



MARGIN

Thriving Within Limits

Why We Need Margin

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There are only so many details that can be comfortably managed in anybody's life.

Once we exceed this number we will probably experience one or more of the following:

1. Stress
2. Distraction
3. Disorganization
4. Ineffectiveness
5. Grumpiness
6. Frustration
7. Giving up

These symptoms can show up in many arenas

- ❑ Marriage
 - ❑ Family
 - ❑ Work
- ❑ Finances
 - ❑ School
 - ❑ Church
 - ❑ Friends
- ❑ Hobbies/Interests
- ❑ Personal tasks/Responsibilities

Our Problem: Competing Agendas

**John 10:10 "The thief does not come except to steal,
and to kill, and to destroy.**

**I have come that they may have life, and that they
may have it more abundantly. (NKJ)**

**Rom 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the
pattern of this world,
but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.
Then you will be able to test and approve
what God's will is—
his good, pleasing and perfect will. (NIV)**

Abundant Living requires Margin

- Margin is the space that should exist between our sustainable load and our limits
- Margin allows us to live with vitality & focus
- Using up our margin steals vitality & focus
 - Margin is where our reserves/buffers are
- Margin is where we find the time & energy to respond graciously to interruptions
 - ... to pursue dreams & opportunities
- Margin is where there is money available for emergencies, opportunities, gifts.
- Margin is where we nurture life with God

How do we use up our margin

- ❑ Too many Activities
- ❑ Too many or not making Choices
 - ❑ Too many Commitments
- ❑ Spending more than we make/have
 - ❑ Too many Expectations
- ❑ Trying to manage too much Information
 - ❑ Working too much
- ❑ Lack of clarity on what is most important
so we try to be too much to too many too often

I know I've depleted my margin if

- ☐ I'm chronically rushed, late, exhausted.

- ☐ I feel overcommitted, overloaded or overwhelmed

- ☐ I'm exceeding my sustainable load in more than one area at the same time

- ☐ I've been exceeding my sustainable load in any area for too long

- ☐ I feel uninterested in or overwhelmed contemplating living the kind of life I know would please Jesus

Consider a day in Jesus' life

Mark 1:21 They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. **22** The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.

23 Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, **24** "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are-- the Holy One of God!"

25 "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!"
26 The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

How might this affect Jesus' life

Mark 1:27 The people were all so amazed...

28 News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

29 As soon as they left the synagogue... **30** Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. **31** So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

32 That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. **33** The whole town gathered at the door, **34** and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons... (NIV)

□ After a day like that what do you think Jesus and his disciples will be thinking about as they wake up the next morning?

Mark 1:35 *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!"

➤ I think we've got something here, Jesus!

38 Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else-- to the nearby villages-- so I can preach there also.

That is why I have come." (NIV)

Consider this day too

Jesus, with his disciples as servers, has just fed 5,000+ from 5 loaves & 2 fish...

John 6:14 After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world."

15 Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force...

Mark 6:45 Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd.

46 After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray. (NIV)

And this one

The disciples have just returned from their 1st
ministry endeavor without him...

**Luke 9:10 When the apostles returned, they reported
to Jesus what they had done.**

**Then he took them with him and they withdrew by
themselves... (NIV)**

Or this visit with 2 Sisters

Luke 10:38 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him.

39 She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said.

40 But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made.

She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" (NIV)

➤ **What will Jesus do?**

Luke 10:41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered,
"you are worried and upset about many
things,

42 but only one thing is needed.

Mary has chosen what is better,
and it will not be taken away from her." (NIV)

What was better about Mary's
choice?

Questions

- Are you seeing a theme?
- How is the way Jesus responded to his life and encouraged others to respond to theirs different than we tend to respond to ours?
- From these examples what could we say about the kind of life Jesus wants us to live?

**Psalm 46 :10 "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth." (NIV)**

Benefits of living with Margin

- Improved intimacy/walk with God
- Healthy environment for growth of the Spirit's fruit: Love, Joy...
 - Shalom/Peace
 - Health/Vitality
 - Availability/Service
 - Time to dream & plan
- Relational opportunities & enjoyment with spouse, kids, friends
- Actually looking for & responding to opportunities to make the most of

Margin makes possible:

- ❑ Being *transformed* - **Romans 12:2**; Training ourselves to be godly. - **1 Timothy 4:7**
- ❑ Running in such a way as to get the prize. - **1 Cor 9:24** ...let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. - **Heb 12:1**
- ❑ Improved Marriage - each ...must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. - **Eph 5:33**
- ❑ Better Parenting - Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. - **Eph 6:4**

Margin makes possible:

☐ Serving - Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. - 1 Pet 4:10

☐ Giving - Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. -- 2 Cor. 9:7-8 (NIV)

Margin makes possible:

□ Making the most of opportunities

Be very careful, then, how you live-- not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Eph 5:15-16

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. -

Colossians 4:5-6 (NIV)

Take away

The world system, under the devil's control, will try to steal our lives by pushing us to try to have it all, do it all and be it all down here.

But, to live the abundant life Jesus promised, we need margin in our lives

We can then thrive within limits

Next Week: Taking Back Your Life