

THE ABC's
of
Becoming
A Better Christian

***B*BALANCE**

Tonight, We Want To Examine

Balance

*B*alance Must Be A Priority

*A*wareness of Seasons

*L*ead By The Spirit

*A*adjustments Are Necessary

*N*o Is A Necessary Ingredient

*C*ontentment Is Key To Living A Balanced Life

*E*xhaustion Is An Indicator That Balance Is Missing



Balance Must Be A Priority

Balance In The Christian Life Is **A Challenge**

Seeking to meet the needs of **family**, **household**, **work** and **self-care** significantly impacts **YOUR LEVEL** of PEACE, JOY and FULFILLMENT.

Balance is really **a series of decisions** that you must make in any given day about how to **allocate your LIMITED resources**.

How Can We Improve Our Decision–Making To Find Better Balance
KNOWLEDGE

Hosea 4:6 ~ People Are Destroyed By **A Lack of Knowledge...**

Know Your Purpose ~ {Prioritize It}
Know Your Self ~ {Be Honest About You}

With **This Knowledge**, you'll begin to make better, more confident decisions about **when**, **how**, and **where** to spend your time and energy.

BALANCE KEEPS THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE ~ KEEPS THE MAIN THING THE MAIN THING



Balance Must Be A Priority

Luke 2:52 (NIV)

52 And Jesus **grew** in *wisdom and stature*, and *in favor with God and men*.

What do these four areas represent?

1) *Psychological*, 2) *Physical*, 3) *Social* and 4) *Spiritual* dimensions of living.

God is not just concerned with your “**soul**”
He’s concerned with every aspect of your being which includes the following:

Physical: Proper Rest, Nutrition, Activity (Work, Exercise and Recreation)

Psychological: Mental and Emotional

Relational: Family (spouse, children), Friends, and Co-Workers.

Spiritual: Trusting and obeying God.... Our Worship, Witness, and Walk

Simply put: **BALANCED INDIVIDUALS** function as God has designed and intended them to function.

JESUS SPENT TIME MINISTERING IN THE CHURCH AND AT THE HOUSES OF SINNERS



Balance Must Be A Priority

BALANCE IS LIKE A PENDULUM

*It's that brief moment in the middle when you're swinging from **one extreme** to the other.*

*Part of our **pursuit of balance** contains **THE REALIZATION** that it is **never perfectly achieved**.*

THE PURSUIT OF BALANCE IS THE GOAL.

So don't be frustrated with the constant effort.

James 1:2-4 (NIV)

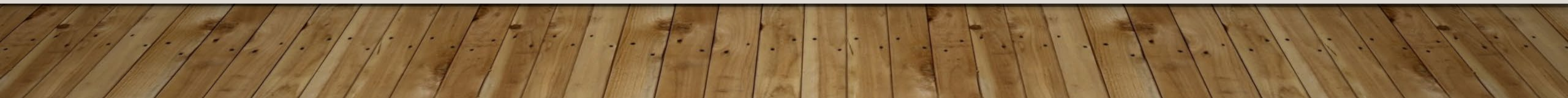
2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

*3 because you know that the testing of your faith **DEVELOPS PERSEVERANCE**.*

*4 Perseverance must **finish its work** **SO THAT YOU MAY BE MATURE AND COMPLETE,***

NOT LACKING ANYTHING...

YOU WILL NEVER PURSUE WHAT YOU HAVE NOT PRIORITIZED



Awareness of Seasons

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (ESV)

- 1 *For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:*
2 *a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;*
3 *a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;*
4 *a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;*
5 *a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace,*
and a time to refrain from embracing;
6 *a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;*
7 *a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;*
8 *a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.*

In Your Pursuit of Balance, You Must Understand That Seasons Change

It is possible to do the right thing in the Wrong Season

1 Chronicles 12:32 (NIV)

32 *men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do*

Luke 4:13 (KJV)

13 *And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.*

Lead By The Spirit

Mark 1:35 (NIV)

35 *Very early in the morning*, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, **WHERE HE PRAYED**.

JESUS OFTEN GOT ALONE TO GET HIS ASSIGNMENT

Listening to the **Spirit's instructions** on *how to spend your time and energy* is important to be **productive/balanced** in the right areas.

God's Desire is for us to *align with His thoughts and ways*,
Proverbs 16:9 (NIV)

9 *In his heart a man plans his course*, **BUT** the Lord determines his steps.

Our Ultimate Goal is to **FULFILL GOD'S PURPOSE** for us in each area of our daily walk...

Psalms 63:1 (NKJV)

1 A Psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, You are my God; **EARLY WILL I SEEK YOU**;

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV)

33 But **seek first the kingdom of God** and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.



Lead By The Spirit

**GOD'S PRIORITIES FOR YOU AND PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS OF YOU
ARE RARELY THE SAME**

Deciding *how to spend your most valuable and limited resource of time* is one of the most important decisions you make every day. Each step you take moves you either toward or away **FROM GOD'S PURPOSE AND VISION FOR YOUR LIFE.**

THE KEY IS TO FOLLOW HIS LEAD AND TO ENGAGE IN REDIRECTION OF YOUR STEPS AS NEEDED.

