

Running On **EMPTY**

Part # 1: The Pace of Life

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Even though more and more demands are placed on our time, very few seem concerned about **overload**. Sometimes simply saying **no** to the things that drain us, and allowing ourselves to slow down to **refuel** serves as a simple solution.

The truth is, the things that overload us can keep us continually **overwhelmed**.

Increasingly we find ourselves overwhelmed by the **pace** of life.

Central Point...

The term '24/7' has become an accepted mantra in our society. It has **defined** the pace of American living.

Why do we find ourselves overwhelmed by the pace of life? Primarily because we have allowed ourselves to believe three lies...

Lie #1 – We can **have** it all.

Lie #2 – We can **do** it all.

Lie #3 – We **deserve** it all.

Whether we give in to one or all three, it doesn't take long before we find ourselves always in a **hurry**.

The Bible offers an interesting perspective:

Ephesians 5:11-16 *Don't waste your time on useless work, mere busywork, the barren pursuits of darkness. Expose these things for the sham they are. It's a scandal when people waste their lives on things they must do in the darkness where no one will see. Rip the cover off those frauds and see how attractive they look in the light of Christ.*

*Wake up from your sleep,
Climb out of your coffins;
Christ will show you the light!*

*So watch your step. Use your head. Make the most of every chance you get.
These are desperate times!*

Simply put, instead of trying to **cheat** time, we need to **redeem** it.

Focal Point...

Redeeming the Time

God created time and gives it to us as stewards.

If we don't purposefully order our time, we will find that we have no time to do what is **important** and will barely have the time to do what is **pressing**.

Because when we don't use our time purposefully...

1. Life seems **useless**.

Ecclesiastes 1:14 *14 I've seen it all and it's nothing but smoke—smoke, and spitting into the wind.*

2. Life seems **exhausting**.

Ecclesiastes 1:4-8 *"The sun rises and sets and hurries around to rise again. The wind blows south and north, here and there, twisting back and forth, getting nowhere...everything is unutterably weary and tiresome."*

John 4:13-14 ¹³ Jesus replied, "People soon become thirsty again after drinking this water. ¹⁴ But the water I give them takes away thirst altogether. It becomes a perpetual spring within them, giving them eternal life."

3. Life seems **unfulfilling**.

Ecclesiastes 1:8 *"No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied; no matter how much we hear, we are not content."*

4. Life seems **insignificant**.

Ecclesiastes 1:9-14 *"History merely repeats itself. Nothing is truly new; it has all been done or said before... We don't remember what happened in those former times, and in the future generations no one will remember what we have done back here."*

5. Life seems **uncontrollable**.

Ecclesiastes 1:15 *"It is all foolishness, chasing the wind. What is wrong cannot be righted; it is water over the dam; and there is no use thinking of what might have been."*

As a result, we are tempted to react in one of two ways:

- we continue to **maintain** or increase our pace.

- we stop **trying** altogether

Though neither option moves us forward, either one can help open our minds to two important truths:

1. Trying to correct our pace within our **own** limitations is hopeless.
2. Turning to **God** can make all the difference.

Matthew 5:3 *You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.*

Three keys to redeeming our time:

Key #1: Understand the ultimate purpose of life.

Ephesians 1:11-12 *It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, he had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, ¹² part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone.*

Key #2: Understand the important priorities of life.

Matthew 22:35-40 *One of their religion scholars spoke for them, posing a question they hoped would show him up: ³⁶ "Teacher, which command in God's Law is the most important?" ³⁷ Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence." ³⁸ This is the most important, the first on any list. ³⁹ But there is a second to set alongside it: 'Love others as well as you love yourself.' ⁴⁰ These two commands are pegs; everything in God's Law and the Prophets hangs from them."*

Key #3: Understand the importance of careful planning.

Proverbs 21:5 *"Careful planning puts you ahead in the long run; hurry and scurry puts you further behind."*

Turning Point . . .

When we are able to successfully redeem our time, we have the best chance of ensuring the pace of our lives is at a rate that **honors** God, and helps us reach our **full** potential.

Our challenge...

Believers – simply ask God,

Father God – How am I doing in redeeming the time you give me?

Seekers – If you are one checking out the claims of Christianity, know that the future God desires for you to experience is one that includes a growing personal relationship with Him. The good news is that to receive it, you simply have to ask Him.

To invite Christ into your heart, you can simply pray,

Lord Jesus, I want to receive your love today. I believe you came and died for me, and I want to be your friend and follower, starting today. So I officially invite you into my life today. Lead me, guide me, love me, so that I can love others better each day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

