

Valley Living – part one
“Macho Man in a Macho Valley”
Pastor Dale Campfield – Eastgate Community Church
June 21st, 2009 – Father’s Day

Intro:

Matt 28:19 “Go and make disciples of all nations...”

ECC Process of Discipleship: Making an IMPACT...To Love...To Grow...To Serve

We have 3 priorities – To love...which is expressed in our Sunday morning celebration. To grow...which is expressed in our Connection Groups. To serve...which is expressed in our daily lives in the places we live, work and play; as well as through the local church. The vision of E.C.C. is to gather together weekly for corporate worship, loving God and each other; then to come together in small Connection Groups for discipleship and fellowship, and are regularly involved in reaching out to others with the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ through community outreach. To Love...To Grow...To Serve!

Sermon Series Title: Valley Living

Series Synopsis: We’ve RESET our assumptions of Jesus Christ; climbed the mountain learning about the teaching of Jesus Christ; now...we’ll deal with the place we live the most..... The Valley. It’s in the valley that we learn the lessons we need to learn that enable us to climb that next mountain. It’s in the valley experiences of life that God meets us in ways we need Him the most. It’s in the valleys of life that Jesus Christ truly becomes personal to us. Without the valley, there would be no mountain to climb.

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Elements of the Series

SUNDAY MORNING CELEBRATION: Valley Life Sermon Series

VALLEY LIFE GROUPS: The congregation will be encouraged to meet in small groups once a week for six weeks for the purpose of encouraging one another throughout the valley experiences of their lives.

VALLEY LIFE ALMANAC: Every individual within the Eastgate church community will be encouraged to daily follow their personal Almanac; which will keep them focused on the journey at hand, learning how to make an impact while living in the valley.

Sermon Series Title: Valley Living

Part One: “Macho Man in a Macho Valley”

As you can see in your Daily Almanac we were hoping to get Rev. Billy Graham to kick off this series; but that didn't work out (like we really tried), so I'll be kicking off this series.

Part One: "Macho Man in a Macho Valley"

Illus: Pictures of Macho Men

It's Father's Day. When you think of Macho Men, what images of men come to your mind? Tom Sellek, Burt Reynolds, Clint Eastwood, Dwight Schrute, ????
etc. etc.

Illus: Song – "Macho Macho Man"

It seems that everyone wants to appear to be Macho. As well, the world we live in, nobody wants you to see them hurting. Remember the old commercial, "Never let them see you sweat"? That's the kind of world we live in. "I'm macho, I don't need any help, I'm a macho man, a macho woman. I can do this thing on my own." That's the mentality many people have. "I can do it on my own." "I don't need your help." It's all steeped in pride however. We must dependent upon God and others for our help. We cannot have the mentality, "I'll do it myself." "I'll pull myself up by my own bootstraps." It will destroy us.

Illus: Commercial – "Never let them see you sweat."

Today, as we begin this series, we're going to look at a value or a quality that is universally admired, and universally ignored. That is the quality of balance. We must live a balanced life in the valleys of life. It's the day to day in the valley of life that will sustain us through the seasons of life. We must be balanced. We can't be thinking that we have to be MACHO all of the time and just keep going and moving and thriving and making everyone think we've got our act together all of the time. We'll burn out if we do that.

MACHO MEN BURN OUT! WE MUST LIVE A BALANCED LIFE!

How many of you would like to live a balanced life? Pretty much all of us. 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. None of us are. 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're going to talk about this morning may be the greatest sin in this congregation. You folks are not out committing immoral crimes every day of the week, you're not terrorists, you're not ax murderers. But most of you do live pretty unbalanced lives. This may be the one that gets us. This may be the one we need to work on the most as we live in the valley.

What I want to share with you today is nothing new but it's 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. Every nook and cranny of the universe is built on this principle of balance or equilibrium.

