

Time

by Gary Wilkerson

Gary Wilkerson's sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding and managing time from a biblical perspective to foster peace and meaningful relationships.

Duration: 47:46

Scripture: Leviticus 19:9

Topics: "Time", "Time Management", "Rest in God"

Description

Gary Wilkerson addresses the concept of time, emphasizing the need for margin in our busy lives. He highlights how society's frantic pace often leads to stress and disconnection from loved ones, urging listeners to prioritize relationships and spiritual well-being over relentless productivity. By referencing biblical principles, particularly from Leviticus, he encourages the congregation to leave room for rest and to trust God with their time, suggesting that true effectiveness comes from a place of peace rather than busyness. Wilkerson's message calls for a reevaluation of how we manage our time, advocating for a lifestyle that allows for divine encounters and personal rejuvenation.

Transcript

Good morning, Times Square Church, how are you today? It's good to see each and every one of you. For those of you who are standing in the back there, I'll try to be brief, and that means less than two hours for me. For those of you in the annex, I want to welcome you as well.

I know you're not here in this room with me, but I'm with you. I just got a brief image of you on the side screen over there. I just want to welcome you as well.

It was great to see the choir. Last time I saw you guys, you were in robes. I didn't know you were so bright.

It was so great. And to have our board members from World Challenge, we're just honored and grateful to have you with us here as well. Sister Teresa, Pastor Teresa, thank you for allowing me to be at Summit yesterday.

That was quite an entrance, too. Just as the choir hit those notes, it was just amazing. It was just like, just right.

I know you didn't know that, but it was just perfect. It was just perfect. And Pastor Carter, we did hit some traffic coming back from Summit.

He's a great guy to be stuck in traffic with. He's a good conversationalist. He asks great questions.

We just had a wonderful time here today. I have my wife with me, Kelly. Would you mind just standing for a minute? This is my wife from 34 years, so thank you, Kelly.

And I normally don't do this, but I just kind of have to do this. I saw a couple of T-shirts here in the house this morning. I just want to kind of allude to a few of them.

There's some folks here from Samaritan's Purse, is that right? In the orange T-shirts there. Are you guys doing a project in town, or are you just like Samaritan's Purse a whole lot? Well, we are doing a project. All right.

From the hurricane relief, Samaritan's Purse. That's great. Over here there's a guy that has a T-shirt in a little different way.

It says, Guess. And I'm not sure. It's kind of like, where am I from? Why am I here? That's cool.

I'm glad the choir doesn't have that on. That would be a little difficult. I just want to take some time to speak to you about time today.

And as you hear that subject, you go, Oh my goodness. They invited this guy who's pastoring in Colorado Springs to come in. What is he going to do, a time management seminar here? I can read a book on that.

I can go hear some time management. There's time management gurus that come to our office and tell us about how to better manage your time. It's not really where I'm headed, but I want to talk in a biblical sense about time.

First of all, I have a question for you, if you could help me a little bit here. What is a New York minute, by the way? Is it different than a Colorado minute? It's faster. And I've heard it's faster, but does that mean it lasts 50 seconds? And if so, your life is shorter than everyone else's? I don't know really what a New York minute is, but it is.

It's faster. I think it's faster because you try to accomplish more in a shorter amount of time. You try to dive headfirst before the subway doors close.

It is the snap of the finger lifestyle here in the city. As I was coming here to the airport, if you've traveled before, if you don't travel, you may not understand this, but if you do travel, you go through, you get your ticket and your driver's license or passport, and the first person checks it and stamps it, and then, depending on how big an airport you're in, you look at this sea of lines, of security lines, where you go through these machines. Some of them, just to scan to make sure you don't have any metal, some of them make you look like you have no clothes on, and I always suck it in a little bit when I get there.

But what I try to do is I always try to get in one of the shorter lines. And you know that doesn't work out at all, right? I have no, I have zero prophecy, discernment. I want to prophesy, this line shall be shorter than that one.

And I get in the shorter one, and right in front of me, almost every time I do this, I have to pay more attention because right in front of me, no offense to moms here, but there'll be a mom who has carried everything she and her baby owns, and you don't know it because it's all stuffed in one suitcase, and when you open it, she opens that up to take her laptop out, and her stroller falls out, her bowling ball falls out,

her baby falls out, you know, and it's just this, and you're there, right, and it's like, you know, you wish she was from New York, so she would move faster, because she's just like, oh. And you're watching the other lines now, and you want to get in it, you know, and you're thinking, get back in that one, because they're really, they're going, right? Aren't they? They're going faster. Doesn't that happen at like tollways? You see the faster lane, and then somebody from like New Jersey is in front of you, and they're trying to find their quarters, and it's just, you know, it's that, you know, and you get frustrated.

