Encouragement for Today* devotional, reaching over a million women each day. She's the author of nine other books, including *Taming the To-Do List* and *I Used to Be So Organized*. She and her husband, Tod, live in Arizona and have five young-adult children. Connect with Glynnis at www.GlynnisWhitwer.com where she encourages women to live with margin and room to breathe while still getting things done. Subscribe to receive blog updates and Glynnis will email you five free mobile lockscreens to be reminded of what God's Word says about rest.