Illus: The Balance of the Earth

For instance the earth is perfect in its balance. It is perfectly balanced. If it were not, we would feel the vibrations much more intensely as it rotated. The earth is tilted just right on the axis. If we were to tilt just a few degrees one way or the other we would either be burned up by the sun or we would freeze up as we pulled away from the sun. It is perfectly balanced and God intended it that way.

Illus: The Balance of Nature

Nature is a system of eco systems that live in balance. We're discovering that more and more each day, how that even the tiniest variation in the ecosystem creates a chain reaction. God has set up a food chain with plants and animals in harmony in the earth. Economists are studying these balances and these ecosystems and how they work together. We had no idea how finely tuned the world was until recent years. But even nature is setup in a system of checks and balances.

Illus: The Balance of Architecture

This building or any other building -- is built on the principle of balancing stress load. As you build a building you have to balance the stress points on it so it holds up. An imbalanced building will collapse. An imbalanced bridge will fall. If you ever go to Washington DC visit the National Cathedral which is enormous. It took 80 years to build. It's solid rock and incredible. The whole idea of cathedrals came about when they discovered the idea of what is called flying buttresses. This is an architectural tool they use when a column starts to buckle -- they put pressure at the exact point to keep it from buckling promoting an anti- pressure so there is balance. If a building is not balanced it collapses.

Illus: The Balance of Life

If your life is not balanced it will collapse. The human body is built on the principle of balance. Your body is nine different systems. 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.

Equilibrium and balance is a basic principle of the universe and God loves balance. Not only that, He's interested in you living a balanced life.

Psalm 127:2 (Living Bible)

"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're under stress. God is concerned if you don't balance your life. He is very concerned about it because God is a God of balance.

The bottom line is this: When my life is out of balance, I'm not in God's will. It is not God's will for me to live imbalanced. I cannot expect to live in this valley of life thinking I have to be MACHO, do everything, be everywhere, fulfill

everyone's expectations of me and still make it through life. I MUST BE IN BALANCE – not MACHO!

This morning we're 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.

Living a BALANCED not MACHO life.

B - BUILD MY LIFE AROUND CHRIST.

Build my life around Christ. The only totally balanced person who ever lived was Jesus. Therefore if I put Him at the center of my life, it stands to reason that I have a better chance of being balanced if He's at the center than if anything else is. He is the most balanced person who ever lived and if He is at the center He will teach me how to be balanced.

Illus: Think of your life like a wheel.

At the center of the wheel is the hub. There's a core, a center. Out of that hub are all the spokes of life which represent your relationships, your family, your career, your finances, your dreams, your goals and every other area of your life. You will build your life around something. Something is going to be at the center of your life. I don't know what it is. If I were to ask you, "What does your life revolve around right now?" it might be work. It might be your family. It might be your dreams. It might be possessions. It might be some goal.

How do you know what your life is centered around? Simple. What do you think about the most? Whatever you think about the most is what you center your life around.

The center of your life is very important. If you have a solid center, you're going to have a solid life. But if you've got a weak, flimsy center you're going to crack up at the edges. People say things like "I feel like I'm coming unglued. I feel like my life is falling apart." If you've felt that way, it means one thing. You have a faulty center. It means something other than God has taken first place in your life. Something other than God has taken the center point in your life. It may be another person. It may be money. It may be a dream or a goal or a career, whatever. But if it's not God it's not strong enough to hold you together. You'd better get God back in the center as quick as you can or your life will eventually fall apart. Nothing else has the strength to hold all the pieces together. Not only does the hub create stability, the hub controls everything else. So whatever you put in the center, in the core of your life, is going to control and influence everything else.

Not only is it the controlling factor, it's the source of power. The center of the wheel is the hub, the hub is connected to the axle and the axle is connected to the source of power. The power always emanates from the hub outward, not inward. If you have anything except God at the center of your life, at the hub, at the core, you've got a power shortage. Nothing else has enough power to help you make it through all the things you're going to go through in the valley of life, the unforeseen crises that you're inevitably going to experience. Put Christ at the center and He gives stability, He gives control and He gives power.