You want to move. You want to keep going. You want to keep moving faster.

It's a busy world we live in, right? Isn't it? Isn't it busy, and we're rushing, and we're frantic, and we're kind of tired, and we're having to breathe heavy, and sometimes we're, you know, we're late for meetings. We rush from one, and then we're late to that one, so the meeting goes a little longer. That one's going to make us late to the next one, and the whole day is ruined, and there's all kinds of things.

People are, I took an informal survey, and I've just, this is my own survey. It's not a poll or anything, a scientific poll, but I did a survey, and I asked people, how are you doing? Simple question. The number three answer I get, working backwards, the number three answer I get is good.

I'm doing great. On top of the world. Never been better.

You liar. And then the number two answer is fine. And you know what that answer means, right? It means I don't want to talk to you.

I'm fine. But the number one answer I get, everybody I travel asks this question, how are you doing? The number one answer I get, anybody know what it might be? Tired, busy, crazy, exhausted, I'm just, just tired, just busy. Busy is the number one answer I get.

People come up to me, and I don't know why, they think that because I'm a pastor, I travel a little bit or something. They say this to me all the time. I know you're busy, but if I could just talk to you for a moment.

Or like, I won't hold you long because I know you're busy. How do you know I'm busy? I may be a sluggard. You don't know.

I mean, you don't know. And so there's an assumption, because most everybody is busy, that you're busy, that they're busy. I wonder if Jesus was busy.

I wonder if he lived by a New York minute. Or I wonder if he was willing to withdraw from the crowds. I wonder if he was willing to just listen to what his father told him to do and went about that business of his father.

People are so busy today. I was on 7th and 53rd, and this girl was looking at her cell phone. She was looking down.

Taxi's coming, right? She didn't get hit by the car. You're looking at me like, oh, did she get hit by the car? Like you're all interested. No, somebody grabbed her arm, and she yelled at him.

What are you doing? We're so busy. How many of you have ever been walking down the street using your cell phone? Let me see your hand if you have done that. Oh, come on.

I thought I'd run out of time. I didn't know that was his hand. I thought it was a hook, a shepherd's hook.

I'm offending New Yorkers about their New York minute. No, seriously, nobody's ever walked before using it? Has anybody ever, I don't know if you drive, like you take subways or taxis. Most people I know that come visit us in Colorado, they don't know how to drive.

They don't have a driver's license. Crazy people. Have you ever been driving, and you dropped your cell phone while you were driving because you were using your cell phone? Have you ever dropped your cell phone in a car? All right, one worse.

Have you ever bent over to try to find it while you were driving your car? That's not good. That's not good. All right, one worse.

This is not a confession. This is a question. Have you ever dropped your cell phone whilst on the toilet? Yes? Okay.

Would you stand? No, I'm joking. Man, you drop, it's a, that's not good. So we're stressed.

We're running around. We're overbooked. We're cramming things in.

We're living excessive lifestyles. We are creating anxiety. We have to come home after a busy day.

Many people have to turn on the television for an hour to do what? What's the word they use? Let me know. Unwind. To unwind? What wound you up? Why are you wound up? Why do you need television to unwind? Because we're wound.

We're wound. A lot of you in this room are already kind of pushing back a little bit. I don't want to hear too much of this because you don't understand you're a pastor.

You know, the opposite of pastor, you must be busy is, well, you wouldn't understand pastor because you're a pastor and pastors don't do anything. They type findagoodsermononline.com and put it in their notes and preach it. And so they think that we're not busy.

So you say, you don't understand, I'm in the corporate world. I'm a CEO or I'm a COO or I'm on a board of directors and, man, this is a dog eat dog world, right? This is a world where you have to, if I don't go, go, go, go. Or you might be saying I'm a single mom and I've got three kids and I'm trying to put the first one in daycare and the second one in elementary school and the third one I'm trying to raise money for their college and it's just husband abandoned us and dad's gone and it's just me.

And pastor, you don't understand what it's like to be a single mom in the city and the stress that I live under. You might be a junior in high school and you're saying, I want to finish early because I want to go to college early and so I'm cramming. I'm on the athletic team and I'm a 4.0 and I'm on the track team and I'm a cheerleader and I'm in the debate club and I just want to get all these things done so I can make it to the next level.

You might be 40 years old and you're working day and night burning the candle on both ends because you're saying I want to retire early. So you don't understand, pastor, I'm just trying to press in right now. The problem with this kind of busy schedule, and we'll get to some scriptures here in just a moment, the problem with this busy kind of schedule that we live in is sometimes we miss the people in our life that we're supposed to really care for and love the most.

