



“Pinterest, FanDuel, and Grace”

Biblical Text: Galatians 5:1, 4-7,13-16

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(* denotes frame change on screens)

Neither this sermon series nor the book, **Addicted to Busy*, is likely to change your life. But something needs to, and I’m not kidding about that.

We often live without margin and pay the price! Too many marriages fail. Too many of us burn out. And worse - depression is rampant in our time. A recent report in the New York Times says, **“More Americans now die of suicide than in car accidents. Suicides are nearly twice as common as homicides.”*¹ Frightening!

That report didn’t include suicides of the “spiritual” sort, where we dry up and die inside, and feel so used up that we have nothing left to offer. That’s not living.

So, I asked you to try to do three things, **Unplug* and **Get filled*, so you can **Give your best away*. How that going for you? Did you unplug? Take a nap? **Everyone* is better at it than us - pets, babies, **other cultures*. But ... **We are addicted to busy*.

There’s always a ball game, or somewhere to go with grandkids, or a list of things that need doing. And we like how feels, **until we don’t**. Still, we don’t relax, **until we have to**. A recent study says we suffer from the “**and then**” syndrome.² I’ll do this, *and then....* We can stop here, *and then...* I’ll get through this busy season at work, *and then...* We’ll wait until the kids are out of college, *and then...*

If you are like me, you don’t hear the early warnings. I just get another cold, or feel exhausted. Hello again, death row, it’s me, Michael, back for another stay.

**Dead man walking*. Again, I’m one of the lucky ones.

But sometimes I remember that a balanced life is the goal. I hear about a friend who retires too soon, a marriage that melts down, or someone who dies too early - and it shakes me up - because I don’t want that for me! **What do you want?**

It’s a potentially deadly life rhythm! Someone needs to do an intervention, like Paul did in our text from Galatians 5. Look at the first verse and what he says:

“For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, *and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.**”*³ His subject was law and grace. But it is not unrelated.

¹ Ross Douthat, “All the Lonely People,” The New York Times, May 19, 2013, www.nytimes.com.

² Daniel Goleman, *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships*, Copyright © 2006, New York: Bantam Press, Page 267.

³ Galatians 5:1, New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Something was going wrong in the Galatian Church. He had taught them the Good News - that they were loved by God and saved by grace, and not the law.

And they were doing fine, they were, until someone told them religion was a competitive sport where if you do more, and do it perfectly, you win. Paul said:
* ***“You were running well; who prevented you from obeying the truth?”***⁴

We are not immune from falling for that lie ourselves. The context of our lives is different, but desperately trying to prove ourselves, or our value, is alive and well.

Some of us do it by giving all our *time and energy to our career. Or by watching the ups and downs in the market *like a hawk measuring our worth by our portfolio. Or we turn our *kids’ sports, or dance, or music into the measurement of their worth or ours. And so we turn into **“that”* dad, mom or grandparent.

Some of us do it on **“Pinterest,”* which is a sort of a bookmarking tool for recipes, craft ideas or fashion tips in which the most popular have been *pinned and repinned thousands of times. But Today magazine says ****“42 percent of all users suffer from “Pinterest Stress” - feeling everyone is better at this than you.”***

Guys like me just don’t really “get” Pinterest. We are more likely to become addicted to sports, football, basketball baseball, and repeat the cycle! And then there are fantasy sports, *FanDuel and *DraftKings. Mashable says participants often ****“...average 3 hours a week managing their team, 9 hours watching related content, and spend \$467 per year.”*** But shhhhh! Don’t tell momma!

Look at what Jesus says in Matthew 6:24: ****“No one can serve two masters, for either they will hate the one and love the other *or they will be devoted to the one and despise the other. *You cannot serve both God and (anything else.)”***⁵

If we focus on everything but what is most important, we pay a high price. In Adrenaline and Stress, Dr. Archie Hart says, ****“People who are overcommitted just don’t allow time for their bodies and minds to become revitalized.”***⁶

That’s why the Kiddush prayer from last week is so important. *God has filled our life with blessings. But unless we worship and rest, we forget God’s blessings, grace, and favor are the source for the overflow into everything else we do!

In Biblical words, ***“Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all other things will be given to you.”*** (Matthew 6:33)⁷

⁴ Ibid. Galatians 5:7, New Revised Standard Version Bible.

⁵ Matthew 6:24, paraphrased by the author.

⁶ Dr. Archibald D. Hart, Adrenaline and Stress: Helping You Overcome Stress Damage. Copyright © 1995, Thomas Nelson Press, p. 40.

⁷ Matthew 6:24, paraphrased by the author.

So, do me, and yourself, a favor this week in addition to continuing to try to ***Unplug** and ***Get filled**, so you can have the margin to ***Give your best away**.

Begin to make a list of how you spend your time. Be ruthless. Ask yourself two questions about each item: **Is this a real priority? Does this give me life?**

Laura Vanderkam did a recent study of the time diaries of women and men who managed to juggle demanding jobs and still have a family. She found that people who made peace with their time knew that they had to *** “focus on the things that matter, for anything else, steal the theme song from ‘Frozen’ and ‘let it go’ ”** — even if that meant not keeping up with the latest and greatest everything else.

Wayne Muller says that we ask ourselves: ***“This one little conversation, this one extra phone call, this one meeting, this event, this extra thing, what can it cost?”**

But it does cost; it drains us of life. Then, at the end of days, weeks, months, years, we collapse, we burn out, wonder what happened. One after the other used our precious life, until it was all but used up. **But it doesn’t have to be that way!**

I had a life changing moment this week. Just before coffee on another frozen morning, I looked out the window and thought, **“This stinks! I’m ready for Spring!”** ***And then my eyes landed on Ann’s grandmother’s Christmas cactus, in full bloom in all its glory. It was stunning, even when all else was a winter wasteland.**

There was something profoundly spiritual at work. It’s as if God was saying, **“I have put beauty and wonder, and signs of grace, all around you. If you are too busy to notice, you are too busy!”** And as usual, God was right.

Look at our text, ***“Live by the Spirit,”** Paul says, **“and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.”** In other words, don’t let your schedule, your stress, or anything else dictate the things you make place for in your life. You are a child of God!

Read on - he says, ***“And the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”** Those are his gifts to us!

There’s a world of difference when those things influence how we parent, or grandparent, lead a meeting, talk with our spouse, interact with a retail clerk, or any of a thousand other daily things we do each day.

But we have to do one thing. **And it isn’t being perfect at any of them!** Thanks God that he’s a God of grace! The one and only thing that we have to do is not be so busy that we fail to make time for God to help us live like that.