



CALVARY UM CHURCH MID-WEEK DEVOTIONAL FEB. 26, 2020

Dear Friends, I subscribe to “Soul-Shepherding” a website and business dedicated to clergy. I thought you might find this particular email helpful because its message applies to most people! In the joy and peace of Christ, Pastor Elaine Wing
Calvary United Methodist Church, Dumont, NJ

Adapted from [*Your Best Life in Jesus' Easy Yoke*](#) by Bill Gaultiere.

Often we hurry to be successful in ministry or just get through our responsibilities for the day. But the Bible's great chapter on love begins with, “Love is unhurried...” ([1 Corinthians 13:4](#), paraphrased).

Putting unhurried margin (or soul space) in our schedule and attitude helps us to love well.

One day, Kent (not his real name) was ten minutes late for his meeting with me, as usual. He tried to make a joke of it, “I’m sorry. I guess I need 25 hours in my day!” Invariably he ran late for meetings and events because he was always trying to squeeze one more thing into his day. Kent complained about having too much to do and being tired of rushing around all the time. He thought his hurried, overcrowded life was inevitable for him as a pastor who had a family and lived in Orange County, CA in the 21st Century. But being an adrenaline addict in recovery myself, I knew better! So I spoke the truth in love to him, “I think you like being in a hurry and doing so much. Maybe the feeling of urgency and importance energizes you.” My friend disagreed with me. But the night before his next appointment he had a dream that he took his wife and two girls on a picnic. As they walked along he was carrying the picnic lunch and the lawn chairs and his wife was holding the hands of their

little girls. And he led his family to sit down together *on the fast lane of the freeway!* So there they were trying to enjoy their picnic lunch while cars kept racing by! The cars had to slow down and move out of the fast lane in order not to hit them! But then a truck came barreling down the freeway, close behind a car, and not seeing his family sitting there, it was about to run them over! That's when Kent woke up—in his nightmare *and in his life!* After processing his dream with me he admitted, "You were right in what you said to me last week. I am going way too fast. My wife has been trying to tell me the same thing."

Here are 3 ways we add margins in the busyness of ministry, work, and family:

1. **Value Presence Over Productivity.** Many leaders and ministers measure their success by what they produce rather than by appreciating the presence of God and people. By being unhurried we're better able to love God and people well, which is Jesus' Great Commandment ([Mark 12:30-31](#)).
2. **Statio.** The Benedictine monks taught me the discipline of statio, which is the practice of arriving early to meetings and events in order to be emotionally present to God and people. Statio is adding spiritual margin to our daily schedule. It helps us to enjoy moments with God, bring our best self to people, and be more fruitful for God's kingdom.
3. **Habits of Prayer.** 71 times the Psalmist uses a wonderful word that most of us skip over: *Selah*. It probably means,

“Pause to reflect and pray.” It’s a quiet Breath Prayer in the middle of a psalm. Selah is what we need in the middle of our projects and activities. We can train ourselves to make a habit of shooting up little arrow prayers like, “Peace... Be still” ([Mark 4:39, ESV](#)) or “In Jesus’ name... Not my strain” (based on [Psalm 20:7](#)). This can help us to practice God’s presence all day, which is the ultimate expression of adding margin and peace to our daily life and work.