

Margin 2 – Space for Relationships

****Bumper Video –**

We start today in Ephesians 5. So get out your bible or your favorite app and join me in Ephesians chapter 5.

Welcome to Redemption Church. You are either here in person or by way of the internet. Either way we welcome you. My name is Chris Fluitt, I'm lead pastor here. We are in the 2nd week of the Margins series.

Quick review

- **Margin is the space between you, your needs, & your limits**

We all have limits. We all have needs. We all need space between ourselves, our needs and limits

- **Normal is insane**

The normal pattern of this world... what we call normal in this culture... is unsustainable, unbiblical, & insane.

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.(NIV)

WARNING! BEWARE! DO NOT! ..be conformed to this world... Why not? Because it is insane.

Instead BE TRANSFORMED! Let God come change your mind, heart, & life.

THEN... you will know... then you will approve & test God's perfect will in your life.

- **Distracted by good things from the best things**

Mary sat at feet of Jesus while her sister Martha was too busy doing other things. Martha wasn't doing bad things. She was actually doing good things, but she was distracted by good things from the Best thing.

Today we are going to be talking about the need for **Margin in our Relationships**

How many here today wish that they had more time? Time for your loved ones.. Time for yourself.. Time to do more..

If God gave us more time do we really think that it would be enough? If God suddenly made special rules for you, and now you have 25hours in a day... do you really think that would be enough time?

I am sorry to tell you, but it is unlikely that more time would really bring the life change you are wanting. We have gone through periods where we have had more time... I remember being in college and having Spring Break, Summer, or Christmas break and think... ok... now I am really going to get stuff done... nope... didn't get much done. Sometimes I got less done. **WHY IS THAT?**

Culture... the pattern of this world has a way of overwhelming us. We say we want to do these **IMPORTANT** things... spend quality time with family, make healthy decisions and exercise, spend time in God's presence... **BUT THESE IMPORTANT THINGS** always get overwhelmed by **URGENT THINGS**.

When you do get that day off... you don't spend it like we mean to spend it. We don't give that day to our family, we don't take a few hours to get in shape, we don't spend more time with God... even though we **FINALLY** have the time to spend... We don't do these important things... we do urgent things.

We need to run errands... we need to catch up on email... we have these chores we need to get done... these **URGENT** things overwhelm the **IMPORTANT** things. That is the Pattern of this world... **DO NOT CONFORM TO IT!** Fight the power of this culture... Don't be drawn into a marginless lifestyle.

Culture will drag you away from what is important and toward what is urgent.

- We URGENTLY need to get the kids to soccer practice... The IMPORTANT conversation we need to have with our kids about God will just have to wait.
- I URGENTLY need to finish this work assignment... The IMPORTANT time with my family around the dinner table will just have to wait.
- There are people that should be here today at Church. It is IMPORTANT that they are here with their family and friends... but they aren't here because something URGENT came up.

It happens so much that it is predictable. CULTURE WILL TRY TO PULL YOU AWAY FROM WHAT IS IMPORTANT.

Look at someone and say - **Be VERY careful**

We need to be very careful that we aren't drawn away into unimportant things...

Ephesians 5:15 Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise,(NIV)

Ephesians 5:16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.(NIV)

The days are what? The days are evil! This culture.. these days.. are going to mess you up... mess up your marriage.. mess up your relationship with your kids.. mess up God's plan and will for your life... Culture is constantly pulling against you... **BE VERY CAREFUL, THEN, HOW YOU LIVE!**

We believe in a devil. We believe in an enemy of our souls. We believe that the days of this culture are not Godly, they are evil. We believe that... right? I want you to hear me out on this... please be open to this thought...

What if the devil, what if an evil culture wanted to keep us from God and doing the will of God. Shouldn't be hard to imagine. BUT the devil can't stop you from turning to God. He doesn't have power to do that. The Bible makes it clear that "WHOSOEVER" will

come to Jesus can have rest... that “WHOSOEVER” believes in Him will not perish... “WHOEVER” calls on His name will find salvation. The Devil can’t stop us... but... he, along with culture, could make us so busy... so busy doing the urgent that it keeps us from the important.

Whether or not you believe that I can’t say. I hope you will think about it... but regardless I have 2 points about margin I know you will agree with me on.

#1 When Margin goes down – Stress goes up

You know I am right! When the space between your needs and your limits goes down... your stress goes up. When you get towards the end of the month and your limit is close to zero... you are praying that the check engine light on your car is just a small issue and not a big need... You can feel the stress go up when needs pop up in your life.

If you are experiencing great amounts of stress you need margin in your life.

Ask yourself right now “how can I bring margin into this stressful situation?”

- If it’s a problem in your home you need some emotional margin and some time margin. Time margin where you sit down and let people know you care and value them. Time where you listen to them. You need emotional margin so you don’t fly off the handle... so you can show patient love.

If your stress is climbing – you have a Margin issue. #1 When Margin goes down – Stress goes up

#2 When Margin goes down – Relational intimacy goes down

You know the answer to this question. The number one reason for divorce in the United States is... MONEY PROBLEMS.

When you have money problems, your needs are too close to your limit. You lack margin.

Men & women who love each other end up getting divorced because of bad financial margin... because the margin affects their intimacy.

This doesn't just apply to money, and it doesn't just apply to marriage relationships... but I feel the need to talk about marriage intimacy.

#2 When Margin goes down – Relational intimacy goes down

There is a cultural belief that when men and women get married... after they get married they have less... physical intimacy... or if I could be so bold... sex.

