

## Running on Empty

**Big Idea:** Both spiritual parenting and personal growth requires time. We will never be effective as insiders and spiritual parents unless we solve our problem with chronic busyness, over commitment and consequent exhaustion.

Growth, like love is often spelled T-I-M-E. And time is a precious commodity these days. If we're going to function effectively as insiders, then we need to consider carefully how to prioritize our time. This session is for every overloaded participant in this series who has been asking, "That's great, but when do I have time for this?"

1. Think of yourself as a car that runs on physical, emotional, and spiritual fuel. On a scale of 1 to 10, how full right now are your tanks?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Physical

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Emotional

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Spiritual

2. Why is Bill so overloaded? What are his root problems?

His priorities appear out-of-order. He doesn't have time for his family and other key relationships. He seems to be trying to please the wrong people.



3. Do you ever feel you're too busy to be an effective Insider who brings God's grace and truth to the people around you? If so, explain what you're feeling and why.

4. How would you answer the question, “What are you giving your life to?”
- Getting to know God and make Him known.
  - Living with my wife in an understanding way; learning to love her as Christ loves the church.
  - Investing in my daughter and son-in-law, expecting them to come to know Christ and be fruitful.
  - Spending time with people to make them disciples.
  - Using my gifts in the CBMC ministry.



5. In order to spend time with Erik, Thomas had to take some time from something else. He might spend less time building his career or less time with other friends or less time exercising or sleeping. How does that kind of trade-off feel to you?

It appeals to me because I would be investing in something eternal like a man’s soul and a person who will reproduce their lives into others, resulting in the multiplication of eternal souls.

6. As you think about simplifying your schedule in order to have room for people (and yourself), what seem to be the main obstacles?

Solitude is being with God and God alone. Is there any space for that in your life?

Why is it so important that you are with God and God alone on the mountain top? It's important because it's the place in which you can listen to the voice of the One who call you the beloved. To pray is to listen to "my beloved son," "my beloved child."

...When you are not claiming that voice, you cannot walk freely in this world....There are many other voices speaking – loudly: "Prove that you are the beloved. Prove you're worth something."

It will take work – deliberate, conscious effort – and it will take time to regain margin and find the space to be available in your calling as an insider. You will become a non-conformist....

Get away from home and your familiar surroundings, from telephones and people who know you. Spend the first day in the Scriptures, in prayer, and in personal assessment. Decide the second day to working through and examining the commitments that make up your life. Ask yourself how they contribute to or work against the things you want your life to be about....

[A]sk yourself some questions and write down the answers. Let me suggest a few:

- "What are the key Scripture passages that God has used in my life in the past?" Go back and review them....
- "Do I know Christ more intimately now that I did a year ago?..."
- "What motives, positive and negative, drive my life?..."
- "What anxieties do I experience?..."

Jim Petersen, *Lifestyle Discipleship*, pp. 187, 189

### **Suggested Additional Reading:**

Read chapter 13 of *Lifestyle Discipleship*