

# FBC TODAY

U N L E A S H I N G   T H E   G O S P E L

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# THE DISEASE OF HURRY



# FBC

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
SUBANG JAYA

YOUTH

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- **MAIN SERVICE**  
| Physical & Youtube |  
Sundays 8:45am / 11:15am
- **YOUTH SERVICE**  
| Physical |  
Sundays 8:45am
- **SUNDAY SCHOOL**  
For Ages 3 to 12  
(Preschool to std 6)  
Physical Classes  
8:45am / 11:15am

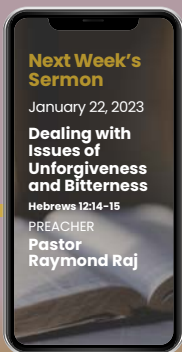
When we meet our friends, we customarily ask them how they are doing. How often do you get a reply that they are busy or very busy?

What about you?

Do you often feel there's just too much to do with too little time? Do you feel you are constantly rushing from place to place or from task to task? Or that

you are just treading above water as you follow your daily schedule, feeling exhausted at the end of the day.

Whether you are a young urban professional, a student, a single mother, or a retired pensioner, it seems many of us are resigned to the fact that our busyness is just part and parcel of modern-day living. We get carried along by the culture of the day that tells



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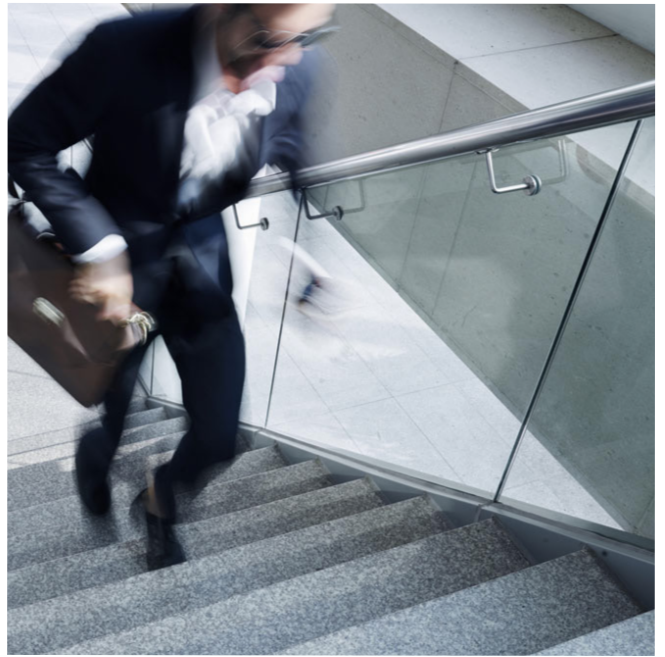
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us it's all normal and that success is about doing more with less. This trend is exacerbated by modern technology and social media that constantly and relentlessly bombard us with information and a whole host of distractions vying for our attention. If you feel stressed out or worse, burnt out, you are not alone!

Pastor and author Mark Comer wrote, what I think is an extremely useful and engaging book, titled "The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry". The book was a result of reflecting on a burnt-out life that he had lived while trying to grow a mega church. In it, he described the "hurry disease" that has afflicted many of us where we struggle to keep pace with having too much to do in the relentless pursuit of having "more"; like MORE material possessions, MORE personal achievements, MORE leisure activities... some of which may have a legitimate place in our lives.

**But when we find ourselves having to constantly multi-task and distracted by the incessant beeps from our phone notifications, we have succumbed to the 'hurry disease'. The upshot is we cut ourselves off from the presence of God and make it nearly impossible to love deeply and experience the peace and joy of the Kingdom.**

Even pastors and seasoned ministry workers are not spared. According to Dallas Willard, an American Christian Philosopher, "Hurry is the great enemy of our spiritual life today".



To be sure, busyness is not really the issue here. Jesus was extremely busy in His time on earth as He went about His Father's work, preaching, teaching, and healing the sick. In fact, sometimes, he and his disciples didn't even have a chance to eat as they ministered to the crowd that continuously came to seek them out. (Mark 6:31). But Jesus always put a premium on having His alone time with God, His Heavenly Father. In Luke, 5: 15-16, we read that even as his popularity and demand for his time began to increase, "Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed" (NIV).

So what is the solution? Mark clearly articulates that it's not having more time. Even if we are given 10 more hours a day, we would most likely fill them up with even more things, which in turn would make us feel even more tired and spiritually more at risk than we are now.

I remember growing up with a generation of self-help gurus like Anthony Robbins who taught people to break through personal limits in order to maximize their full potential and attain so-called self-actualization.

While God certainly wants us to do our best, what is often ignored in our popular culture is to recognize and accept our limitations. After all, we are finite beings and we are all limited to varying degrees in our physical abilities, mental capacities, and giftings. Yet I find myself often trying to live life as if these limitations do not apply. And if I'm totally honest, it's often to satisfy my own ego and self-worth or play to the expectations of others... nothing to do with pleasing God!





**The key then is not more time but to “Slow down and simplify our lives to what really matters”. And the things that really matter should be the same things that Jesus would value. We can only appreciate what those things would be if we are a follower or apprentices of Jesus. Put simply, it is to be with Him, to be like Him, and to do what He would do if He was in your situation.**

But here’s the caveat – to be a real apprentice of Jesus would only be an idea if we are not prepared to spend time with Him and cultivate a lifestyle like His. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who came so that we may have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10). It has to begin with recognizing that only by abiding in Jesus can the deepest needs of our souls be met. As in all deep and meaningful relationships, abiding in Jesus requires that we spend time with Him.

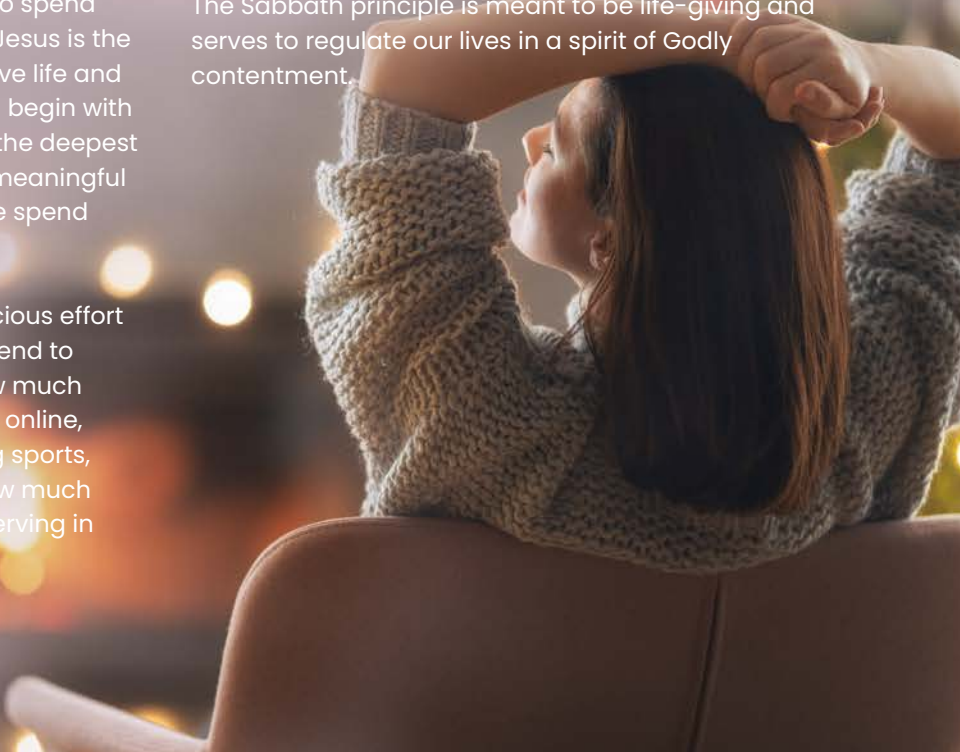
Unhurried time. And often, that means a conscious effort to give up on other non-essential things that tend to crowd out God in our lives. Think about it. How much time do we spend in a day watching TV, going online, responding on Social Media, shopping, playing sports, and other trivial pursuits? Then think about how much time we spend praying, reading the Bible, or serving in

ministry. Our answers to these questions will give us a clue to what our hearts really desire and as Mark puts it, whether we are seeking the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Entertainment.

The Book concludes with 4 Core practices for “Unhurrying” one’s life. They are:

**Silence and Solitude.** A survey from Microsoft found that 77% of young adults would reach for their phones when nothing is occupying their attention. The new normal of digital distraction is so prevalent that it is robbing us of our ability to be present in the moment. I can think of the all too familiar scene in a restaurant where an entire family sitting around a table look down on their phones instead of talking with one another and enjoying each other’s presence. The noise of the modern world often makes us deaf to the voice of God. So a good place to start out is to follow Jesus’ example in Mark 1:35 where he went off to a solitary place and spent some quiet time communing with God. This was an ongoing spiritual habit of Jesus found throughout the Gospels. In Luke 5:16, Jesus “often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.” My takeaway from this is that having Quiet Time should be high on our daily agenda!