Matthew 6:33

"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." (New Living Translation)

Circle "your primary concern". King James Version: *"Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness."*

What does it mean to put God first in my life? Don't think of it in terms of first place, second place, third place... Think of it in terms of what's at the center? What's in the hub? What's at the control? What's the source of power in my life? If you put Jesus Christ at the center, He can direct, He can influence, He can empower, He can give stability to every spoke of your life whether it's education, career, family, etc. while experiencing valley living. You don't have to be MACHO, let God do it for you! Jesus summarized life priorities in two sentences.

Matt 22:37-39 (NIV)

"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's the only thing you get done in life, but you get those two things done, you've done the most important things according to what God says. And He's the one who put you here. If you love God and you love other people you've done the most important things. I need to build my life round Christ.

A – ACCEPT MY HUMANITY

A in Balance stands for Accept.

I need to accept my humanity. That means I stop trying to pretend that I'm God. I don't have to be a MACHO man in the valley of life – or on the mountain top for that matter. 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'm a human being. I'm not superman. I'm not a macho man. I'm not even semi superman and neither are you. When you play God, you always end up overworking.

Ecclesiastes 10:15

"Only someone too stupid to find his way home would wear himself out with work."

He says it's dumb to wear yourself with work. When you overwork, you're playing God. You're saying, it all depends on me! It's all going to crash if I don't keep it going." No, it's not. You are not the general manager of the universe. You can resign and it's not going to fall apart. God will take care of things.

One of the causes of workaholicism and one of the causes of the lack of balance is we care too much about the opinions of other people. We let the expectations of others manipulate us. God can't even please everybody. One wants it to rain, another wants it to be sunny. Only a fool would try to do what even God can't do. You cannot please everybody, you cannot meet everybody's expectation. When you do you're asking for trouble. You're asking to be imbalanced. When you start living for the expectations of others, you go around "should"ing yourself. "I should do this ... I must do this ... I've got to do this ... They're expecting this." Who's holding the gun to your head? Nobody. The things you do in life you do because you choose to do them and accept the consequences or you choose not to do them and accept the consequences. But that is your choice.

Even pastors fall for this one because lots of people have expectations of pastors. I heard about a guy who came up to a pastor and said, "I tried to call you on Monday and I couldn't get in touch with you." Pastor said, "That's my day off." The guy is trying to be self righteous and says, "The devil never takes a day off." The pastor said, "Yes, and if I didn't, I'd be just like the devil." Satan is not my model. God is and the Bible said that God rests. Why? Because He needs to? Because He gets tired? No. But as an example for us. You cannot do everything. And not everything is worth doing in the first place. You have limitations on your life. You are a human being and you're not God.

One of the popular rock groups out today is Jars of Clay. They're good. They're Christians. Their name comes from 2 Corinthians 4 where Paul says, *"We hold God's gifts in our lives in jars of clay."* He compares our bodies to jars of clay. He says we're human beings. We're feeble. We're fragile. Jars of clay break easily. If you drop them, they splatter. They crack up. Clay pots have to be handled with care. Clay pots have to be handled appropriately. If not they're going to crack up.

The same is true of you.

Psalms 119:73

"You made my body, Lord. Now give me sense to heed your laws."

L – LIMIT MY LABOR

Make a conscious decision to make time for other things besides work. I have to decide how many hours I'm going to work each week and then I stick to it. For those of you that are self employed, if you don't set a standard number of hours a work that you're going to work, you'll just never take a break. You'll take your work home with you or you may work out of your home. You never slow down, you never take a break, you never let down.

Illus: The Bow and Arrow Syndrome

Just like a bow and arrow, a bow that is constantly strung tight, loses its power. It has to be unstrung periodically.

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're not overworking. This is very serious stuff. Particularly I would suggest this is you are a single parent. I don't know anybody who works harder than single parents. Because you have so much responsibility on you and you're trying to care for your kids you rarely take any time for yourself. You don't relax, you're always on the go and you're harming yourself and your family.