For me, it was with my little daughter. She's in the city with us this weekend and she's a little bit older now, but when this happened when she was a little girl, I came home from a really long day at work. It was just a hectic day at the office and I'd been counseling and had strategic meetings and some planning and I got a little bit of time to work on a sermon and I came home and I was tired and I wanted to unwind, not by watching television, but by reading the sports section.

And so I open up the paper and I'm reading the sports and I'm just going, feels good just to breathe for a minute. And I said to myself, I just want five minutes of me time, time alone. And my little daughter, her, so I have the newspaper out open like this and my little daughter's head comes, I'm sitting down in a chair, up underneath the newspaper, blocking the really good section of the sports.

And I'm kind of turning the paper and she's like, daddy, daddy, daddy, and I push her head back down underneath, behind the paper, and I'm just, five minutes, okay, keep my calm, don't get angry at her. Her head comes back up under one more time. Hi, daddy, welcome home.

Hi, daughter. I'll be just with you in just a minute. Third time she comes up from underneath the newspaper and something happened that I'm embarrassed to say, but I got angry at her and I raised my voice and I said, can't I have just five minutes alone without you bothering me? And I pushed her head back down, not abusively, okay, so don't get, don't call any police or anything, but I just pushed her head back down and paper, and of course, by that time I'm not reading the sports section, I'm going, oh, Jesus, I'm so sorry.

And her head comes up under the paper one more time, tears in her eyes this time, and she just said, daddy, I'm sorry, I just wanted to say I love you. I did exactly what you just did. So crazy busy, so overwhelmed.

Now, for some of you that are slothful and lazy and ne'er-do-wells, don't listen to a word I'm saying. Get busy, do something with your life, okay? Because the people that like this message the most are the laziest people. They're going, oh, man, I needed to hear that one.

I took the trash out this week, I'm exhausted. So you don't listen to what I'm saying today, okay? Don't listen to it. You owe the other.

Get to work. But for the 90%, I'd say, in this room that can relate to what I'm saying, you can understand the sense of just, I'm a Christian, or maybe you're here today and you're not a follower of Jesus, and you wonder what it would be like maybe to find peace that passes understanding as the Bible claims that we have that kind of peace, the joy that the world can't give to us, we Christians have that, and some non-Christians might be here looking at it like, I know a few Christians and they're worse off than I am, right? And so maybe the non-Christians here are saying, I'm not sure I want to partake in your crazy lifestyle of drivenness, like it's as if Jesus is a heavy taskmaster striking you on your back constantly, saying get after it, do more, accomplish more. You're not doing enough.

You're not making me happy. You have to try harder. And so if you're a non-Christian here today, I want to tell you the real following of Christ is a joyful.

It's full. It's full of vitality. There's vigor.

There's strength. There's energy. There's passion.

There's accomplishments. There's missions. There's a nonstop energy, but there's also a peace and a joy and a presence of the Lord that causes us to walk in sync with God, alignment to the things of God.

So if we're aligned with Jesus, we look at his lifestyle, we say was he crazy busy or was he a man of peace who accomplished great things out of his peace? So if you're weary, worn, and heavy laden, the Word of God instructs us and gives us great wisdom and insight into how to avoid a lifestyle that so drags us down that we're no good to anybody else anymore. We are so burnt out and exhausted. If you're a preacher, you preach sermons that are dead and dry and lifeless that you preached a dozen times before.

If you're a counselor, you're sitting there half-wake, falling asleep while people are trying to tell you their problems and you're tired of hearing them. If you're going to work in the morning, you just feel like you can't go another day and we're living this kind of lifestyle. Is there a solution? Is there a remedy? Does God speak to this issue of our life? Or did he write the Bible at a time when everybody was just living in such farming communities that they didn't really face this issue? And the reality is they did.

And so if you turn in your scriptures, please, to probably the best book on time management you'll ever find, the book of Leviticus. You wouldn't think so, right? But yeah, Leviticus. Leviticus chapter 19, your favorite book and mine.

Leviticus chapter 19, verse 9 and 10. Now, just before you read this or read it with me, I want to set the tone, the context for it. Moses and the children of Israel had spent the last 40 years in what? The wilderness.

Okay. Have you been in the wilderness before? Not a lot to do. Okay.

It's kind of bland. You build your tent, manna falls out of the sky, you pick up the manna, you eat your manna, you go back to your tent, go to the end of the day, I really need to unwind, picking up that manna, that was tough. It's just a real kind of light lifestyle.

And so they moved and traveled a bit, and they just kind of went in circles. So they were not a busy people. If you ask the children of Israel on Moses' day, how are you doing? They wouldn't say, oh, I'm so busy.

They would say, I'm bored probably. And so now there's a huge transition coming. And Moses is the great leader that he is, the man of God that he is, begins to speak to his people in preparation for their extravagant lifestyles that are about to come, for the excessive burdens that will be on their shoulders, for the intensity of the new lifestyle that they weren't used to now.

