

# EXTRA! from the Creek

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## the Church at Dyers Creek

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This week we're passing along to you  
a page from the

### *Pastoral Counseling Papers*

## Peace with a Prioritized Life

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"On your mark, get set, go!" The pistol sounds and the runners spring into action. Every thought, every motion, every breath has a purpose, and every eye is fixed on the same thing – the finish line. What a beautiful illustration of living the Christian life! But for most of us there are times when we lose our focus and get caught up in running the rat race instead. For the sake of evaluating our lives, here are six prime symptoms of a life that's out of balance.

**Busyness.** People who are busy are always in a hurry. Time is their enemy because they never seem to have enough of it. Are you always arriving just in time or a little late? Is your desk or house a mess? Is it because you just don't have time? Don't get caught up in the activity trap. It's not how much you do that's important, but whether you're accomplishing the things that are really important.

**Emotional stress.** Do you often feel pressure and anxiety? Do you have trouble sleeping or waking up? Are you frequently uneasy, restless, indecisive, unhappy, irritable, or worn out? Do you lack connectedness in relationships and keep conversations at a superficial level? Do you feel hopelessly overwhelmed? Those symptoms of emotional stress are all indicators that you're doing a whole lot more than God designed you to do, or that you're doing it in the wrong way. Remember, Jesus said His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

**Nagging guilt.** Do you feel guilty because you're not accomplishing everything you think you should? Have you stopped liking yourself? Do you feel like you don't measure up? Nagging guilt indicates that something is wrong.

**Financial problems.** Are you spending money you don't have? Are you going out to eat because you're too tired to cook? Are you shopping because you want to feel better? Are you working harder and longer but still can't keep up with the bills? Have you stopped giving to God because you just can't afford it? God may be using your financial struggles to get your attention.

**Praylessness.** How is your devotional life? Are you running out the door in the morning and crawling into bed exhausted at night with hardly a thought drifting God's way? If you treated a friend or a spouse the way you treat God, how good would your relationship be? The amount of time spent with the Lord in prayer is one of the greatest indicators of where your heart is with God.

**Escapism behavior.** Do you sit down and mindlessly watch television for hours even if there's nothing in particular you want to watch? Do you grab something from the refrigerator even if you're not hungry? If you're doing any activity just to turn your mind off or get away from the pressures of life, you're practicing escapism behavior – in which case your life is definitely out of balance!

If your life doesn't have the balance you desire right now, commit yourself to taking control of your time; you can't control your priorities until you control your time. And give your first and best time to God. Before you know it, you'll be experiencing more of the peace and power of a prioritized life.

### **Sources**

Chip Ingram. Living on the Edge ([www.lote.org](http://www.lote.org))

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