What I'm talking about is not just some pop psychology or good advice, it's so important that God put it in the Ten Commandments. It's right up there with Don't murder, Don't commit adultery, Don't lie, Don't steal. That's how important what we're talking about is. It's the fourth commandment.

Exodus 20:9-10

"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. "Don't have any other God's before me. Don't make any idols, Don't murder, Don't 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.

This principle is called the Sabbath. Sabbath simply means "A day of rest." God expects you to observe a sabbath every seven days. That means a day of rest. Why? Notice what Jesus said in...

Mark 2:27

"The Sabbath was made to benefit man."

It's for my benefit. It doesn't matter what day you choose. The book of Colossians in the New Testament says God doesn't care at all which day your Sabbath is -- Sunday, Saturday, Tuesday, whatever -- as long as you do it every week. Every week you take a full day off. Not every other week. Every week. It doesn't matter what day it is as long

as you do it. Sunday is not a Sabbath for me. And neither is Saturday. My sabbath is Saturday most of the time. That's my day.

What do you do on your Sabbath? Catch up on all the things you didn't do the other six things? No. That's not what God says to do. God says to do three things on your sabbath:

- 1) Rest my body
- 2) Recharge my emotions
- 3) Refocus my spirit

That's the purpose of the Sabbath, a weekly day off. You are to do all three things or it's not a Sabbath.

1) Rest my body.

Have you figured out the fact that if you don't take time off, your body will make time off. One way or the other, your back will go out, you'll get a headache, you'll get the flu, whatever. We are not designed to go without rest. Our best deserves rest.

During the French revolution they outlawed the Sabbath in France. They said there will be no day off, we'll work seven days a week. Within the matter of a couple of years, they had to reinstate it because the health of the nation had collapsed. We aren't wired to work constantly without any rest. God says, I want you to rest your body on the Sabbath. Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is take a nap.

2) Recharge your emotions.

That takes different things for different people. You can recharge yourself emotionally through quietness, through rejuvenating recreation (not the competitive kind where you're beating your brains out to kill the other guy. That doesn't always recharge you) and relationships. Take time for relationships. They can rejuvenate you emotionally and get you recharged.

3) Refocus your spirit.

The Bible word for that is worship. Worship is when I focus on God instead of all my problems, when I tune in to the creator and His power and His love for me and what He's like. One of the things worship does is put everything else in perspective. It shrinks your problems. Have you ever come to church really stressed out, really tired and by just singing some songs that help you focus on God, hearing some Bible study from God's word, getting together with some of the other Christians, it kind of shrinks the problems and you're reminded, God's still on His throne, He's still in control, He isn't dead, He's going to help me, He's going to be with me, It's not that big of deal, He'll help me through it. All of a sudden the problem isn't as big as it was. Worship puts things into perspective. Your problem looks big but then when you see how big God is, your problem looks very, very tiny. Because God can handle anything.

God wants you to do all three things on your day off, on your sabbath: Rest your body, Recharge your emotions, Worship -- Refocus your spirit.

A – ADJUST MY 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's really most important in life. We 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

"I've learned why people work so hard to succeed, it is because they envy the things their neighbors have."

God says you've got 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't do them both at the same time. You can't live in a world that says, "I've got to have more. I've got to have better. I've got to achieve greater. I've got to keep on keeping on and keeping up because somebody may get ahead of me economically or at the office or anywhere else." You can't do that and live a balanced life at the same time. Especially as you are living in the valley life.

That's a question of values. We buy things we don't need, with money we don't have to impress people we don't even like. We just keep doing it and doing it. Somebody's got to stop and say, When is enough, enough? Be realistic, be rational, be logical about this. Somebody's got to stop and say, "Is it worth it to just keep on this rat race?" You can win the rat race and you're still a rat! Jesus said it like this...

Mark 8:36

"What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?"

I'd say, what good is it for a man to become president of his company and lose his kids or his wife? What good is it for a woman to get that career promotion and lose her kids or her husband? or anything else? What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? What happens is, we become possessed by our possessions. The things we think we are managing are actually managing us. They control us.

