

Satisfied Series – Part 7
Lie #7 – The Lie of Busyness
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Today is the last part of a series we have been doing called SATISFIED. In this series we have looked at some of the lies our culture is feeding us about how to live a satisfied, happy, and fulfilled life.

These lies can also be called the idols of our culture. Instead of statues, American idols are often mindsets that we allow to control our lives.

When I adopt a mindset that is contrary to biblical truth, that mindset begins to control my behavior. I will never be able to truly change my behavior until I identify and deal with the lie I have come to believe. And then replace that lie with truth from God's word.

This series has been meant to be a wake-up call, so we don't let the culture dictate and shape our lives. Sadly, the state of American Christianity today shows little difference in how Christians and non-Christians think on some of these issues. We have been infected by the culture more than we care to admit.

READ **Romans 12:1-2** The Apostle Paul states it this way:

I like the way the Passion Translation states verse 2.

“Stop imitating the ideals and opinions of the culture around you, but be inwardly transformed by the Holy Spirit through a total reformation of how you think. This will empower you to discern God's will as you live a beautiful life, satisfying and perfect in his eyes.” TPT

The key to a beautiful satisfying life is a total reformation of how we think. In other words, it is rejecting the lies of the culture around us.

In this series we looked at how the world thinks about control, pleasure, success, people, stuff, sincerity and today we will look at what for some of us is the biggest of them all. BUSYNESS.

The way the lie of busyness goes is that it causes us to think busyness makes us important. It causes us to draw our sense of significance from how busy we are.

In some ways, busyness is the new status symbol of our day. We like to talk about how busy we are. It makes us feel important and admired.

- *Hi, how are you? - Good, busy, very busy, but good*
- *Yea, I know. Same here. With my job, kids, taking care of my mom, sports, and church I hardly have anytime for myself*

- *Hey good talking to you, I gotta run, busy day ahead*

Instead of feeling bad for each other we admire those able to juggle crazy busy lives. In our culture busy multi-taskers running on fumes are the heroes.

- Until their marriage or health collapses
- Until they have a breakdown, or their kids rebel against their busyness.

The pressure of busyness can be overwhelming.

Young moms, single moms, working dads, church, family time, sports, school, finding leisure time to relax and exercise, time for quiet time with God, time to read the word, time for small group, and on and on the pressure of busyness piles on us.

I struggle with this the same as you do. Sometimes I feel I am making headway and then other times I feel overwhelmed with busyness.

We would like to do it all, but we can't. Our culture has set an unreal expectation and pace for any of us to really follow.

And our strong work ethic sends us subtle messages that if we are not busy all the time we are lazy. I grew up believing this. It took me a long time to be able to sit and do nothing without feeling guilty.

Listen, we are all in the same boat. We can't let busyness keep squeezing us till we break or something in our family breaks.

How do we get this tiger by the tail? How do we stop the madness? How do we slow down the treadmill? How do we bring sanity into our inner world?

I used to think once our kids were grown and out of school, once I added more staff pastors, once I reached 60 then things would slow down. Some things do change but I learned if I am not careful every time I cut something out something else will quickly take its place and I am right back to where I was.

Let me suggest a few things that might be helpful in slowing down and creating some margin in your life.

1. I need to take responsibility for my busyness.

It is my problem to solve. It can be solved. It all starts with personal responsibility instead of complaining, excuses, and blaming. You hold the key!

Yes, there are seasons of extra busyness. I get that. Over our conference week I have most every evening filled but that is a short-term situation that I can manage. Long term it would be a big problem.

Plus, I think of the single moms. When I see what they do I feel ashamed in complaining that I am busy. I honor all single moms! The season of raising their kids can be very difficult and time consuming.

But it's good for all of us to ask God to show us how to better manage our lives. Instead of giving in to the tyranny of busyness ask God for some creative answers.

In other words, you need to take the bull by the horns if anything is going to change. Complaining isn't going to change anything.

Ask God; what can I change, delegate, stop doing or start doing that will help me be less busy. He cares about your busyness.

2. I need to continually re-adjust my priorities.

Priorities need to be re-adjusted on a regular basis.

The continual demand for our time can cause us to overcommit and get our priorities out of order.