It's almost like they were going to be moving from Colorado to New York City. You know, it's going to be a different pace. And so he begins to speak to them.

This is 4,000 years ago, and it's this transition from wilderness to work. Now they're going to be building homes rather than just having a tent. Now they're going to be starting businesses.

They're going to be starting stores and shops and have trade and industry and farms that they're going to be setting up that will take a lot of work and energy, getting up early in the morning, coming home late at night. And so Moses understands how busy they are going to be, and he gives them a warning. And this is a warning, not just of his own insight.

This is a warning from the Holy Spirit. This is a warning to us in this church today as believers or non-believers who maybe today might want to become a believer because you can find a new way of living your life. If so, here's Moses' instruction.

In chapter 19, verse 9 and 10 of Leviticus, here's what Moses says. When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen.

Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the Lord your God. I like that ending there.

This is not a trivial manner. This is not a pastor who's unfortunately come up here today and chosen the wrong subject for you. This is God stamping the scripture by saying, I'm the Lord your God.

So pay attention to what I've just told you because if you don't, it's going to seem trivial to you. It's going to seem insignificant. It's going to sound like, no, I'm not worried about being busy.

That's not a spiritual problem. I'm worried about pride or arrogance or lust or envy or adultery. I'm not worried about how I use my time.

So let's get on with this. You're wasting my time, Pastor Gary. But God stamps this with his authority, with his unction.

I am the Lord your God. Hear what I have to say to you. This is as important as do not commit adultery.

This is as important as do not steal because if we're doing this, we're going to rob God of our best. So he says a couple of things here. He says to them, when you reap the harvest of your land, so you're going to build a farm.

So let's just say it's 40 acres. And you build this 40 acre farm and you go through it and you begin to reap the harvest. He says to those who are reaping, don't go to the very edge of your farm.

Kind of a strange statement, isn't it? What he says there is leave a little bit of room. Leave a little bit of margin. You don't need to do everything you're doing.

You don't need to get it all done. You don't have to. Your to-do list is different than your devotional.

And sometimes we put more emphasis on our to-do list than we are on our devotional, our time with the Lord. And so he's saying there, whenever you're working, just leave a little bit of room. And yet so many of us are totally disobedient to God on this.

We are always on the edge. Am I making anybody nervous here? Any of you obsessive compulsives here getting a little nervous here? My wife is like, get back, get back. It makes people around you nervous.

When you live on the edge, you make me nervous. Have you ever been on an airplane and the person next to you has their cell phone and they're doing some kind of last minute business deal and the flight attendant has already told them, please turn off your cell phones. And they're going like, George, I've got 13 stocks.

Shut up. Put your phone down, idiot. In Jesus' name, I love you.

Yeah, it's just, man, come on. Seriously? Are you going to live life on the edge? Are you going to text while you're on the toilet? Are you going to walk around with your cell? Are you going to head down looking at your cell phone? Are you going to use every minute answering emails? Are you going to be on the phone constantly? Are you unable to sit still for five minutes? Do you have to be on edge like this all the time? When you're on edge like that all the time, your daughters are going to find out you don't love them as much as you say you do. Your husbands and your wives are going to see that you're not really the priority of their heart.

Jesus is going to know he's taking a back seat to you and your agenda, that you're pushing everything to the edge. You've got to get it done. You've got to accomplish it.

You've got to make sure I make that one last deal. You've got to close that thing. You've got to talk to that person.

You've got to finish that book. You've got to do this report. You've got to do that.

And it's just pressing, pressing, pressing, driving, driving, driving. And as a matter of fact, what I'm saying to you today is so counterculture. Probably some of you are pushing back mentally against what I'm saying here because you're saying, no, that's how we're supposed to live.

That's how you accomplish. That's how you get a lot done. And even in the ministry, people are doing this.

It's more. It's press. It's drive.

It's stress. It's going this trip, and go talk to that person, and go to this meeting, and go to that meeting, and it's just so much. And we think that's the way to get a lot done.

Moses is telling his people, it's just the opposite of what you think. You think by going right to the edge, you're going to get a lot done, but he's saying, he's suggesting, leave a little bit of margin and you're going to find out something really unique. And we're going to talk about that as we close in just a moment.

So first of all, don't go to the edge. Leave a little bit of margin. And he says, don't go over it twice.

Don't go over your vineyard a second time. And what this represents is, Moses is saying to his people, don't get obsessive with your work. Don't get to the place where, oh, I missed that thing.

I've got to go back and do this. This is undone. And I've got to get it all.

There are some people, why are people living life on the edge? Well, I think Moses speaks to this. The second thing he's saying here is, I think we live life on the edge because we feel like we have to have it all. We can't let anything drop.

