



August, 2017

This month my family enjoyed a wonderful vacation of visiting new places and doing new things like riding the very fast Lake Express ferry across Lake Michigan and spending time at a cottage belonging to Audra's uncle. While the kids spent their time swimming or kayaking, Audra and I enjoyed taking time to read just for fun. One of the joys of vacations is to get away, change your scenery, and find time to relax. However, we shouldn't have to wait for a vacation to find some balance and renewal in our lives. I came home realizing how important it is to make time to nurture our spirit, bodies, and minds regularly.

And this can be a real challenge. Our society teaches us to do everything we can to succeed at our jobs, to "go the extra mile," to say "yes" to everyone, to please everyone. Even when someone retires that doesn't mean the end of working. Many continue to devote a majority of their time to volunteer work. The tough question becomes ... what is God calling us to do? And is a life of constant busyness really a faithful life?

So, we need to be intentional in caring for our "self." This part often is ignored because we've been conditioned not to be selfish. But caring for self is not selfish, it is necessary. We can not adequately care for others if we don't care for ourselves. How do you care for yourself? Your mind? Your body? Do you take time to just be quiet and "be"?

We also need to make time to nurture our faith. When we are centered and grounded in God, our priorities take a new shape and problems are seen from a different perspective. I encourage you to find at least fifteen minutes two to three times a week to pray and read scripture. Pick up the Upper Room devotional at church to help guide your time. I also want to encourage you to participate in one of the Bible studies that will be going on throughout the year. Take time to be with God and see the difference it can make in your life.

Let's not wait for a vacation to be refreshed, I invite us to be intentional every day in seeking a renewed and balanced life, where all the areas of our lives are growing and being nurtured in a healthy way. Awareness is the first step. Begin to pay more attention to the areas in your life that you are short-changing. Scale back in the areas that have taken hold and leave you feeling constantly drained of energy. Enjoy more things that bring you joy and feed your soul. Grow deeper in your faith and you will find the means to bring all the areas of your life into balance. Finding balance isn't always easy, but for the sake of our mental, physical, and spiritual health it is worth it.

In God's Love,

Pastor Tim

*Psalm 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*