

The Balanced Life

Psalm 127:2

Tonight, in this series as we continue in this series entitled "Life's Values," we are going to look at a value or a quality that is universally admired, and universally ignored. That is the quality of balance.

We all want to live balanced lives. But I have yet to meet a totally balanced person. No one in this room is living a balanced life completely. It is a goal, a desire, an objective, but none of us have gotten there. The only person who ever lived a totally balanced life was Jesus Christ. What we are going to talk about tonight may be the greatest sin in this congregation. **Most Christians are not out committing immoral sins every day of the week, they are not terrorists, they are not ax murderers.** But most of us do live pretty unbalanced lives. This may be the one fault that gets us all. This may be the one we need to work on the most.

What I want to share with you tonight is nothing new but it is something we all need to hear periodically to get our lives refocused and back in balance. The principle of balance is one of those laws that God established the universe on. You have a circulatory system, a respiratory system, a central nervous system, a digestive system, a skeletal system -- nine different systems in your body and these systems are in balance with each other. When any one of them gets out of whack, out of balance, we call that dis-ease or disease. Likewise health is an issue of finding balance. **When the systems are all in balance we call that health.** Healing is the recovery of balance to the body. Psalm 127:2 reads like this in the Hebrew, "It is senseless for you to work so hard from early morning until late at night. God wants his loved ones to get their proper rest." **God is concerned that you get the right amount of rest.** God is concerned when you are under stress.

God is concerned if you do not balance your life. He is very concerned about it because God is a God of balance.

In this segment we are going to look at seven principles of balance from God's word. These are not anything new but they are principles we need to be reminded of over and over.

B stands for Build. Build my life around Christ. Matthew 6:33 reads like this in the Greek, "God will give you all you need from day to day if you live for him and make the kingdom of God your primary concern." Notice the words "your primary concern". King James Version reads like this, "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness." Jesus summarized life priorities in two sentences, as seen in Matthew 22, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, this is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself."

Jesus summarizes the whole Bible: Love God and love people. If that is the only thing you get done in life, but if you get those two things done, God says you have done the most important things in life. And He is the one who put you here. **If you love God and you love other people Jesus says you have done the most important things.** I need to build my life round Christ.

A in Balance stands for Accept. I need to accept my humanity. That means I stop trying to pretend that I am God. **I stop trying to pretend that I have all the answers, that I can solve everybody's problem, that I can meet every need and that I can fulfill everyone's expectation.** I have to recognize that I have limitations. I am a human being.

L - Limit my Labor. Make a conscious decision to make time for other things besides work. You need to force yourself to set some realistic hours and then hold yourself accountable to somebody else to

check up on you to make sure you are not overworking (your mate or a good friend).

What I am talking about is not just some pop psychology or good advice, it is so important that God put it in the Ten Commandments. It is right up there with Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not lie, Do not steal. Exodus 20 says, "You have six days in which to do your work, but the seventh day is to be a day of rest dedicated to Me." Of all the things God said, here are the Top Ten moral commands, "Do not have any other God's before me. Do not make any idols, Do not murder, Do not commit adultery". Then he also says, "Take a day off every seven days." **Why?** Because God wired you up to be in a rhythm of work and rest. Our best requires rest.

A - Adjust your values. The reason you need to do this is because in balancing our lives the reason we get out of balance is our values get out of balance. You may have to do some thinking about what is really more important in life. **If we not careful we unconsciously start majoring on the minors.** The Bible says that one of the reasons we overwork is materialism which is obviously a wrong value. Ecclesiastes 4:4 says, "I've learned why people work so hard to succeed, it is because they envy the things their neighbors have."

God says you have two options. You can either spend all your time keeping up with the Jones' or you can forget them and reduce your stress level. But you can not do them both at the same time.

That is a question of values. We buy things we do not need, with money we do not have to impress people we do not even like. But we just keep doing it and doing it. Jesus said it like this, "What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?"

N - Nourish your inner life. A very important part of living a balanced life is learning how to nourish your inner life, learning how

to nourish and tend the inner fire that God puts within each of us. The Song of Solomon 1:6 says, "I had no time for myself."

When you or I neglect to nourish our inner life, to tend that fire, we develop a vacuum in our lives. The way you can tell that your inner fire is diminishing is if you are so irritable all the time that the least little thing bugs you, if you can not handle anybody disagreeing with you, if you can not handle a delay or interruption or stop light, these things are signs that you have not been nourishing your inner life. And God says we are to do it.

C - Commit your daily schedule to God. Each day, you and I have to commit our schedules to God, knowing for an absolute fact, that your life is not going to cooperate with your schedule. Know it! **Some of you are list makers.** Everyday you have a list of things to do. When Linda and I are driving down the highway, or sitting at home, or at the office, I am constantly saying to her, "Make me a note to..." **We have a note pad at home, in both cars, and at the office.** But every so often God reminds me of this verse in Psalm 31:15b, "My times are in Your hands."

There is one last key to living a balanced life that will help your life stay in balance.

E - Enjoy the moment. I have shared this sentence with you before: **I have just enough time to do God's will.** If I find there are more things on my schedule to do than I have the time to do them it means either (a) there are things on that list that God does not intend for me to do, or (b) I am doing them in the wrong way. The Bible puts it this way in Ecclesiastes, "All of us should enjoy what we have worked for. It is God's gift."

The goal of life - the reason you were put here on this earth - are two things: 1) Know God, and enjoy a relationship with Him, and 2) Use the talents and gifts He gave you to serve others because that

builds character for eternity. Life is a test. God sets two goals in life:
1) Get to know Me, love Me, enjoy Me and have a relationship with Me.
2) Use the talents and gifts I gave you to serve other people because I am testing your character for eternity. **And while you are doing it, enjoy all the moments.**

Jesus offers us an exchange program, as seen in Matthew 11, "Come to me, all of you who are tired and have heavy loads, and I will give you rest." **If you are carrying a heavy load tonight, it is not from Jesus. It is not from God.** He does not place heavy loads on us. He says right here, "The load that I give you to carry is light." **God will never put more on you than He puts in you to bear it up.** We put more on ourselves, but He won't. Let Him straighten it out.