You have heard this right? Now we believe that we shouldn't be having sex outside of marriage... but that isn't the point I am trying to make. The point I am trying to make is... this world believes that there is less intimacy for married couples than for unmarried couples.

It should not be this way! If anything there should be more intimacy between two people that are committed and trusting each other... building a life and actively trusting one another... There should be more... not less...

Margin is wrecking your sex life. When margin goes down... relational intimacy goes down...

It is understandable.. We can all see what happens. The husband and wife both arrive home after a long day of work. They are tired. There may or may not be kids on the scene... if there are then it is mom and dad's job to take care of the kids. And this can be very tiring and stressful. And don't forget the active lifestyle of kids these days... Mom and dad may be driving the kids to extra-curricular activity and clubs...

And by some miracle we do actually get the kids in bed... then we are defeated by a thing called Netflix. Instead of making time for

each other, man and wife become couch potato binge watching zombies.

I want to talk about Physical Intimacy. It is so important for your marriage to have physical intimacy. When it comes to wiring, we guys are wired for the physical.

We must make margin for physical intimacy. A lack of margin decreases intimacy. SO MAKE ROOM FOR IT.

That means avoid the Netflix marathon where you both end up falling asleep on the couch. Make room for that moment. As good as your kids are they aren't meant to monopolize your every waking moment. Don't let your kids eat all of your margin. That means chores can wait when it comes to spending time together.

If spouses are too tired to have physical intimacy – then they have a margin problem. Make up in your mind right now... I am going to say NO to Netflix so I can say YES to my husband. I am going to say NO to my kids so that I can say YES to my wife. I am going to temporarily say NO to the dishes and laundry so that I can YES to my spouse.

Here is the problem with us guys.. We want to make that moment to happen in an instant. It happens very easy for guys because they are wired for the physical... but listen up guys. Your wife is wired for emotional intimacy.

Just like we have to make margin for physical intimacy, guys we have to make margin for emotional intimacy.

So you want to pursue physical intimacy... and you are met with resistance... Here is why. You are expecting margin for physical intimacy but haven't made margin for emotional intimacy.

You just sat through a dinner where you made more eye contact with your phone than you did your wife. Because of your lack of margin in the workplace you have brought home stress and made your family live with it. Guys stress usually causes us to shutdown... and we shutdown emotional intimacy.

When we shut down our emotions it causes our spouses to say... who is this? This is not the person I married.

Guys we understand physical intimacy. It is something we do. BUT emotional intimacy is something we live! It is putting on display who we are. AND WHO WE ARE IS A MEN MADLY IN LOVE WITH THEIR WIFE... AND IN LOVE WITH THEIR KIDS... AND IN LOVE WITH THE LIFE THEY GET TO LIVE. Put that on display every day! Make margin for it!

Marriages are failing at an all time rate. We have to make margin for each other. We need a margin of physical & emotional intimacy.

We need to make room... but how do we make room?

A pastor in Atlanta named Andy Stanley wrote a great book called "The best question ever." The best question ever when it comes to making good decision for you and your family... **Is it wise?**

It really is the greatest question ever. And we rarely ask this question. When someone asks us if we can do something for them next Saturday... we usually don't ask "is it wise" instead we ask... "are we free." We look at our schedule and say... well we don't have something scheduled for that time slot... and since we don't have a reason to say no... it seems wrong to say anything but yes. "Are we free... yes... then we can dot it."

Are we free isn't a bad question but it isn't the best question. Is it right or wrong is a good question but it isn't the best question. Just because something isn't wrong... just because it is right and good doesn't mean you should fill your margin with it. A better question is – Is it wise?

In light of _____, is it wise...?

- In light of our financial goals to get out of debt, is it wise for us to make this purchase?

- In light of our relationship struggle to spend quality time together, is it wise that I spend the evening over at my buddies house watching football?
- In light of the fact we have a teenage son in our home who all too soon will be out of this home, is it wise to add this time commitment?

It is ok to say NO!

Matthew 5:37 Simply let your `Yes' be `Yes,' and your `No,' `No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.(NIV)

Let me speak very quickly to our Redemption Church volunteers. It is ok to say NO. We want you to do what is wise. We want you to do what is important and not urgent.

Ephesians 5:15 Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise,(NIV)

We are commanded to live as WISE and not UNWISE. Have you been living wise? Is your schedule a mess? Are you ready to make a change.

Musician

Most of us are scheduling foolishly. Here a few points I want to bring you before we open these alters today.

1. **We have to learn to Say NO to many good things so that we can say YES to the best things.** Just because you could do something doesn't mean you should do something. If you did everything you could possibly do, you would have no margin. Not every opportunity is really an opportunity... it could be a distraction or a margin filler. It could be that thing that comes between you and your marriage or family.
2. **Activity does not equal productivity** Busyness does not equal success. We need a different definition for success. What if peace where our definition of success? What if love in our

home was our definition. What if our relationship with God played a part in how we defined a successful life.

3. **It takes courage and faith to say no** Say no to this culture! The days are evil. Say no to what so many others are saying yes to... it takes faith and courage. Do not be conformed to the pattern of this world..
4. **You have enough time.. You don't have enough margin.** We can't give you time. We can't create time. But we can create margin. We can make decisions that best use the time we do have.

Ephesians 5:15 Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise,(NIV)

Ephesians 5:16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.(NIV)

Ephesians 5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.(NIV)

Are you making the most of every opportunity?