Let me suggest what I believe are 5 biblical priorities in order of importance.

- God - Your time and relationship with God
- Family - Your time and relationship with your family
- Job - Your job in providing for yourself and family - education
- Church - Volunteering at church – we are all called to do our part
- Leisure - Extracurricular and leisurely activities

I hear pastors in our community lamenting all the time in how hard it is to get people to volunteer in their churches because of their busy schedules and misplaced priorities.

When these priorities are well ordered in our lives we find time to enjoy all of them.

When we become too busy and overcommitted our relationship with God and with our family seems to be the ones that suffer the most.

If family is a high priority, then I need to make choices based on what is best for my family.

A big pressure thing on families is sports programs. This is hard for parents to navigate because the schedule is being imposed on you.

I feel for you because I too love sports and enjoyed going to my daughter's games. I remember when we had to limit some sport activities for what we thought was best for our family. You need to decide what is best for your family. You are in control.

But busyness comes from much more than sports. That's just one small area of our busy culture. It includes how much time we put in at work. Maybe we need to adjust some of our goals for expensive things, so we can put less time in at work and more time at home with the family.

Sometimes I need to stop and do inventory of my time. Why am I so busy? What have I allowed to crowd into my life. Why do I allow busyness to define me and rule me?

3. Healthy boundaries can help you protect your priorities.

You see, people will not set your boundaries for you. They will keep asking you to do things. The demands on your time will never stop.

When we don't have clear boundaries people can plunder our treasures such as the time we need for ourselves and our families.

Isa 10:13 I removed the boundaries of nations, I plundered their treasures; like a mighty one I subdued their kings.

When we don't have boundaries, we are like houses without doors. Anyone can come in at any time.

Healthy boundaries help you know what to say yes to and what to say no to.

There are some things God is asking you to do and to get involved in with the gifts he has given you. You need to prioritize them.

But there are also some things he is not asking you to get involved in and you need to eliminate from your life.

The number one boundary setting word is NO.

Paul Leininger stated on last week's podcast – *when I say no to the right things it brings peace into my life.*

An example of a boundary could be that I will not be away from my family more than two nights a week. This helps me to say no and choose wisely where I will give my time.

Another boundary thing you can do is take charge of your schedule. Take a pen and block out family time in your schedule. For years my wife and I would schedule Friday nights as our date night. If we didn't schedule it, it was easy for people and things to take up that space. We had to be intentional.

4. We need to learn how to rest.

Even God rested on the seventh day. Not because he was tired but because it was a rhythm he built into creation, into our bodies, into our soul. To stay healthy, we need to know how to rest on a soul level.

Media and technology have turned up the busyness in our lives – I have found since I have an iPhone the spaces in my life have filled up all the more. At times I feel addicted to it.

I heard that some families have a policy that during the meal everyone turns off their phone and they actually talk about each other's day. They learn to be present with each other.

In this crazy driven world, we desperately need to learn how to disconnect and rest.

Matthew 6:31-32 Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.

- The lesson here is that we should each go and buy a boat (🚤)
- Note: Jesus went with them - They didn't take other people - to a quiet solitary place. A place free of distractions and noise – you will find rest
- You, Jesus and a quiet place away from the routine, pressures and demands

To combat the tyranny of busyness in our lives we need to build into our lives a rhythm of rest. It can be Sunday or another day. There are times you need to just shut down for a while. You need it. When is the last time you did that?

Rest keeps us emotionally healthy. – Kids emotional meltdown, "*you need to get some rest*".

Our spiritual, emotional, and mental batteries need to be recharged and you can't do that while you are running 90 miles an hour and grabbing some Jesus fast food along the way. There are times you just need to shut down for awhile in a place of solitude.

Where is your place for extended times of solitude with Jesus? When do you create time for this? If necessary, write it into your schedule so it happens. We need those times to be still and know that he is God in our situations.

Conclusion:

God wants us to live a satisfied life. To do so we need to learn from him and reject the lies of our culture.

The only thing that will bring us lasting satisfaction, fulfillment and happiness is a life fully surrendered to Jesus. Jesus is the bread that satisfies and the spring of life that never runs dry.

Closing: