



CALL IT

Q U I T S

Quit Busy

DAY 1- *Addicted to Busy*

*Read Psalm 46, Luke
5:15-16, 1 Pt 3:3-4*

We live in a very busy world. We're pulled in many different directions by many different things. And as each pulls on us we find ourselves being busy for various reasons, some benign and others not.

Jaimie Bloch, psychologist and clinical director of MindMovers Psychology wrote that some of us may actually be addicted to keeping busy. This may be influenced by the fact that when we complete tasks, our brain releases the pleasure hormone dopamine, which makes us feel good. Here are six things to consider.

First, you have a fear of missing out. Many of us pack our schedules to bursting point due to a fear of missing out or being unproductive. If you become anxious at the thought of slowing down and not getting things done, you may be addicted to being busy.

Second, trying to avoid negative emotions. Occupying all your time with tasks, can also be a way of avoiding difficult issues in your life, such as family or work problems or a relationship breakdown. Being busy temporarily helps redirect your focus.

Third, You strive for success. Some people like to keep busy as they feel it is the only way to achieve success. The more you have to do, the more successful you feel.

Fourth, being busy is a status symbol for you. We live in a society that praises hard work and productivity, so being busy all the time can make you feel as though you are winning in life and can elevate your sense of social status. Trying to be at our best all the time creates a feeling of importance and can become addictive.

Fifth, You feel guilty when doing nothing. Because of the value placed on achievement and productivity in our society, we feel pressure to constantly be accomplishing things.

Sixth, you're bad at relaxing. People addicted to being busy are often bad at relaxing, as they may feel anxious and guilty at being unproductive. We forget how to simply relax and can actually become stressed by working hard to relax.

If you can relate to these signs of being overbusy, and you are using a packed schedule to avoid issues or emotions, then self-care is important. God did not list an 11th commandment "Thou shalt be busy". Being busy is a choice. Although it can be hard, there are times we need to say "No!". We need to address being busy head on. Being busy should not, nor ever be THE defining factor in one's life - especially in the life of a Christian.

Things To Ponder

Thinking of the busiest person you can, what traits do you see in their life? Are they emotionally and spiritually healthy?

Do you feel you are too busy? How has this affected you emotionally and spiritually?

Did any of the 6 points listed ring true with you? What can you do as a next step to become healthier?

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DAY 2- *Busy Chasing the Church*

Church burnout. It's an "elephant in the room" topic that isn't addressed enough. And it's not just those that work on staff for a church that can suffer from this, but volunteers also. Many great Christian people forget or fail to see the "work of the church" and become burned out by being too busy doing "church work".

Church burnout is not limited to a church's size, small or large, all churches can suffer from burnout. All churches want to provide multiple ministries so that they can reach more people. Ministries for adults, teens, youth and children are just a few and to do the work they will ask for and recruit volunteers, and if able, higher additional staff. For a time things may seem good. But, if the church is not careful, people can begin to be thought of as an end to a means. The ministry can become more important than the people working in it. The result is that people are asked to do more and more, eventually resulting in burnout.

Sadly, too often, rather than address the problem of being too busy, people often do one of two things. Either they drop everything and do no ministry work. They're still attending church, but they have stepped back from "church work". Another thing people do when they are burned out is they leave the church. They may begin attending somewhere else or may stop attending church completely. None of which is really a healthy response.

Okay. I've painted a dark picture of church burnout, so let's look at how a church can avoid it. To do this, there are a few general guidelines. First, the church needs to set limits for ministries and people. You can do many things poorly or do fewer things well. It's about quality over quantity. This was what Jethro addressed with Moses in Exodus 18.

Second, everyone from church leaders and staff to volunteers, must never put the ministry above people. People must never be viewed as tools who can be replaced through prayer. People can only do so much and if the ministry is to grow then we pray for more "harvesters" before we overextend the current people. I know there is a certain element of "stepping out in faith", but the church needs to make sure it's God who's speaking first.

Are you busy chasing the church? Just be sure that you're about doing the "work of the church" and not just "church work". Choose one of two ministries where you feel God is calling you to serve. Then, by doing fewer things, you'll be able to do better things. The success of Jesus' church is not on your or my shoulders.

One last thing. God has called everyone to serve their local church somewhere, somehow. In John 13 Jesus washed his disciples feet, an act of service and love. The example Jesus gave us is undeniable, if you are a Christian then your love for Jesus and others should be reflected in your love and service to others. I pray that you will pray and seek God's direction in where and how you can serve.

Things To Ponder

Can you think of a person who forgot or failed to see the "work of the church" and become burned out by being too busy doing "church work"?

How would you describe the "work of the church" VS doing "church work"? Why is it important to understand the difference?

How do you balance the work of the church in your life?

DAY 3- *Busy Being Busy*

We've explored being addicted to busyness and the problem of church burnout due to busyness. Let's take a moment to look at the busyness of life in general. I mentioned earlier that we live in a very busy world. We're pulled in many different directions by many different things. And as each pulls on us we find ourselves being busy for various reasons, some benign and others not. Let's take a moment and look at three things that pull on us the most - family, work and recreation.