We've got to keep juggling. Keep it all under control. I've got this.

Have you ever said that phrase? I've got this. I can handle it. And before long, with that kind of lifestyle, the balls begin to drop.

You begin to miss something. And normally, while you're juggling the things you think are important, it's actually, the balls that are dropping around you are the real important ones. Your family, your prayer life, your intimacy with Jesus, your study of the word of God, your willing to be present to people around you,

not only practicing the presence of God, which is a lovely book written by a man named Brother Lawrence, but also a book that's not been written yet, but practicing the presence of people, to be there for people and really be able to listen to them when they're talking.

These are things that can't be accomplished when you're going around trying to pick up more stuff. The third thing Moses says is, the second time, we'll pick up the grapes that have fallen. He's just saying, let some stuff fall.

Now, this is the toughest one of all. Let some things go. There are some things in your life you have to say no to.

There are some things in your life that are good, that they seem very godly, don't they? There could be ten new things in your life that's, well, that sounds like God to me, and that sounds like God. No, well, that one sounds like God. And we need a spiritual discernment and a prayer life, and we need to not live life to the edge.

Oftentimes, when you're living life to the edge, you have lost your discernment. You're too busy to hear God say, let that thing drop. And so we're saying yes to things that we should let drop because we've lived life without margin, and so we don't have time to hear God.

You see what it's doing? It's multiplying our stress, our anxiety, our disorder, our sin. And so we need that margin to be able to know what to let drop. I am pastoring a church, a lovely young church.

It's four years old. Last two weeks ago, it turned four years old. Pastor Jonathan Bissick, my good friend, our children's pastor is here with us today.

Hey, Jonathan. Love you. Good to see you.

Great children's pastor. We're pastoring together a wonderful church in Colorado Springs, and I also do, as our board members are here with us, I lead as president of World Challenge, a missions organization in probably 50, 60 countries around the world doing quite a bit of stuff, and it's easy just to say yes to more things and doing some pastors' conferences here and overseas. And about a year and a half ago, the Lord said to me, I want you to take at least a year off of doing the international pastors' conferences.

For me, what I was doing, I get nervous about flying overseas. I'm afraid I might get blown up. And so, and other things too.

I have to eat spiders or something like that. I get all kinds of weird phobias about traveling overseas. So it takes me about a week before I'm going, I'm nervous and I'm anxious, and then I'm also preparing my sermon.

So about a week before I go somewhere on an international pastors' conference, I'm kind of stressed out. I'm kind of not present to the pastoring and to my family. And then I'm gone for about 10, 12 days, 14 days sometimes.

And I know you're going to say, oh, if you only had faith, you wouldn't do this. But I get sick almost every time I travel overseas. And all I do is bring Oreos with me.

I think I'm afraid of the food or something. I get sick from Oreo overdose. And so I come back, and I'm sick for like a week.

And so it's a month. I spend a month for every overseas trip, every 10-day overseas trip I do. And I was doing three or four a year.

And the Lord was telling me, you got to stop that. Put that to an end. And I just, honestly, what I told the Lord, and I didn't use these words, but you know what I'm talking about, right? I told him he was wrong.

I did, right? I mean, right? I mean, not like, oh, God, thou art wrong. It was more just like, Lord, you know those pastors, they're hurting and they're troubled. And these conferences are just too good.

And every time I go, the reports are just like, save my ministry. If you haven't come, then Lord, how can I not do that? I've got to go. Sorry, Lord, thank you for the invitation not to go.

But I got to go. And it just got worse and worse and miserable and miserable until one day I just called, you know, my good friend here who helps with our conferences, Bettina. And I just said, I've got to take 2013.

Just only in America, can't go overseas. And she was so gracious and kind and just said, I understand. Do what the Lord tells you to do.

And as soon as I did that, not like two weeks later when I kind of felt a little better about it, the instant I did that, that phone call, I put the phone down. I just went, oh, wow. I feel so much lighter.

I feel so free. I let some things drop. I didn't go to the edge.

I left some margin. I have margin in my life. Aren't you jealous? I am rested.

I am happy. I am relaxed. I am content.

I am not anxious. I am not stressed. Nana, nana, boo, boo.

You know, like, come on, join me in the Holy Spirit's call to find your breath again, to find your rest in the Holy Spirit, to find your Sabbath, to find a heart that is not so fearful of missing something that you press to the edge, that you go through it twice and make sure everything's picked up, or that you're afraid of anything falling to the ground. I didn't get back to that person. I didn't do this, and I didn't go there, and let it go.

I believe if we trust God, we'll see. We'll see his power at work. God, and here's, if you don't remember anything else I've said, here's the pinnacle.

Here's the core of my message. Here's the centerpiece, and this is simply this. God works best in our margins.