One of the reasons why Americans have a hard time relaxing is because in our society we confuse our work and our worth. They are two very separate things. We think that what I do is the same thing as what I am. We think that my identity is all wrapped up in my career and my net worth determines my self worth. That's all a lie. It's just not true. Your identity has nothing to do with your career. It has to do with who God made you to be.

We think if I achieve a lot then I'm worth a lot. So I'll just keep working and working to prove my worth.

Many of you grew up with a false concept that got into your mind somehow that says, "You're worthless. You don't matter. You aren't worth diddly." You may have picked that up from a kid on the playground or a teacher may have said that to you or you may have had a brother or sister who said that or you may have even had a parent who either said it or in so many words said, "You aren't going to amount to much." So in the back of your mind, you figured "I'm going to show them. I'm going to prove them wrong." And you start working and you work harder and harder and no matter what you accomplish, it's never enough. Just about the time you start to relax and maybe add a little bit of balance to your life, that haunting voice comes in and says, "Keep pedaling. Somebody's catching up! Keep working because somebody's going to pass you and show that you really aren't worth it." You need to get rid of that idea. Base your worth on what God says about you. Not some phony idea that somebody told you a long time ago that you're still living off of and that drives you to keep working.

Ecclesiastes 4:6

"It is better to have only a little with peace of mind than to be busy all the time."

The greatest things in life aren't things. It's better to not have a whole lot and have a life and sanity and balance than it is to have a warehouse full of possessions and no time to enjoy them. Or time to enjoy the people in your life.

As a pastor I've been by a lot of bedsides when people died. I've seen a lot of people take their last breath. Sometimes at a hospital, sometimes in a home, sometimes at a scene of an accident. In all of the people I've watched die in my

life, I've never heard a single person say with their dying breath, "I wish I'd spent more time at the office." Not one. "I wish I'd made that one more sale." I have heard a lot of people say things like, "I sure wish I'd spent more time with my kids." or "I sure wish I'd got to know God better." or "I sure wish I'd focused on the things that really matter."

N – NOURISH MY 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. He puts an inner fire within each of us that gives us a passion and zeal and a reason to get up in the morning. It's a fire that has to be tended. If you don't tend it, if you don't nourish that fire, you will find that it goes out eventually and you are then trying to live your life and meet other people's needs from very cold embers rather than a blazing fire. The passion and zeal will go out of your life if you don't tend this inner fire and nourish your inner life.

Song of Solomon 1:6 *"I had no time for myself."*

I think most of us can relate to that verse at least some point in our life, feeling like you have no time for yourself. When you feel that way, it's a warning light that the inner fire is going out, that there are attacks on that inner fire and if you're not careful, it will go out and there will be nothing left. This particular area of nourishing the inner fire, making sure that my soul is growing, is something we all need in the valley living. I am learning that the more I tend that inner fire, the more strength and joy I have to face life. If you find yourself facing life from a very dead, cold, empty vantage point know that you have allowed that inner fire to go out or at least be dimmed.

A verse in Matthew *"Love God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself."* A person who neglects this inner fire is not loving himself or herself and God tells us we're to do it. He knows how important it is. When you or I neglect to nourish our inner life, to tend that fire, we develop weak areas in our lives. The way you can tell is if you're so irritable all the time that the least little thing bugs you, if you can't handle anybody disagreeing with you, if you can't handle a delay or interruption or stop light, that's a sign that you've not been nourishing your inner life. And God says we're to do it.

Our society encourages us in this. Our society encourages us to live externally, to live from the outside in, to make sure that everything looks really good on the outside and hope somehow we can cover up what's going on, on the inside. To be macho. In our society what's valued is the appearance of something, how it looks. What does it matter if you've got an immaculate yard, every weed picked, every blade of grass is where it should be, and your house is decorated flawlessly and your car has got a shine that's incredible and you have got a desk at work where everything is lined up and just so! What does it matter if all of that externally looks good and on the inside there is death and bitterness and rage and frustration and unforgiveness. God tells us we are to live our lives from the inside out not from the outside in. That has to do with tending that inner fire.

