

Finding Balance In Your Life

Air Dates: June 27 – July 1, 2022

Day One

We hear a lot about finding balance in our lives, especially those of us who are working women. And for Christian working women, we have a completely different yardstick by which to measure the balance of our lives, because we have—or should have—an eternal perspective: What matters for eternity?

Our dilemma is: How do we know what a balanced life is—and how do we find it? Which of these statements would you say are true? Your life is in balance when:

- You accomplish everything we plan to do each day.
- You are able to meet all the expectations others have of you.
- You never feel pressured or frazzled.
- You never have to say “no” to anyone.
- You can juggle many balls in the air at the same time.
- You are very good at multi-tasking.

Are these the signs of a balanced life? No, not necessarily. We need a biblical perspective of what it means to live a balanced life. So, let’s begin by asking the question: Why am I here?

Why Am I Here?

If you are a Christ-follower, you are here to do the good works he has planned for you to do:

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10).

You are not to be lazy; you are not here to please yourself; you are to be about the Father’s business. God does not exist to make us happy and fulfilled and solve all our problems. We belong to him, and we are here to do what he planned for us to do.

In the last decades we’ve been programmed to believe that we deserve to have what we want. Well, God’s Word certainly affirms that each individual is special to God, created in his image, and loved by him. But we are not here to be doted upon and fussed over. We are here to do good works.

When you get outside of that parameter, then you’re in trouble. Here are some of the reasons you can get outside of God’s plan for your life:

- You start “doing your own thing.”
- You plan your life and ask God to bless it instead of seeking to know and do his plan.
- You try to do your good works and some others as well.
- You fail to seek God’s will.
- You allow others to dictate what we should do and be.

If you want to live the kind of balanced life that will count for eternity, you have to be intentional about doing it.

Day Two

How do we find the right biblical balance in our lives, especially for us workplace women? Think about your grandmother or great-grandmother. Did she have a job outside of her home? Probably not. She probably worked harder than you do, but she had a much more limited role than you do. I seriously doubt that she ever listened to a message on balancing her life. That would have been puzzling to her.

But today, we have many modern conveniences that make housework easier, things she never dreamed of, and as a result, we have accumulated many different roles and our lives are far more fragmented than hers was. For example, consider all the hats you are wearing—or trying to wear. Your hats could include wife, mother, employee, employer, care giver, church worker, house cleaner, cook, chauffeur, counselor—and the list goes on!

The world approves of us based on how many hats we wear and how successfully we juggle them. Our society honors and recognizes people who are busy. We judge people's worth and value by the length of their "to do" list. Too often we brag about our long hours and wear our burnout as the badge of credibility.

So, in trying to wear all these hats, you and I are challenged to make better and better decisions about our activities and how we spend our limited time. I want to get to the end of my life and hear Jesus say, "Well, done, good and faithful servant," and I'm certain you do, too. We will be good stewards of our time and our "hats" as we continually grow in our ability to make better and better choices, based on God's Word, not on our culture, not on other's expectations, not on our own mindsets and prejudices.

My Mom passed away at the age of 95. She led a very simple life as a wife and mom. She was never a soccer mom, never had a career, traveled very little, spent her days in her home—and in the Word of God. At her memorial service, her children and grandchildren called her blessed because she left us such a great legacy as a godly woman who kept her simple life in balance by staying grounded in the Word of God—reading it, memorizing it, teaching it, and loving it.

I know we live in a different time than our grandmothers did, but we still need to keep our lives grounded in the truth of God's Word. I encourage you to think about what your legacy will be to your family and friends.

Day Three

How can we find and keep a truly biblically balanced lifestyle? As Christ followers, our challenge is to get our priorities in line with God's priorities. For example, we know from Scripture that these things are always a high biblical priority:

- Getting to know God
- Your marriage – your mate
- Your children
- Family relationships
- Using our gifts in the body of Christ for the good of others

If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, these should be the priorities of our lives. When you allow anything to usurp these responsibilities, then your life is out of balance. Mine was for quite a few years when, in climbing the corporate ladder, I put my career ahead of my responsibility as a mother and took a job that required too much travel.

Zero Budgeting

Zero-budgeting is a fiscal policy which starts the budgeting process each year at zero. For example, just because you had money in the budget last year for travel, doesn't mean you'll have money in the budget this year for travel. You have to show the need for that budget money before it will be approved.