When we trust him, when we say, God, it's not all up to me. It's not my picking up the fallen grapes. It's not me making sure I go through a second time.

It's not me going to the edge of the margins all the time, making sure your kingdom work gets done. As a matter of fact, your kingdom work gets more done when I obey you and have margin in my life. More is accomplished through a man or a woman of God who knows how to rest.

Because a man or a woman who knows how to rest, it signifies something deeper they know how to trust. That God wants you, that God invites you, but he doesn't overwhelm you. At times it may seem like it.

Yeah, sometimes we are put to the test. We are burdened. We are troubled.

We are in trial, tribulation, and we do seem anxious, and we do seem burdened. But more than not, the principle of God, the pattern of God is to bring his people to a place of trust and rest, a place of simplicity in him that gives us greater power. My friend Dave is here from Detroit.

We were pastoring together in Detroit when I was a young man, and I was a go-getter. I mean, I was busy to the 10th degree. And there was an older man in our church.

An older man had long white hair and a long white beard. He looked exactly like... Have you ever seen the picture of the old man praying by the side of a loaf of bread on a table? He looked just like that guy. So when you have a friend like that, you have to listen to what they say because they seem really like wise.

I mean, he could have been an idiot, but he just looked so wise that I was just so... His name was Moritz, and Moritz came up to me one day, and he said, Pastor Gary, can I have a moment of your time? I said, certainly, Moritz. And he goes, you're doing twice what you should with half the impact you should. And I went, wow.

And what God wants you to do is do half of what you're doing with twice the impact of what you're doing. And that, even at a young age, 24 years old, I said, God, teach me this. Teach me how to have margin in my life because we think by cutting back, by leaving room, by not doubling up, by not letting some things go, we're gonna not do as much for the kingdom of God.

And I know we have that love and that heart and that passion, so it's hard to hear a message like this because we say we're gonna... Gary, if we obey what the Lord's saying here, we're gonna do less and accomplish less. The opposite is true. Isn't it? Say yes, please.

Yes. Thank you. The opposite is true that when you obey God in this fashion, God works best when we allow margin in our life.

He accomplishes more. It's proven in scripture time and time again, constantly. Jesus lived this out.

And I'll begin to wrap things up now. Jesus lived this principle out. He was... In John chapter 4, Jesus was... He and his disciples were baptizing people and more people coming to him.

Crowds were getting big. And it begins to say in the scripture that in the first few verses there that Jesus and his disciples were baptizing more than John and his disciples. And that's crazy because John was baptizing like a maniac.

And so here's Jesus now and he's the new in thing. He's got the crowds coming to him. And there was a little dispute between them.

And you know what Jesus does? He builds a tabernacle there and he says, this thing's gonna work. Man, let's push this thing. Let's get this thing done, man.

We got the crowds coming now. Let's take the offerings. Let's set up the tents.

Let's get this... You know, the Jesus Christ Baptist. You know, and put it out there. Let's get this thing.

That's what you think maybe he would do, right? Doesn't that make sense? Take advantage of the time, of the season. And the scripture there in the second verse, I think it is what John 4 says, and Jesus, what did he do? Departed. He left.

What? You're having a revival, Jesus. And where does he go? He walks through Samaria. Does he have a big crusade planned? That's why I had to leave.

I know that baptism was great, but I got something more important. I gotta double up. I gotta push to the edge of the margins here.

Where does he go? He goes to Samaria and the scripture says, and he sat down at a well. Jesus, you left a revival to sit down? And then it says, a woman came and he said, he began to talk to her. So here's Jesus' ministry.

He leaves the revival of baptism and he goes and he sits and he talks to one woman. And he says, can you give me something to drink? I'm thirsty. So he's sitting and he's talking and he's drinking.

And he's just enjoying the cool water in the afternoon. The Bible says he was tired. He had pushed almost to the margins.

He pushed to the edge and he was tired. So he responds to his father by just walking away from it for a little season. And he sits and he rests and he talks.

And you would think, Jesus, you're not getting anything done. You're just sitting and you're talking and you're having a discussion with a woman at a well and you're drinking water there and you're getting, oh sure, you're getting refreshed while the world's going to hell. Why don't you do more, Jesus? Get up from that thing and be like me, Jesus.

Be like Martha. Don't be like Mary. You're just sitting there doing nothing.

But Jesus is just there. And then the woman begins to see that he's not only a prophet, but he's Messiah. And at that point, if I'm Jesus, I'm going like, hey, I got inroads here.

And this gal is going to help me bring a revival to her Samaritan city. And so I would have said to her, hey, you know what? You and I are connecting here. We're relating.

And it sounds like you know all the sinners. You slept with most of them yourself in your town. Why don't I come with you to your city and I'll bring a revival there.