Mark 1:35-38 (NIV)

35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

36 Simon and his companions went to look for him,

*37 and when they found him, **they exclaimed: "EVERYONE IS LOOKING FOR YOU!"***

*38 Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else--to the nearby villages--so I can preach there also.
THAT IS WHY I HAVE COME."*



Lead By The Spirit

*Know The Difference Between Assignments and Appointments
God Desires To Use You...But Your Calander Is Full!!!*

Acts 16:6-10 (NIV)

*6 Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, **having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.***

*7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, **but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.***

*8 So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. 9 During the night **Paul had a vision** of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."*

*10 After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, **concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.***

Galatians 5:16 (NKJV)

*16 I say then: **Walk in the Spirit**, and you shall not **fulfill the lust of the flesh.***



Adjustments Are Necessary

*When You Receive New Information...
Make The Necessary Adjustments*

*Don't Allow The Guilt Of
"I THOUGHT YOU SAID"
Cause You To Operate In Stubborn Pride*

Proverbs 16:18 (NIV)

18 Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.

As You Hear From God... Are You Willing To Adjust

Seasons and Situations Will Call For Adjustments



No Is A Necessary Ingredient To Finding Balance

Only when we know **WHAT TO SAY YES TO** can we say no to everything else.

We tend to **spread ourselves too thin trying to do too much** and **we miss out on doing God's Will**

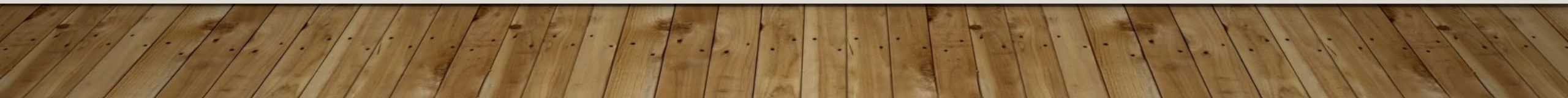
If you say **YES TO EVERYTHING**, you won't be able to put in your **BEST EFFORTS ANYWHERE**.
In order to **make your commitments count**, you must learn to **SAY NO** to a lot of **worthy causes**

By not overcommitting, I'm able to **do a better job at the few things I've chosen to do**.
I can also set and **enforce boundaries** much more effectively and **help others to respect those boundaries** when they see that I'm exercising good judgment over my commitments.

Luke 10:38-42 (NKJV)

38 Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named **Martha welcomed Him into her house**. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also **sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word**. 40 **But Martha was distracted with much serving**, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? **THEREFORE TELL HER TO HELP ME.**"

41 And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, **you are worried and troubled about many things**.
42 **But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.**"



Contentment Is Key To Finding Balance

Philippians 4:11-12 (ESV)

11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, *for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.*

12 *I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.*

Contentment is an *internal state of satisfaction, acceptance, and gratitude,*
Not dependent on external factors

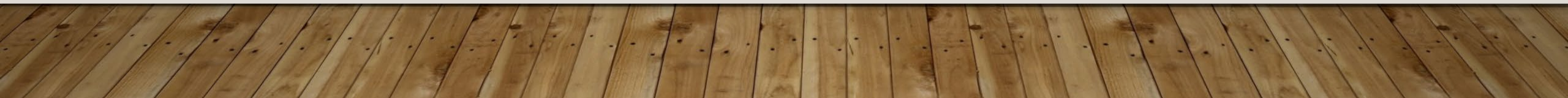
I am able to find balance, because I am not PURSUING THINGS I don't need to make me happy!!!

1 Timothy 6:6-10 (NLT)

6 *Yet TRUE GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT* is itself great wealth. 7 *After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it.*

8 *SO IF WE HAVE ENOUGH FOOD AND CLOTHING, LET US BE CONTENT.*

9 *But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.*



Exhaustion Is An Indicator That Balance Is Missing

1 Kings 19:1-6 (NIV)

1 Now Ahab told Jezebel *everything* Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword.

2 So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them."

3 *Elijah was afraid and ran for his life.* When he came to Beersheba in Judah, *he left his servant there,*

4 *while he himself went a day's journey into the desert.* He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and *prayed that he might die.* "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors."

5 Then he lay down under the tree and **FELL ASLEEP**. All at once an angel touched him and said, "*Get up and eat.*"

6 He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water.

He ate and drank and then lay down again.

When you're out of balance in your life, you may feel *overwhelmed, exhausted, frustrated, unfulfilled* and any number of emotions that can impact you spiritually, emotionally, mentally, physically and relationally.

THIS CAN LEAVE YOU FEELING DRAINED OR EMPTY INSIDE AND OUT.

When life gets crazy, it often *seems beneficial to put everything else before your own needs,* but **OVER TIME** that approach will **BURN YOU OUT** and **CRIPPLE YOUR ABILITY TO FIND BALANCE.**



In Conclusion

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PASTOR ROBERT TOWNSEND

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