



# **MARGIN**

**Thriving Within Limits**

**Taking Back Your Life**

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# 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

Lack of margin can show up in your:

- Marriage
- Family
- Work
- Finances
- School
- Church
- Relationships
- Hobbies/interests
- Personal tasks/responsibilities

# How we lose 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

The Core Issue: Lack of clarity on what is most important

# Jesus on what is most important

*Luke 9:23 Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily*

*Galatians 6:14 May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

*and follow me. (NIV)*

Life Implications are great

Luke 9:24 *For whoever wants to  
save his life*

*will lose it,*

*but whoever loses his life for me  
will save it.*

*25 What good is it for a man to gain the whole  
world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? (NIV)*

# What's at stake

Matthew 7:24 *"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.*

*25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.*

*26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.*

*27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."* (NIV)

# Storms expose faulty foundations

- ❑ Crises of life and winds of adversity test the stability of what our lives are built on
- ❑ Storms now = illness, betrayal, loss, failure, disappointment, and tragedy.
- ❑ Storm later = final judgment, standing before God and giving an account for the life you lived.

# What's at stake

- ❑ A time is coming when what our lives are built on will be revealed.
- ❑ Many will have regrets, ignoring what they thought was hidden or didn't matter.
- ❑ Nonbelievers will regret not entering the narrow gate of trust in Christ
- ❑ Some believers will regret not building their lives on the solid rock of Christ's Word

# Believers with regrets?

- ❑ The Bible teaches justification apart from works. It does not teach Christian living apart from works.
- ❑ The Bible does not teach that a believer's works flow inevitably from justifying faith.
- ❑ Believers are invited and held responsible to exert effort towards good works, to build their lives on the solid foundation of Christ.

# What that crash might look like in the arena of Finances

**1 Timothy 6:9** *People who want to get rich fall  
into temptation and a trap*

*and into many foolish and harmful desires that  
plunge men into ruin and destruction.*

**10** *For the love of money is a root of all kinds  
of evil.*

*Some people, eager for money, have  
wandered from the faith and pierced  
themselves with many griefs. (NIV)*

# Taking Back Your Life

□ Requires Change

**Romans 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)*

# Taking Back Your Life

□ Means giving up some things

**Hebrews 12:1** ...*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.*

*...in such a way as to get the prize.*

**1 Corinthians 9:24**

# Questions to help you decide:

1. Is it helpful or does it hinder?
2. Does it bring me under its power-  
is it entangling?
3. Does it hurt others?
4. Does it glorify God?

# Practical Suggestions > Time

1. Consider what is most important
  2. Prioritize people
  3. Be realistic – there will be interruptions & surprises
  4. Learn to say “no”
  5. Specialize
6. Go for quality over quantity
7. Principle of Sabbath Rest
8. Let God be your judge, you’ll be answering to Him someday

# Practical Suggestions > Money

1. Spend less than you make
  2. Give some away
  3. Save Some
  4. Avoid Debt
5. Make getting out of debt a top priority and develop a plan for that
  6. Define "real" needs
7. No impulse buying – practice delayed gratification

# Practical Suggestions > Other

1. Small portions
2. More fruits and veggies
3. Eat slowly
4. Exercise
5. Get enough rest
6. Limited Exposure to Negative People

# Life Focus Clarity > Margin >

- ❑ Improved intimacy/walk with God
  - ❑ Shalom/Peace
  - ❑ Health/Vitality
- ❑ Prioritizing Relationships
- ❑ Time to reorient dreams & plan
- ❑ Making the most of opportunities
  - ❑ Freedom to Serve/Give
- ❑ Laying up treasure in Heaven
  - ❑ Anticipating eternal reward

## Take away

In order to thrive within God given limits, followers of Jesus must push back against the world 's do it all, have it all, be it all system and take back their lives.

If we don't, we will lose "lose" our lives to the world's system.

Next Week: Giving Yourself Away