

Popular Pentecostal Pastor: The One Lesson You Really Need That Churches Rarely Preach

To be made in the image of God means that we're ripe with potential. We have the divine's capacity in our DNA. We're like God. We were created to "image" his behavior, to rule like he does, to gather up the raw materials of our planet and reshape them into a world for human beings to flourish and thrive.

But that's only half the story.

We're also made from the dirt, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust": We're the original biodegradable containers. Which means we're born with limitations. We're not God. We're mortal, not immortal. Finite, not infinite.

Image and dust.

Potential and limitations.

One of the key tasks of our apprenticeship to Jesus is living into both our potential and our limitations.

There's a lot of talk right now about reaching your full potential, and I'm all for it. Step out. Risk it all. Have faith. Chase the dream God put in your heart. Become the Technicolor version of who you were made to be.

But again, that's only half the story.

What you hear very little of—inside or outside the church—is accepting your limitations.

We live in a culture that wants to transgress all limitations, not accept them—to cheat time and space. To “be like God.”

#YOLO.

#FOMO.

#imsostressedouticantbreathe.

Listen, I have good news for you. Great news, in fact.

You.

Can't.

Do.

It.

All.

And neither can I.

We're human. Time, space, one place at a time, all that pesky non-omnipresent stuff.

We have limitations. Lots of them. The limitations include but are not, well, limited to these:

1. Our bodies.
2. Our minds.
3. Our giftings.
4. Our personalities and emotional wiring.
5. Our families of origin.
6. Our socioeconomic origins.
7. Our education and careers.
8. Our seasons of life and their responsibilities—like going to college or raising a young child or caring for dying parents.
9. Our 80 or so years of life, if we're that blessed.
10. God's call on our lives.

Is this list exhaustive? Of course not. It's only a sampling. My point is, our limitations aren't just temporal but emotional, social, economic and more.

What if these limitations aren't something to fight but to gratefully accept as a signpost to God's call on our souls? I love Peter Scazzero's line: "We find God's will for our lives in our limitations."

Don't misread me: The same is true for our potential. My language here could easily be manipulated or misinterpreted to say something that is at best un-American and at worst unjust.

But I doubt Jesus' agenda is to make poor people middle class or middle-class people wealthy. Jesus blessed the "poor in spirit" by the thousands, gave them the Sermon on the Mount and then sent them home, still poor, but blessed. Jesus' agenda is to make wounded people whole. That often leads to more money or opportunity or influence, and I'm all for it. After all, we were created to rule over the earth; nothing brings me more joy than to see men and women take their rightful place as loving, wise, creative, powerful rulers in society.

All I'm saying is limitations aren't all bad. They are where we find God's will for our lives.

And the main limitation we all share—regardless of where you started in life or how smart or hardworking or type A you are—is time. Nobody has more than 24 hours in a day.

We simply can't see, read, watch, taste, drink, experience, be or do it all. Not an option.

Life is a series of choices. Every yes is a thousand noes. Every activity we give our time to is a thousand other activities we can't give our time to. Because, duh: We can't be in two places at once.

As Paul said:

“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil” (Eph. 5:15-16, ESV).

That next to last phrase can be translated from the Greek in a few ways:

–Redeeming the time.

–Making the most of every opportunity.

–Making the most of every chance you get.

Every day is a chance. Every hour an opportunity. Every moment a precious gift.

How will you spend yours? Will you squander them on trivial things? Or invest them in the eternal kind of life?

How do we slow down, simplify and live deliberately right in the middle of the chaos of the noisy, fast-paced, urban, digital world we call home?

Well, the answer, of course, is easy: follow Jesus. {eoa}

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Adapted from The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry: How to Stay Emotionally Healthy and Spiritually Alive in the Chaos of the Modern World. Copyright © 2019 by John Mark Comer. Used by permission of WaterBrook, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC.