



February 5, 2006

SERMON REFLECTION

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
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A Balanced Life — Mark 1: 29-39

From the very beginning of his ministry, Jesus demonstrated a biblical approach to life/time management. Work, rest, prayer, quiet time, more work ... Jesus preaches and heals, but the Gospel writer lets us peek at how Jesus could do so for the long haul.

For Personal Study

Athletes have long understood that the best training results not just from pushing themselves to new levels of performance, but from the planned recovery time to maximize the benefit of their efforts. Whether it's the recovery and stretch pause between a series of exercises or the intentional rotation of training modalities to rest each muscle group, healthy down time brings out peak performance. This method systematically stresses then heals the muscle, making it stronger than ever. Eliminating the recovery phase results in accelerating muscle damage.

Work and recovery is a principle that is true for all aspects of life. Intuitively we know that more is not better, yet we push without rest and expect a positive result. We watch those who are close to us make the same mistake.

Read **Mark 1: 29-39**

Jesus gives us an example that challenges us. Surely there were more people who needed to be taught and healed. Jesus chose to stop and remove himself from the pressing demands of His life and recover through prayer and meditation with His Father.

Reflection Questions:

Where in the Mark 1 passage do you find reference to Jesus' focus on work? Where do you find His focus on recovery?

What happens when Jesus takes time to recover?

In what areas of your life is your "push" out of balance with your recovery process?

Read **Mark 6:30-34; 45-46**

How did Jesus deal with the interferences to His plan for bal-

ance?

What in your life interferes with balanced living? What supports balanced living?

Read **1 Peter 5:8**

How does self-control relate to balance in your life?

Select one step toward balanced living this week. How will you begin?

For Group Discussion

What are the benefits of a balanced life? What are the consequences of an unbalanced life?

Share your thoughts: "If I had a better balance in my life between work & recovery, I would ..."

What strategies have you found to be successful and unsuccessful to improve balanced living? Why?

How could you help your spouse, child, or other close relationships improve their "work/recovery" balance?