What are you neglecting in your life right now out of business? What is it you have stopped paying attention to or stopped doing completely because you are just too busy? Maybe it's praying. Maybe it's spending time with God. Maybe it's doing stuff with your kids. Maybe it's spending time with your husband or your wife. Maybe it's the friend that you haven't talked to in a year because you're really just too busy. What is it that you've stopped doing because you're so busy?

What do you do for fun? What do you do on a weekly basis for fun? Ladies, shopping doesn't qualify as nourishing your soul. It may be fun but it does not in any way make your soul grow and be better. Gentlemen, spending time at your computer may be a blast and you may be able to cruise the Internet, but it doesn't enlarge your soul! It doesn't tend the inner fire.

For me, I just got a new bike – it's new to me. A 82 Yamaha. I love to ride it, pray and get my soul nourished. I also enjoy sitting in a hot tub! It's nourishing the inside. I do it for fun. It gives me a chance to "get away" and get nourished by God.

Charles Swindoll says in his book [Growing Strong Through the Seasons of Life](#) that one time we went to a beautiful home where there was a gorgeous stone fireplace with a wood mantel over the fireplace. He could see words carved in the mantel. He walked up close to see what words were on the mantel. It said, "If your heart is cold, my fires cannot warm you." A three car garage cannot warm a cold heart. A promotion at work cannot warm a cold heart. A two week vacation to some fantastic spot cannot warm a cold heart. What will warm a cold heart is contact again with the living God.

Psalms 119:16 *"I will delight in your decrees. I will not neglect your word."*

God called David, the man who wrote those words, a man after His own heart. If you're finding the fire in your life has gone out get back in contact with the living God and let Him begin to warm up your heart again. To be balanced you have to nourish your inner life.

C – COMMIT MY 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've got a list of things to do. Some of us just absolutely have to live by that list. This is the place for some of you that you get so frustrated. If anybody messes with your list, you get so mad! You have your idea of how your life is supposed to go. You don't want anybody messing with it. You've got your list. You're living by this list -- don't mess with it! Y get very frustrated and bent out of shape. When God reminds us of this verse in...

Psalm 31:15b *"My times are in Your hands."*

When I live by that verse, the stress level goes down. When I understand that God knows what I'm supposed to be doing on any given day. I may make my list... You may make your list -- go ahead. But commit it to God, knowing that He alone knows what you or I are supposed to be doing on any given day.

In Matthew 9 is the story of Jesus on His way to heal a dying child. On His way to heal this dying little girl, a woman who has a chronic illness of over 20 years stops Him and He stops and heals her. I look at that and think, "Why can't this lady wait?" And the Bible doesn't answer that question, but what it tells me is this. Jesus understood this principle. He understood that the Father knew where He was supposed to be at any given moment in time and He was willing to be bendable and flexible and let God show Him where He was supposed to spend His time.

If you want the stress level in your life to go down, allow yourself to be bendable and flexible. Give your schedule to God, "I have my ideas of where I think I'm supposed to be today. I have my ideas of what I think I'm supposed to accomplish. But, God, here's this interruption. Do I need to stop and take care of this or is this something You want me to bypass and put off?" Don't make the decision yourself. Let God be the one who helps you know what you're supposed to do on any given day. Give that schedule to Him.

Ecclesiastes 3:1

"There is a time and a season for everything under Heaven."

God knows what you're supposed to be doing. God is the one who sits up the season in our lives. Let Him be the one who tells you what you're to be doing on every day. As you live in this valley, or on the mountain top, let God show you what you are to do that day. Be flexible to His ways, not your macho "My way or the highway" mentality.