There'll be a spiritual awakening. You know what he does? He just keeps sitting there. It must have been a long time because she goes away, right? And his disciples come back and say, oh, he didn't get lunch.

And they're worried and stressed. And then she goes into her city and starts telling them all the stuff that he told her about her life. And the whole city comes out to him.

He's just sitting there. Isn't that cool? I mean, I'm not promoting a sitting ministry. I know some people take the Scripture so literal in the sense of like, okay, yeah, I believe the best pattern for ministry is sitting.

No, there's times where he says to get up and go and do and preach and do this. It's listening, right? Isn't it? Come on, isn't it listening? It's listening to Jesus. It's saying, Jesus, what do you have for me? What are

you saying for me? And you see, because he was willing to hear his Father's voice, because he was willing to obey the Holy Spirit and leave some margin and not feel like he had to pick everything up himself and let some things drop, he just sat there and he drank and he talked.

The Holy Spirit uses people who listens to him. When we listen to the Holy Spirit, divine, supernatural, amazing things happen. In half the time, you accomplish twice as much.

And so some of you are doing the math right now and saying, so our pastors could preach 15-minute sermons then and accomplish twice as much. I know what you're thinking, but the truth is, the reality is we can. We can come to a place of rest, of joy.

Imagine what it would be like. Imagine what it would be like to find a place of rest. Imagine what it would be like to find these rhythms of grace that infuse you with a Holy Ghost power and you're accomplishing things in your relationship with your wife or your husband that you've never accomplished before as much as you strived and stressed and in anxiety tried to make things happen in your own strength.

Imagine what would happen with you as a parent and your children. Imagine what would happen in your community, on your job, the things you're striving to accomplish if you obey God and just say, God, I'm going to obey this Sabbath day rest, whether it's a literal day or week or just it's a spirit within me, it's a heart within me, to allow you to cause my rhythm to be in sync and aligned with you and if so, you will accomplish more than you've ever accomplished before. I tell you, I'm living proof of this and there are many of my friends experiencing the same thing.

We are not going to the edge. We are not trying to pick everything up. We are letting some things drop and we're finding just a supernatural empowerment of God's grace to accomplish His divine purposes.

And that is exactly what I want for you. Imagine the joy, the rejuvenation, the impact you will have. Listening and obeying what God has said to you today will not cause you to become a sluggard, slothful, or miss out on things.

It will cause you to have the greatest increase of impact you've ever had in your life. You're saying to yourself, Pastor Gary, this doesn't translate to my job. I'm in a corporate world and if I go home at six o'clock at night and all the other guys are going until nine and ten at night, I may not be able to get the bump in salary.

So what? Most of you guys don't need the bump in salary because you only want the bump in salary to get the bigger apartment or the summer house out there. And while we're doing all that edge, edge, edge, we're missing our own family. We're missing walks through beautiful Central Park.

We're missing a time where your daughter comes up underneath your newspaper and wants to say, Daddy, I love you. And you can put your stinking paper down and grab her by the arms and just say, Love you too, honey. Love you.

You're my girl. You're my girl. And that is the joy.

So I close with this. I have an assignment for you, okay? An assignment because I want this to become practical. Is there one thing in your life today that you already know God has told you, no, that's not for you? Probably it's already in your mind.

It's that second job. It's the burning the midnight oil. It's finishing the three-year degree in two years.

Now, for some of you, please don't get under condemnation here because for some of you you're in a season. Maybe you're a resident in a hospital, right? And you go to your doctor who's leading your team tomorrow and say, My pastor told me I needed a rest. You're going to Columbia and you tell your professor, I need an extra week for that assignment because I need some margin in my life.

He's going to say, Go get a job from Times Square Church if you want that. So I understand. So don't get under condemnation.

But even for those who a lot of times people who are residents in hospitals or going for a master's degree are yet still living on the edge in other ways. Like every night of the week having to go out and do something or return every phone call or fill out every email or always online research. And just sometimes there's just even the busiest life could use a little margin, right? And so I want to ask you just to choose one thing in your life.

I want to pray for you right now as a matter of fact and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you in one thing. And I want you to simply obey. For me it was saying no to pastor's company.

It was very difficult to do that. I felt like I was letting the Lord down and these pastors down. But you know what happened? Got some Pastor Carter.

He went to India for me and that was like and better things happened. More accomplished. It doesn't have to be through you or me.

It can be other people taking up their giftedness. So let's pray and just ask God. Lord, if there's one thing, if there's one thing, would you just speak it to me, Jesus? If there's one thing.

Lord, even if there's one thing more. I started with the pastor's conference but is there anything else? Are there things you want me to add that you want me to sit at a well somewhere? You want me to leave the revival at the baptism tank? You want me to, Lord, I want to be captured by your heart and your grace and your movement in my life. I want the peace that passes understanding because it's only in this peace that causes me to want to come to Jesus.

