

Balanced Living IV



1Tim 2:2 *"...that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence."*

1Thess 4:11-12 *"that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing."*

Three Ways To Balance Your Life

- These Suggestions come from a book by Gary Smalley, "Making Love Last Forever", They are found in chapter five.
 1. Identify Life Priorities
 2. Compare Expectations against Reality
 3. Align Your Expectations with Reality

When Reality Doesn't Meet Expectation

- ❑ We might pretend to be one thing when we are really another, that's a hypocrite.
 - **Matt 23:1-14**
- ❑ Or we might deceive ourselves, thinking to be one thing when we are another.
 - **Gal 6:3** *"For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself."*
- ❑ Passages written about deceiving ourselves
 - **1Cor 3:18-23; 6:9-11; 15:33**
 - **Gal 6:1-10; James 1:12-27; 1John 1:8**
- ❑ Instead of playing the hypocrite or deceiving ourselves, we want to change our expectation or change our reality (or both).

Align Your Expectations with Reality

- ❑ When our expectations and experience are closely aligned we are stronger and more content.
- ❑ However when our expectations and reality don't match well it brings discouragement or frustration and drains us of energy.
- ❑ If our expectations and reality don't match we want to determine if we need to change the expectation or the reality, or both.
- ❑ Are we expecting too much of ourselves?
 - **1 John 1:8; Rom 3:23**
- ❑ Are we not living up to what God expects of us?
 - **1 John 1:9-2:2**
- ❑ Smalley writes about examples from his own life:
 - Expects Healthy Man: 50 years old, heart, weight & cholesterol problems don't mix with Donut Man.
 - Expects Perfect Marriage: Arguing doesn't match.

Changing Your Expectations

- Consider Peter's expectations:
 - Willing to fight and die with Jesus – as a soldier.
 - **John 13:36-38; John 18:10-11, 25-27**
 - He changed his expectation – to suffer and die with Jesus.
 - **Acts 4:19-20, 29-30; Acts 5:40-41; 1 Peter 4:12-19**
 - **John 21:18-19** *"Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish." This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me."*
 - **John 8:28-29** *"Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him."*

Changing Your Reality

- ❑ Sometimes change is necessary, God calls this repentance.
 - **2 Corinthians 7:9-10** *"Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death."*
- ❑ Smalley's suggestion for lasting change
 1. Read several of the best recommended books on the subject. (I think this begins with the Word of God)
 2. Discuss issue with an expert or two.
 3. Meet with 3 or 4 others with same issue for mutual support and accountability. (Smalley gives example of Weight Watchers for him)
 4. Last but not least seek strength from faith in God.

Steps for Lasting Change

1. **Read books on the subject.**

- Pro 11:14 *"Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety."*

2. **Discuss issue with experts.**

- Pro 15:22 *"Without counsel, plans go awry, But in the multitude of counselors they are established."*

3. **Meet with others. (support group)**

- James 5:16 *"Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."*

4. **Faith in God.**

- 1 Peter 5:7 *"casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."*
- James 1:5 *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him."*
- Phil 4:13 *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*