Let's first explore the busyness of family. There are many factors to consider when discussing family. Children come to mind first. Today there seems to be no limit of activities there are for children to be involved in, with school at the top of the list. In today's environment kids face more pressure than ever to "achieve", whether it's in academics, sports, or both. College no longer is an "option", but a requirement. And even then simply going to college is not enough as you must differentiate yourself from others in order to achieve success.

Parents are also pulled in many different directions. From the activities their children are involved in, to caring for aging parents as life expectancy has gotten longer. Balancing their children's sport practices with their parents' doctor visits and also trying to find time with their spouse or simply downtime for themselves is becoming harder and harder. There simply doesn't seem to be enough time.

Another area we can find ourselves being too busy in is work. Whether it's to get ahead financially, climb the corporate ladder, or simply because we love our work, or there's just too much work. If you work to climb the corporate ladder and get ahead financially, you can easily fall into the trap of the love of money. Jesus warned his disciples and us of the love of money when he said, "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." (Mt 6:24, Lk 16:13).

But, you can also begin to enjoy your work too much or fall into the trap of too much work. In this example, work will either become your god or your master. Neither is desirable. Neither is healthy. Neither glorifies God.

Finally, we can fall into the busyness of recreation. Everyone needs time away from work. Everyone needs to experience a time of rest, so one can be recharged. Let me ask, do you own your cabin or RV or snowmobile or timeshare, or cruise or whatever else, or does it own you?

There obviously is an overlap where we can easily become a slave to the busyness of family, work or recreation. So, how do we not fall into any of these traps? That's for our last discussion.

Things To Ponder

Have you seen others too busy doing family, work or recreation? What were the symptoms?

Of the three (family, work, recreation), which is easiest for you to become too busy at? Why?

Do you feel you strike a balance between family, work and recreation? How?

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DAY 4- *The Cure For Busyness*

This may be the hardest topic to explore, since we must first acknowledge the problem of busyness in one's own life. It's a lot easier to see it in others than it is in ourselves. Therefore, take a moment to pray. Ask God to reveal areas in your life where you're too busy and ask him to help show them to you.

If busyness were a disease, then we would want to find its root cause so we could cure it. The problem of busyness doesn't seem to have one root cause. In the area of busyness each person is unique. Therefore allow me to not identify the "why" of our busyness, but to talk on the topic of how to step back from being too busy.

In our first lesson, we explored various symptoms of being addicted to being busy.

(Take a moment to re-read them)

Most people who feel they are busy and anxious would find themselves aligning with at least one, if not more. With this in mind it does not mean you are addicted as much as you have leanings or have dispositional tendencies. Fancy words that simply mean you find yourself saying "Yes. That kind of describes me". Once you see what busyness is controlling you, you're halfway to breaking its grip on your life.

Now this next part will sound very familiar, almost too basic, but it is the best place to start. Let's explore the Sabbath. That's right, the Sabbath. Jesus told the Pharisees that "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mk 2:27). The Pharisees understood that the Sabbath was for mankind to take time and cease from work. But they got so caught up in defining "work", that they lost track of why God had created it in the first place. God gave the Sabbath as a gift for mankind.

Regardless of which day of the week it is, don't you look forward to a day off? We all need a day off. A day to break away from the routines of work and family - even recreation. That day "off" is a gift. God knows and understands that we cannot burn the candle at both ends. If we do, we'll eventually burn out. So, to save us, he gave us the Sabbath - a day of rest.

The Sabbath is not just to cease work for a day, but a day to rest. But what is rest? For some, rest is watching sports and sleeping all afternoon on Sunday. For others, it's going for a long walk in the forest or along a beach. And while these are not wrong in and of themselves, as they do help one recharge their batteries, I would offer that the rest God wants for us is a little more.

True rest, Sabbath rest, is not just for the body, but also the soul. We find examples of this where we read "be still" followed by a reference to God (Ps 37:7, 46:10). To "be still" is to allow your mind and spirit to focus and meditate on God. As the old saying goes "If you're too busy to pray, you're too busy". Take some time now. Find a quiet place where you can be still and allow God to refill you with his presence.

Things To Ponder

Where has God shown you you're too busy?

Why is it important to take a break from the routines of life?

Have you ever considered the Sabbath to be a gift from God? How does this affect how you normally spend the Sabbath?

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DAY 5-Life Application

In this devotional and series of lessons, we have explored **busy**. This final lesson is unique in that it is time for me to stop talking (writing) and for you to do some Bible study and journaling. .

This is totally optional, but here is what I would like you to do.

1. Get maybe 2 or 3 of your favorite versions of the Bible.
2. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you something new, something you never really noticed before.
3. Read **Psalm 23 & 46** at least twice - slowly.
4. Now read the questions below and write down some thoughts and observations. This is just for you, I'll not ask you to share any of it.

Digging Deeper

Main Point - What do you see as the main point or idea the writer wanted to convey?

Learning - What was one new thing you learned or was reminded of from this scripture passage?

Life Application - How can applying what you have learned help you grow?

Next Step - What is the next step you can do to apply what you have learned?

References

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