

# Reset – Part 3

## Balance: Living a Balanced Blessed Life

Ecclesiastes 7:18 NIV - ...*The man who fears God will avoid all extremes.*

We live in a world of extremes. The lack of balance in life leads to poor health, poverty, addictions, and damaged relationships.

Balance means things are in proper order, proper alignment, and not weighted too heavily in one area. Today I discuss the four areas in which a true disciple of Jesus needs to find balance.

Jesus understood the need for balance.

Luke 2:52 - *And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.*

According to Luke 2:52, Jesus grew (increased) in four basic aspects: wisdom (mentally), stature (physically), favor with God (spiritually), and favor with man (socially).

### Following Jesus into a Balanced Life

#### Four Necessary Areas of a Balanced Life

1) True disciples of Jesus strive to be balanced mentally.

The Word tells us that Jesus "... grew in wisdom..." (Luke 2:52).

a) There are two types of wisdom.

*1 Corinthians 2:5-7 - ... that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. v.6 Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. v.7 But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.*

i) The Wisdom of Men – Go to school, get educated, but balance your class on psychology with the wisdom of God.

ii) The Wisdom of God – the Word of God and the mind of Christ

b) Through the power of the Spirit, we have the mind of Christ.

*1 Corinthians 2:16 – “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.*

c) The Mind of Christ

Romans 12:2 - *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

The mind of Christ makes discerning God's will the highest priority in every situation.

- i) The mind of Christ is able to discern what is good in every situation.
- ii) The mind of Christ discerns what is acceptable to God in every situation.
- iii) The mind of Christ discerns what is perfect in every situation.

(1) The word "perfect" here is *telios*, meaning complete or in its proper place.

(2) Make sure your thoughts are in the order as they should be.

Make growing the mind of Christ, a priority of your balanced life. Renew your mind!

- 2) True disciples of Jesus strive to be balanced physically.

The Word tells us that Jesus "... grew in stature..." (Luke 2:52).

- a) Stature refers to the physical aspect of life.

In this area, we need to make progress and keep in balance.

- b) Our life style, our eating habits, nutrition, recreation, and exercise is a direct influence on our image and is what we project outwardly to God, to other believers, and unto the world.

Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and the temple needs maintenance!

1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 - ... *do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, v.20 or you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*

- c) Three Physical Areas Which Need Balance:

In our life, we should establish habits that prolong our existence and that do not cut short our life by affecting our health.

- i) Balance in Our Diet

Excesses in eating and drinking unhealthy products are causing many of God's people to deal with unwarranted sicknesses and disease.

It just doesn't make sense to keep praying for healing while putting toxic food in our bodies. Excesses in sugar and processed foods with no nutritional value is hindering us!

ii) Balance in Our Outward Appearance

(1) Our Physical Condition

1 Timothy 4:8 - *...for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way...*

- (a) "Training" is gymnasia (exercise). It is used only here in the New Testament and the apostles acknowledge its value.
- (b) Paul is teaching Timothy about the need to balance the physical and spiritual in his life.
- (c) By nature, a disciple of Jesus is a disciplined follower of Christ. God's people should be the most spiritually and physically disciplined people on the planet. Cultivate the practice of exercise, but don't become an extremist!

(2) Our Appearance

- (a) Our image reflects what we are and the God in whom we believe. Even though Jesus was born in a humble stable, Jesus wore the best clothes of His era.

Interesting tidbit: Jesus wore "tunics without seams" and these were the best of that time. So much so, that the soldiers gambled over His clothes to decide who could have it (John 19:23-24).

- (b) Some of us dress more like John the Baptist than Jesus!

He dressed like a survivalist. Today he would have showed up with real tree or mossy oak camo print and camo paint on his face!

iii) Balance in Our Stress Level

- (1) Jesus taught His disciples balance so they would not be overwhelmed by the stress of their life and ministry.

- (2) Jesus knew when it was time to withdraw from the stress and pressure of dealing with people.

Mark 6:31 - *And he said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat.*

Note: Eleven times in Mark's gospel, we are told that Jesus, by Himself or with His disciples, withdrew to be alone to pray or to simply rest.

3) True disciples of Jesus strive to be balanced spiritually.

*And Jesus grew... in favor with God... - Luke 2:52*

a) Make the favor of God a priority!

*But seek first His kingdom, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you - Matthew 6:33*

We must crucify the desire which makes us pursue material worth and comfort more than spiritual wealth and eternal treasures.

b) Paul declares a great truth in 1 Corinthians 15:58.

*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord...*

To abound means to do more than the bare minimum.

Don't settle for just attending the activities of the church; rather become a part of them (ministry teams, schools of leadership, evangelistic ministries, etc.).

c) The Basics of a Balanced Spiritual Life

- i) Prayer
- ii) The Word
- iii) Worship
- iv) Witnessing

4) True disciples of Jesus strive to be balanced socially.

*And Jesus grew... in favor... with men. - Luke 2:52*

To have a balanced life means you will avoid extremes and keep everything in its rightful order.

The early church made people one of their priorities:

*Acts 2:44-47 - And all who believed were together and had all things in common. v.45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. v.46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, v.47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

Finding a Balance in Relationships

a) Begin with the people in your own household.

1 Timothy 5:8 - *But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

Never allow your family to deteriorate by putting your time, effort, money, and energy in others (or other things) to the detriment of those in your house.

- b) Secondly, make the people of God a priority.

Galatians 6:10 - *So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

Growth in our relationships does not happen automatically; growth takes effort. Hard work is required to maintain healthy friendship and rebuild broken relationships.

- c) Lastly, be committed to reaching those who are outside of the church.

Colossians 4:5, 6 NIV - *Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. v.6 Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

- i) Don't lose your integrity with people. Establish and keep a good reputation.
- ii) Make the most of every opportunity, but don't force opportunities.
- iii) Be gracious to outsiders.

**BE A GRACE GIVER!**