MAKE GOOD TABLES

Work. Family. Rest.
And why God cares about more than just Sunday.

Make Good Tables
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Peterson, Eugene H. ***The Message***. Bible Gateway. Web. 25 Oct. 2012.

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To Nicole and Leo,

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The days are long,
and the years are short.

- Mom -

The Hamster Wheel

Wake up. Get ready. Feed the kids. Out the door. Work. Practice. Games. Quick bite to eat. Crash. Repeat.

Does this sound familiar?

Just another day in the life of…well…almost everyone.

And I didn't even mention all the other things we have to do: laundry, dishes, take out the trash, oil change, school projects, exercise.

I'm exhausted as I write this.

It's what I affectionately (not really) call "the hamster wheel."

My mom always said, "***The days are long, and the years are short***."[1]

Wow, is she right!

Our days are full.

Full of great things.

Full of mundane things.

Full of joy.

And, at times, full of sadness.

Single. Married. Children. Empty nesters. Graduated. Retired. It doesn't matter what stage of life you're in.

Our days are full, and they are long.

But sadly what happens to so many of us is we live through full days, but we don't really feel like we have a full life.

And for followers of Jesus, we live with a sense of guilt because our days are full, but not necessarily full of the "God-things."

We try to pray. We try to read scripture. We try to get to a worship service.

But we struggle each day and each week and each year to find out how to fit it all in.

How can I do the "God-things", when my life is so full of all of the other things?

One of my favorite quotes comes from a British writer named Dorothy Sayers:

"The church's approach to an intelligent carpenter is usually confined to exhorting him to not be drunk and disorderly in leisure hours and to come to church on Sundays. What the church should be telling him is this: that the very first demand that his religion makes upon him is that he should make good tables."[2]

So you might be thinking: ***"What does it even mean to make good tables, and how does this quote apply to my life?"***

To "make good tables," means that your faith as a follower of Jesus is not just for Sunday, it's for Monday.

To make good tables means that your faith influences every decision you make and everything that you do.

In this instance, the carpenter doesn't just worship God by attending a church service, but by making really good tables.

See, our primary objective in life as followers of Jesus is not ***just*** to attend church and stop doing bad things.

And please understand, gathering together as the Body of Christ is vital to the life of ***all*** those who follow Jesus.

Think about it: If your hand gets disconnected from your body, your hand is no longer receiving life from

your body. Without receiving life from the body, the hand will wither, and eventually die.

In the same way, being connected and committed to the Body of Christ is a foundational element in our lives as followers of Jesus.

And Jesus most definitely wants to set us free from our bondages and addictions and anxieties.

But our faith doesn't stop there.

And what we consider worship can't be relegated simply to what happens within the four walls of a room.

Because God cares about more than just Sunday.

See, somewhere along the way, this idea of our lives being separated into the categories of ***sacred*** and ***secular*** appeared.

Sacred being the things in life God cares about and considers good and holy and worship.

Secular being everything else.

It's this idea that our lives are separated into pieces like a pie, and some pieces are sacred while others are secular.

Or, you could say there are pieces in our life that God cares about, called the "God-things."

And then there are pieces in our life that are just, life.

What are the sacred things in our life?

Prayer. Scripture. Church. Bible study.

What are the secular things in our life?

Eating. Sleeping. Work. Sports. Family.

This is how many of us categorize our lives.

There are the “God-things.”

And then all the other things.

But what if our lives were never meant to be separated like pieces of a pie?

What if our lives weren’t designed to be divided into pieces, but to be made whole?

To have a center. A true north. The ***one thing*** that everything else revolved around.

This is the life we were created to live.

Not a life divided into pieces, where some things we give to God, and others we hold back.

Not a life where we simply worship on Sundays and work on Mondays and wish it was Friday.

The life we were created to live isn’t divided by the line of ***sacred*** and ***secular***.

For the follower of Jesus, ***all*** of life is sacred.

There is no space or corner of our lives that the Spirit of God doesn't illuminate, transform, and make holy.

All of life becomes sacred.

All of life becomes holy.

All of life becomes worship.

As followers of Jesus, we become the temple where

His glory and His presence dwell.

And whatever we do, we do unto Him.

We become the temple and the priest, daily

ministering to the Lord.

We don't just walk with God. God walks with us.

In His goodness, He redeems and restores

everything back for His design and purpose.

Now, our lives become holy and sacred.

Now, in Christ, our lives become worship.

So, why am I writing this?

Because so often we fall short of this life.

The life we were created to live.

And worship becomes a song. A service. A day.

We go about our lives with only pieces being touched by His love and His presence.

And then we seem to wonder why it feels as if there's a lid on our spiritual growth.

We are trying to grow. But we feel like we aren't going anywhere.

And then, if we're honest, when we do pray or read scripture or gather with other believers, we feel guilty that we aren't farther along on the journey with Jesus.

But what if the next step in our journey following Jesus isn't a step up, or even a step higher, but rather a step deeper?

What if God desires to open our eyes to all of the daily, ordinary invitations He has for us to see that all of our life is sacred and holy and reason to worship?

It doesn't matter where you are on your faith journey.

It's not too late.

It's never too late to stop, slow down, and recognize that we have only given God pieces of our lives, when He desires our whole life.

It's never too late to let Him illuminate those areas of our lives that we have not yet let Him make holy and sacred and beautiful.

It's never too late to begin seeing that your whole life is worship, not just your Sunday.

It's time to let Him in.

It's time to let Him open our eyes to see and our ears to hear.

It's time to, in the words of Paul to the believers in Rome, "***Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering***."[3]

There's 3 major areas of our lives that we so often struggle to see as worship: work, family, and rest.

In order to take a deeper look at these areas and begin to see how God sees them, we will go all the way back to the beginning of the story.

The beginning, found in the book of Genesis, will provide us with a foundation and a framework as we take this journey together.

It will be a journey worth taking.

Let's do it together.