So while your heads are bowed and your eyes are closed, is there anyone here today that you say, Pastor Gary, I came to Times Square Church today. A friend dragged me here, drugged me, not drugged you, dragged you here and you're saying to yourself, wow, this is interesting. I didn't know this was what Christianity was like.

I didn't know I could really find this kind of peace. I thought it was just another religion that is do, do, do this and make sure you accomplish this and that and you're saying to yourself here today, Pastor Gary, I'm not a believer. I'm not a follower of Jesus Christ.

I'm not a church person. I'm not into this world but I sure am attracted by this message of Jesus changing my life, helping me be, number one, free of sin, the sin of selfishness and pride and arrogance and striving and stress and not only that but inviting me into his peace, his joy. If you're not a believer here today but you would like to be, would you mind just slip up your hand.

I want to pray for you wherever you are around this auditorium or in the annex as well. I can't see you but lift up your hand as you say, Pastor Gary, today I want to give my life to Jesus Christ. I want to come into this family of God.

Raise your hand right now. Come on, wherever you are and I'll pray for you. Yes, sir.

All right. Thank you. I appreciate you doing that.

Yes, ma'am over here. Father, just while some people are raising their hands right now, I just want to pray for them. I don't know them personally but I really would call them a friend.

A friend because we have had this moment, this half hour together to talk about the gospel, to talk about what it would be like, Lord, not to live our life for ourselves only but for others. But most of all, now we're being instructed that we can live for you, Jesus. And you forgive our sins and you wash us and you make us whole and you revive us and you quicken us.

So I pray for these few that have raised their hand today. God, I just pray that they would be so captured by a heart for God. Win their heart, Holy Jesus.

Rescue them right now. And just even as I'm praying for them, I ask you to help them pray a simple prayer that says, Jesus, I need you. I'm not living for you or with you.

I'm lost without you. I live in sin. And I know that I'm separated from a relationship with you.

And I just simply, I don't know what to do but I know enough to ask you, Jesus, come in and take control of my life. Take the reins of my life. Be Lord of my life.

And Lord, help me to commit myself to a faith family, maybe here or elsewhere, that's gonna help me grow in the Lord. To grow and accomplish your purposes in my life. And to stay away from the things that so drag me down.

Jesus, touch these lives who have been honest enough in the midst of this assembly to slip their hand up and say, I want Jesus. We give you thanks for that. In Jesus' name, amen.

Why don't you stand with me if you would, please. I think a song of celebration would be wonderful. And if Pastor Carter, do you wanna come back? But can we just sing a song of joy together? And bless the Lord for calling us into this grace and peace that he has for us.

Well, Pastor Gary, I wanna thank you for that word this morning. I know the Lord's been speaking to my heart all week about busyness and getting back to some of the basics. That which made our lives what they are in the first place.

That time of devotion with God. That time of quietness in the presence of the Lord. That time of, and I love the fact that the scripture says if we do things this way, there'll be something left over for the poor.

That there'll be a heart for other people that are disadvantaged because we're not pressed to the fence as it is in our lives. And so, thank God for this word from the Lord. And the Lord, give us a grace to hear this and to spend time and stop and just smell the roses in life.

Especially New York City. Couldn't be a more fitting word for a city that never sleeps and never walks slowly. Brother Roger Yonker was telling me, I exercise by speed walking out in Texas.

I said, well, you don't have to speed walk here. Just go for a walk and just follow the crowd. You won't even look like you're speed walking in the sidewalk.

And Father, just thank you so much, Lord, for such a wonderful day where we've come into your house, Lord. We're dwelling together in unity. And you're telling us to enjoy quietness in your presence.

You're telling us to not be pushed to the edge where we're tired all the time. Give us the grace to obey this, Lord, and to escape the trap of success. To escape all of the things and all the needs that are presented to us.

Nehemiah, Lord, was a great textbook case of a man who knew what he was called to do and stayed there and did that. And Father, I just thank you for this with all my heart. Thank you for speaking so tenderly to us this morning and all week, Lord, throughout all the conference that was here.

Lord, you spoke to us, and we've heard you. Now we ask you for the grace to obey you. And we thank you for it.

In Jesus' name, amen and amen. Now, before rushing out the door to the parking lot after a message like this, you know, I can just see the 90-yard dash to the exits to get first to the parking garage. Let's just rest for a moment and just enjoy each other's presence.

Take time to talk to somebody. Where are you from? How'd you get here? You know, whatever. How are you getting out of here? But just take time to enjoy each other.

Just take time to make a friend and talk. Take the next 5, 10 minutes. God bless you.

We'll see you at 3 o'clock this afternoon.

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