Wouldn't it be good for you to sit down with the Lord for a zero-budgeting session, with no pre-planned agenda, no assumptions, and see what goes and what stays in his plans for you? Jesus was able to say at the end of his short ministry, "I have finished the work you gave me to do." That's because his agenda was always the Father's agenda. Time and again he said, "I do what the Father tells me to do."

Zero-budgeting may lead you to some radical changes, or it may confirm that you're to stay where you are, doing what you're doing. But once you give God permission to set the agenda, then you have tremendous peace and freedom and you can say with Jesus, "I am doing what you gave me to do, Father."

It may be that this zero-budgeting process comes later in life after you've already done your own thing and made some messes and you're forced to live with those consequences. God understands that. You don't have to live in perpetual regret if that is the case. God is masterful at taking us right where we are to where he wants us to be.

There is no one who hasn't messed up at some point. But there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, and if you are now at a place where you can truthfully say that all you want is to know and do God's will for your life and to spend the rest of your days doing the good works God wants you to do, then you're in a good place. You're ready to move forward and move into that biblically balanced lifestyle which he desires for each of his children.

Day Four

Is it possible to live biblically balanced lives? I can tell you that it is possible, but it is not easy.

Pleasing God or Pleasing People?

If you're ever going to get the right balance in your life—God's balance—you're going to have to care more about pleasing God than you do about pleasing people. You've got to want God's approval more than you want the approval of people. You may find that hard to do, because our natural bent is to want the approval and acceptance of people. And we can become absolutely enslaved by a desire to receive the approval of people.

Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10).

This is a good verse to pray into your life. Ask God to develop you into the woman or man who cares more about pleasing God than pleasing people.

Making Deposits

Living balanced lives has to become intentional. So, to help you do this, I want you to think of yourself as a bank account, where deposits and withdrawals are made. Here are two very important deposits that you must intentionally put into your "bank accounts" if you ever hope to live biblically balanced lives:

Deposit the Word of God

Psalms 119:28: "My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word."

I hope you are involved in some kind of Bible study program all the time. You need in-depth study of God's Word, and you need structured reading of the Bible. His Word strengthens us. I think of a couple

who lost six children in one horrible automobile accident in 1993. Janet, their mother, shared with us that the Word of God was her constant source of strength to get her through those horrible days, and even yet, through the sorrow of losing her children. When you consistently deposit God's Word into your mind, you are adding great strength and stamina to your life. It will get you through tough days.

Deposit the Joy of the Lord

Nehemiah 8:10b: "Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

How do you keep joy in your life? First, you control your thinking. Negative thoughts, critical thoughts, judgmental thoughts, complaining thoughts—these will all rob you of joy. Secondly, you confess your sins immediately and keep a clean slate with the Lord.

Day Five

As we face the challenge of trying to keep our lives in a biblically balanced state, we have to be sure we're making the right deposits into our lives and then that we're not wasting our strength and energy by making foolish withdrawals.

What is it in your life that drains your strength unnecessarily? If you could learn to plug up the energy leaks in your life, then you would have enough left to do what God has called you to do.

Here are five ways you may be draining your strength unnecessarily.

1. Your strength is wasted when you try to do more than you can do.

God has not called us to be all things to all people. Have you got too many irons in the fire? Maybe you have a hard time saying "No." Whatever it is that causes you to over-commit, you need to get this area under control.

Learn to say "No." No is not a four-letter word. Don't let false guilt cause you to say yes when you should say no.

2. Your strength is wasted when you have too much stuff.

Did you know that the more you have, the more energy it takes out of you? You can save a lot of energy by just not accumulating so much stuff. Now you may not have to get rid of things, but just change your attitude toward them. But check it out: Are you spending a lot of your energy on things?

3. Your strength is wasted when you allow yourself to be negative.

Every time you get mired down in negative thoughts and words, you are wasting valuable energy and adding lots of stress to your life. We are to rejoice in the Lord always, and that means stay out of negative territory!

4. Your strength is wasted when you try to control the uncontrollable.

Learn to let go of that over which you have no control. I'm often amazed at how much time and energy I waste over what I cannot control!

5. Your strength is used up when your life is not disciplined.

Proverbs says that we die from lack of discipline, and I believe that many of us are drained of energy because we refuse needed discipline in our lives. That means doing things you don't want to do; it means making yourself establish good habits and schedules and sticking to them. It means denying yourself some things you really want.

Discipline is never much fun, but it brings wonderful fruits. And one of those benefits is that it supplies us with energy to do important things.