

Setting your schedule and routine

Evaluating Priorities

“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” Colossians 3:2

To live in line with what you know is best, it's important to make a routine that truly reflects your priorities. We say that we value our time with God, but we may get caught up in the physical aspects of life, thinking only of what is immediately in front of us as urgent.

For those of us who are parents, we may be so caught up in today's homeschool plan or homework that we lose sight of our children's most important need, which is their eternity. We may put off gospel-focused conversations until tomorrow, although we know we are living out of line, but we feel disorganized and unprepared.

So we have to live intentionally, to accomplish God's purposes in our lives. Our relationship with Him is foundational. Be willing to make sacrifices in order to truly put Him first.

2 Peter 1:5 says to add to your faith with “all diligence.” To give all diligence, it has to come out practically in our everyday lives. When you make or change your routine, include reminders that help you stay focused on Jesus.

Perspective

Not only is our relationship with God more important, but also see the rest of life as a way to serve Him. Even the mundane parts of life are a means to an end.

Why eat healthy? To prevent health problems, to live efficiently, to love God and others.

Deciding what to eliminate or limit

In order to accomplish our highest priorities, there are some things we may have to be content to let go of. Some good questions to ask are:

Am I totally surrendered to God in this? Have I prayed and given this area of my life to Him?

What is the worst that could happen if I don't accomplish this?

Will this matter in eternity?

Is this the most loving thing I can do?

Consistency

The Christian life requires more time and effort than an earthly-focused life, but it is worth it, since we have the assurance that we have eternal rewards. It's motivating to live with purpose and know we are accomplishing what is truly worthwhile.

Consistency is challenging. Although Jesus' burden is light (Matthew 11:30), it takes dedication to form daily habits of seeking and serving Him.

Start setting reminders for yourself to spend time in worship, surrender, and prayer for others as well as your own needs. Stay committed even when you feel stressed or unmotivated; find accountability if you need to. With time, it will become easier to maintain the habits you practice intentionally every day.

Making time for rest

It's important to have a day of rest, since God set an example for us of resting after work. Try to get all your cooking, cleaning, and other work done ahead of time, so you have a whole day off. On that day, you could schedule restful activities like Bible study, phone calls to relatives or friends, and extra time with your family.

Make time not only for restful activities, but also for sleep. Sleep is a high priority, in order to remain efficient mentally and physically, and prevent serious health conditions.

“Am I doing enough?”

1. Not doing literally everything - Some of us feel anxiety and guilt for not accomplishing more, even when we are literally doing our best and working hard all day long. Even though you tried your hardest to accomplish 150 worthwhile tasks, you did “only” 120 of them. God knows your heart, and if you did your best, that is what matters. Sometimes interruptions in life are beyond our control, and there is no reason to feel guilty. When you get discouraged about everything you are not doing, it can actually decrease motivation and make you less productive. Focus on what you *have done*.

2. Questioning priorities - As I mentioned earlier, it helps to ask, “What is the worst that can happen?” as a reality check for what is most important. There are many things in life that we don't absolutely have to do in order to survive and to stay in fellowship with God.

3. Other people's lifestyles - Your guilt might also come from other people. Some say you *should* have a spotless house, while others say you *should not*, so you can focus on other things. Maybe there is no debate or judgment, but only a feeling of personal guilt that comes from comparing yourself to others. What matters is your own relationship with God. Focus on serving Him in the way He calls you, and don't feel that you have to live exactly like someone else.

Categorizing your tasks

As you make plans, it helps to have clarity for exactly how to do what you need to do.

Ongoing actions: Tasks on your routine (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.).

One time actions: Tasks on your to-do list that have to be done only once. An easy way to blend your to-do list with your routine is to leave spaces for the one-time tasks. It helps to have specific spaces for a “project of the day” (for making or fixing things), “contact of the day” (for contacting people), “activity of the day” (for spending time with your children), and other categories of things you do.

Spontaneous actions: Anything in the moment, for example responding to your children with patience. Think of a situation that often catches you off guard, and prepare ahead of time. Set a reminder to practice a patient response; practice speaking the words you want to say to your children, and continue practicing until you see change in your in-the-moment responses.

Mindset changes: Any thought processes that need to be changed. Write down a truth to focus on daily, to establish a new way of thinking, and continue until you see changes in your thoughts.