**Sabbath.** Observe the Sabbath principle of resting from work and delighting in the Lord. It’s having a spirit of restfulness rather than restlessness. It’s a window we give ourselves to get away from the busyness of the other 6 days and do what is often counter to our culture so that we have time to properly rest and delight in worshipping God. Notice that this is a broad command that’s not restrictive or legalistic as practiced by the Pharisees. Mark makes the point that Worship here is defined not just as singing songs of praises but as our whole life orientation in celebrating what God has done for us! Rest is also resisting the pull of the world toward its unquenchable addiction to work and consumerism and lust for more. The Sabbath principle is meant to be life-giving and serves to regulate our lives in a spirit of Godly contentment.



**Simplicity.** Today, this is perhaps better known as minimalism (not the architectural style). In an age of easy access and unbridled consumption, this is perhaps a greater challenge than most people would care to admit. The idea is to declutter our lives of things that are not needful. This is not a call to take a vow of poverty but to have a healthy attitude towards earthly riches and not be subjected to their influences. Jesus lived a simple and uncluttered life. Yet he was not averse to giving himself over to the care of his rich followers, enjoying a good meal with His well-to-do friends on many occasions. Mark then offered several guiding principles to follow before we purchase anything. The practice is to constantly ask how we can live with less and not more.

**Slowing down.** In 1999, I read a book by Bill Gates called "Business at the speed of thought". In it, he articulated a future in which the internet and technological advances would drive the pace of change to such dizzying heights that failure to embrace such change would result in the failure of businesses. We are living in that world now. It's a world of speed and instant gratification. In his book, Mark Comer proposes to "Slow down your body to slow down your life". This is a whole-body endeavor to slow down the pace we think and move about so that we can see and taste that the Lord is good. He offers a host of deliberate practices to slow down our pace of life, like driving at precisely the speed limit, turning off our smartphones, and taking a full day once a month to be alone and reflect to recalibrate your pace of life. Note that these are not dictates but suggestions that can be personalized.

**Being part of the baby boomer generation means that I've experienced a time when life was more slow-paced and less complicated. At least I have a reference point. My heart, therefore, goes out to those millennials who by definition was the first generation that grew up in the Internet age, marked by an elevated usage of the Internet, mobile devices, and social media. They are the ones who may be completely foreign to what a quiet life is like and are more likely to miss out on the fruits that such a life can bring to our spiritual well-being.**



We live in a world of information overload laden with lots of stress-inducing distractions. The onslaught is ruthless and must be met by an equally determined and intentional response. I highly recommend to all of us to read Mark Comer's book as it presents a compelling case for the benefits of a slower, simpler way of life. I highly recommend that all of us, no matter our generation, to read Mark Comer's book as it presents a compelling case for the benefits of a slower, simpler way of life.



**By Leong Yew Lum**

Yew Lum is the Chairman of First Baptist Church (E)



# Congratulations!

We rejoice with  
**Christopher Tan & Law Hiu Yan**,  
grandparents **Patrick Tan & Jenny Thai** on  
the arrival of newborn baby girl  
**Elizabeth Tan** born on  
**1st January 2023**

*Children are a gift from the Lord;  
they are a reward from him. - Psalm 127:3*

## PrayerSpotlight

### Slowing down before God

Heavenly Father, I thank You that You have started a good work in me and I trust You to complete it on the day of Christ Jesus. Remind me that my king will come and all who wait for him will not be put to shame.

Forgive me Lord that there is a part of me that wants to be up and doing things for You, and I find it so difficult to wait for Your timing and await Your leading in my life. Teach me, Lord, to truly abide in You, moment by moment, and to learn to wait for You as my first option, rather than as a last resort.

Help me Lord, to let your Word become deeply rooted within my heart. I pray that I will not faint when answers are delayed, but rather that I will quietly and patiently rest in Your unfailing promises, as Your Holy Spirit does His work within my heart.

Keep me Lord from foolish shortcuts. Tell me as you have told your people in Isaiah that my salvation and strength lies in returning and rest, not speed and compromise. Help me want the future you have for me. Increase my love and dependence upon You so that I may become more like the Lord Jesus in every area of my life.

