

Simplify 2: ten practices to unclutter your soul

From Overscheduled to Organised

Harnessing Your Calendar's Power

Intro

Just a reminder concerning the 'fullness' of your bucket. We are referring to your energy levels and not the amount of activities you are currently engaged in!

How do I squeeze these 'replenishing streams' into my already packed schedule?

I'm too busy! I don't have time!

Some of us like the fact that we're too busy and almost brag about it....it feeds something unhealthy in us.

Story of Angus Buchaan: Too Busy!

A runaway calendar will keep you from simplifying your life.

Without conscious intervention, this pattern of chronically over-scheduling ensures that the priorities you care about most will take a backseat to the urgent priorities of others every time.

Grabbing the Reins

We make it seem like our over-scheduling just *happened* to us unwittingly, like we had no choice in the matter! "It's not my fault!" We believe we are victims.

Newsflash: You are the boss of your schedule!

It's **your** responsibility to keep command of your calendar.

What if you grab the reins of your calendar?

What if you could turn your schedule into a powerful tool to help you live your purpose?

A simplified life begins with well-invested hours each day.

What Calendar?

Some of you don't even have a calendar!

It's time to analyse how you spend your day. Buy a diary, a calendar...

Unemployed? Spending long hours doing nothing?

Discuss: Where am I now vs Where do I want to be.

Identify the barriers that prevent you from entering the benefits of the 'promised land'.

Create a strategy and begin to embark on that journey with faith.

If God were in Charge

Ephesians 5:16-17 (NLTSE)

Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do.

Christ-followers should think totally different about time!

Here's a question: How would you spend your time if God were in charge of it?

What would my schedule look like if God were in charge of it?

Great leaders: Winston Churchill, Leonardo daVinci, Thomas Edison...all used a polyphasic schedule to maximise their waking hours.

We must learn that my rhythm doesn't have to work for anybody but me!

When are you most productive?

Is your current schedule working for you? Really?

Your calendar plays a critical role in determining who you become as a person, as a Christ-follower, as a family member, and as a friend.

When you sit down to rewrite your schedule, you will be making choices with far greater implications than you might imagine!

How do most people fill their schedules?

The thoughtful arrangement of your daily and weekly calendar is one of the holiest endeavours you can undertake.

There is a better way.

A New Way of Filling the Squares

Story: Bill and his daughter, Shauna. "Gone...again...tonight?"

What if my weekly schedule also included my non-work responsibilities?

How much do I involve God and prayer and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit when I put together my schedule?

So, what investment of my time will it take to be not just an average dad, but a fantastic father?

One night, two nights a week?

For the first time I wrote four letters on my calendar that changed everything: H-O-M-E

Who do You Want to Become?

The question isn't, "What do I want to get done in the next thirty days?" but,

"Who do I want to become in this next season of my life?"

Once you know the answer to that question, your schedule/calendar becomes a terrific tool to help you accomplish your life goals.

Here's the secret to becoming a... Write it on your calendar.

Example: Novelist, John Grisham. Wrote, "Write!"

Lots of questions regarding Christianity or your faith? Write, "Discipleship!"

Let's revisit some of those key areas that fill my energy bucket.

Connecting with God

Church Attendance

Story: As I pastor I am amazed at how often I hear, I almost didn't come to church today!"

If you want to hear more from God, be where His Word is taught. Regularly. Weekly.

Who do you want to become?

If you have even the vaguest interest in becoming a little more like the one you claim to follow, then there are few words you need to write on your calendar - and **church** is one of them!

If you want more of God's direction and purpose in your life...

Make it a non-negotiable!

Chair Time

How is your daily time with God? "What daily time with God?"

Allocate personal time with God every day. Find an uninterrupted spot, make a time and open His Word.

Marriage and Family

"We're done!" Giving up your marriage?

See a Christian counsellor to set aside the time needed for hard-but-healing conversations.

Marital fractures don't heal themselves without wise guidance and the strategic investment of time.

Set a date night. Protect it.

Satisfying Work

Matt 5:37 Just say a simple, 'Yes, I will,' or 'No, I won't.' Anything beyond this is from the evil one.

- Always be on time
- Do what you said you would do
- Finish what you started
- Always say please and thank you

Keep healthy boundaries by not allowing work to leak into your home hours.

Recreation

Plot your holidays and protect them. Plan ahead. Family holidays must be made a high priority for you. How important is your family?

Exercise

Write, "Work out" on your calendar today! As you put exercise on your calendar, you live it out.

Fighting the Drift

Does anyone know for sure how many monthly or annual calendars you will get to assemble in your life? Let's start now!

We must, each and every one of us, fight the 'drift' that can happen as each day floats by with numbing busyness.

It's all too easy to fill our day with things that don't matter.

Simplified living requires purposeful stewardship of each day.

Who do you want to become?

By putting God first and keeping your priorities on track, you can live out your full potential and experience the abundant life that God promises.

You can become that person...one day at a time.

Action Step

Write a God-First Schedule

Begin by asking, "Who do I want to become?"

Start with the ones that create the biggest barrier to a God first-life.

Next, add plans or engagements, relationships or activities, that will lead you down the path toward the one you want to become.

Church or chair time; work-out or date night! Maybe it's H-O-M-E?

Maybe it's the first step towards a new vocation.

Do something that will eventually get your life on a better track!