NOT ENOUGH TIME?

As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. Psalm 103:13-14

What do a businessman in Korea, a teacher in a remote area of the Philippines, a bus driver in Los Angeles, and a rock concert promoter in Kuala Lumpur all have in common? They all share the same problem: time management!

When I conducted family conferences in those countries, I asked everyone the same question: "What is the number one problem facing your family?" To my surprise, the answers were a variation of a common theme: How do you manage to do a good job at work, have time for your family, be involved in church activities, and be an authentic person at the same time?

People feel that life gets busier and busier. They describe the feelings of a circus juggler who keep tossing more and more balls in the air, juggling faster and faster until they all come crashing down.

"Stop the world, I want to get off!" they think. But you just can't do that. You have responsibilities including family, work, God, and your personal life. What do you stop doing? Do you resign from parenting for a week? Do you call your boss and tell him, "I'll be back on the job in 10 days--just got too much to do"? Or send God an e-mail letting Him know you'll check in with Him if you get in trouble, but not to expect to hear from you for the next month?

At times, however, we end up doing one of those things. Overwhelmed by business, our family suffers. We become strangers to our kids, and sometimes, to our husbands and wives. And, at times, without sending a formal message to God, we do leave Him far outside of the mainstream of life.

What's the solution? Sitting down and making a list of everything you need to do, and then numbering each item based upon its importance? Most people would say, "Yes! Prioritizing life is the answer." I'm not convinced. As soon as you make your list, you immediately feel guilty. You know that your list is totally unrealistic. If you actually started at the top and worked down, you wouldn't get more than halfway through your list before you ran out of emotional energy, to say nothing of time constraints.

I have another suggestion which is not only more realistic but, I believe, more in keeping with the guidelines of God's Word, the Bible. Draw a horizontal line and on that line write down every task you have to do. Above that line, if you can do it sincerely, put a triangle representing God as Lord of your life. Then relate each task to Him, realizing that everything isn't going to get done. And decide what He would have you to do. Realize that every week, perhaps every day, those tasks will change in importance.

If you are God's child, you must remember that what happens to you is of interest and concern to Him. You've also got to remember that God knows there are but 168 hours in every week. At times we expect far more of ourselves than we can deliver because we continue to crowd more and more things into our schedule. When our tired bodies and frayed nerves keep us from delivering, we end up tired and irritable.

The Psalmist wrote, "As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust" (Psalm 103:13-14).

God won't manage your schedule for you, but asking His direction will help you to focus on what really counts. It's a fact.

Resource reading: Psalm 103