

SESSION 1: BUSYNESS ASSESSMENT

•Prayer, Welcome and Review of Busyness Assessment: 30 minutes

- Introduce yourself and talk about why you are doing this study and what you hope to get out of it.
- Take the first 20 minutes of this class completing the "Busyness Assessment!"

Jesus can sympathize with your busyness. You have bills that need to be paid? Jesus had lepers who wanted to be healed. You have kids screaming for you? Jesus had demons calling Him by name. You have stress in your life? Jesus taught large crowds all over Judea and Galilee with people constantly trying to touch Him, trick Him, and kill Him. He had every reason to be run over by a hundred expectations and a thousand great opportunities, and yet, He stayed on mission. Jesus knew His priorities and stuck with them. Isn't this astounding? Think about it: Jesus was not just turning down an opportunity to play in a community sports league, He said NO to people who had diseases that He could have healed instantly. The disciples struggled to understand why He was not attending to the urgent needs right in front of Him, but Jesus understood His mission. He was not driven by the needs, demands, or approval of others, but rather stayed within the direct will of the Father. Ultimately, Jesus was driven by His God-given mission. He knew His priorities and did not let the accumulating temptations of a busy life deter Him from His task!

In the current culture busyness becomes an addiction that is normalized, and often praised. It seems as though successful people are busy, so the temptation to remain busy and accomplished can become an ever-present struggle. Do not fall to the temptation of busyness: *"All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful. 'All things are lawful for me,' but I will not be dominated by anything" (1 Corinthians 6:12).*

Do you take pride in your busyness and your ability to multitask? The reality is that NO ONE multitasks well! God did not design you to multitask or to remain constantly busy. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus said that man was designed to rest: "The Sabbath was made for man" (Mark 2:27).

Research shows that multitasking is counterproductive! In fact, busyness blinds you and dictates your schedule, so you don't slow down enough to think about each task. At times, your demanding schedule and your desire for accomplishment can be symptoms of a deeper ailment. You may find your self-worth wrapped in what you can accomplish. It may seem as though you have an insatiable desire to always be one step ahead of where you are. It could be a coping mechanism to keep yourself from acknowledging certain feelings or thoughts. Your busyness may even be an attempt to live up to the expectations of others.

If you identify yourself as someone who is constantly busy, sit down and ask yourself: *In all of my busyness, am I living the life that God wants me to live? Am I seeking fulfillment in my busyness and tasks? Am I seeking the approval of others in my goals and accomplishments?*

If your current busy schedule feels more like a burden than a blessing, chances are you have taken on too much and have exceeded what is a healthy balance. It may be time for you to let some of your busyness go.

It is time to reorganize your priorities, and allow the proper priorities determine your schedule. You can actually accomplish more with less if you focus your attention completely on the valuable task at hand. Choose the worthy tasks, and challenge yourself to be fully present in whatever you are doing in each given moment. Allow time for just "being," – i.e. not always focused on "doing". Make time for the joy God wants you to experience. God desires for you to find freedom from your busyness: *"For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefor, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" (Galatians 5:1).* Surrender your priorities to God, and allow Him to show you what is most valuable in your life.

The bottom line is that how you spend your time is a reflection of your priorities. Throughout the Bible, God has made it clear that He should be at the top of the priority list, and remain there, even while carrying out each daily task. Now is the time to make time for God and His loving relationships that which you cherish most! "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3).

Please answer these questions honestly (and have your spouse independently do the same):
(10 being MOST important or satisfying and 1 being LEAST important or satisfying. *Be totally honest!*)

- How important are the relationships in your life? Rate: _____
- How important is your spiritual life? Rate: _____
- How important is it to maintain your health? Rate: _____
- How important is it to succeed in your career? Rate: _____
- How important is it to have adequate financial resources? Rate: _____
- How satisfied are you with your relationships? Rate: _____
- How satisfied are you with your spiritual life? Rate: _____
- How satisfied are you with your health? Rate: _____
- How satisfied are you with your career? Rate: _____
- How satisfied are you with your financial life? Rate: _____
- How well do you know what you spend your time on? Rate: _____

Total up your scores: Total: _____

Think hard and make bullet point notes of the following:

Things you **DON'T WANT TO DO**, and actually **DON'T NEED TO DO**:

Things you **DON'T WANT TO DO**, but actually **NEED TO DO**:

Things you **WANT TO DO** and actually **NEED TO DO**:

Things you **DON'T WANT TO DO**, but actually **DON'T NEED TO DO**:

Small Group Discussion: 20 minutes

Review your "Busyness Assessment" as a group and discuss...

- Were there any surprises?
- Discuss with your group.
- Small Group Wrap-Up: 10 minutes
- What are the biggest take-aways and personal commitment from your small group time?
- What is ONE thing that you will do different this week in order to make needed changes that came up in today's study?

Discuss This Week's Homework: 5 minutes

Focus on the LIFE Journaling Method and it will give you more insight to become a spiritual leader!

- Pray about your commitment to this study and rethink what you want to get out of it.
- Review your "Busy Assessment" with someone close to you to discuss next week.