E – ENJOY THE MOMENT

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 doesn't intend for me to do, or (b) I'm doing them in the wrong way. God would not give me a list of things that are His will to do and then not give me the time to do it. So when I've got more to do than I've got time to do it, it means some of those things are on there by my choosing not by God's choosing. God does not expect me to do everything when He doesn't give me enough time to do it. I may be doing it in the wrong way -- wasting time. Or I'm trying to do too much.

Regardless of whether it's either of those, I need to learn to enjoy the moment. Is it possible to get so busy and so focused on a goal you don't have any time to enjoy right now? Sure. We tend to be such forward thinkers that we often forget to stop and smell the roses.

Ecclesiastes 3:13

"All of us should enjoy what we have worked for. It is God's gift."

I want you to beware of the trap of "when and then" thinking. When and then thinking goes like this: When I achieve this goal, then I will be happy. When I graduate, then I'll be happy. When I get engaged, then I'll be happy. When I reach this certain economic level, then I'll be happy. When I have this much set away in the bank, then I'll be happy. When I get out of this valley experience, then I'll be happy. On and on....

The point is, you won't. The moment you get there, you'll enjoy it about three seconds and then be thinking "What's next?" What's the next goal? What's the next level? What's the next achievement? What do I do now? You need to learn to be happy in the now while you're working on goals. It's ok to have goals. God says to work on goals. But you need to understand that the goal of life is not accomplishments -- do a whole bunch of things and rack them up on you resume. That's called humanism. The goal of life is not acquisition -- get a whole bunch of things and pile them up. That's called materialism. The goal of life is not even to just have fun, having as much pleasure as you want. That's called hedonism.

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'm testing your character for eternity. And while you're doing it, enjoy all the moments.

Proverbs 14:30

"A relaxed attitude lengthens a man's life."

Conclusion:
Conclusion:

As we live in the valley, there are three types of fatigue. There's physical fatigue -- that's when your muscles get tired. There's emotional fatigue -- that's when your emotions get tired. There's spiritual fatigue -- that's when your heart dries up and you just don't feel close to God and you feel like when you pray nobody's listening.

Physical fatigue can be cured by rest. But it takes more than rest to rejuvenate emotional and spiritual fatigue. If your spirit's dried up a three week Tahiti vacation isn't going to do anything for it. It may rest your body but you come back and you've still got the same problems you left with. You need more than that. What you need to do is get plugged back into the power. You do that by putting Christ back at the center, at the hub of your life.

As a Christian, you can take Christ out of the hub. You can put ministry as the hub of your life. You can put church as the hub of your life. You can put family as the hub of your life. You can put money or anything as the hub of your life. But if it's not a person, Jesus Christ, you're missing it. And the power is turned off and you start getting tired. You've got to get back in balance.

There are two main reasons we get under stress. We try to do too much and we try to do it in our own power. Both of those are killers. They'll wear you out and your energy will go down and you're out of balance and the joy leaves. You need to get plugged back in to God's power.

Jesus offers us an exchange program. ...Keeping in mind... If you think you have to live a MACHO man life in this valley living... remember this verse...

Matthew 11:28 - 29 Jesus says,
"Come to me, all of you who are tired and have heavy loads, and I will..."

give you a whole lot more to do? No. That's the Reviled Substandard Perversion. But a lot of you think that. Some of you are afraid to really sell out to God, 100% live for Jesus Christ and not be ashamed of it. A total Christian. You're afraid if you do, God's going to load more on you than you've already got. And you're dead wrong! He may add some things to your schedule, but I guarantee you, He'll relieve more than He adds on. He wants you to be balanced. He'll replace trivia with what is really going to matter, what's going to count 10, 30, 50, 1000, a million years from now, not what isn't even going to matter ten minutes from now. The myth is, If I live God's way He'll give me more to do. The fact is He says, I'll exchange your pressure or My peace and My power. He says,

"Come to me, all of you who are tired and have heavy loads, and I will give you rest. The load I give you to carry is light."

If you are carrying a heavy load tonight, it's not from Jesus. It's not from God. He does not place heavy loads. He says right here, the load 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.

And as you do...

You watch... You wait... You'll See!