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Driven by Self or Drawn by the Savior?

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My everyday intentions often end up getting lost in the pace of running from place to place and working wildly to cross tasks off the list on my countertop. Yeah, the list looks peaceful, even productive, with carefully drawn lines marking my to dos complete.

It feels good, doesn't it? Making a day's aspirations into accomplishments?

But, I'm not always satisfied! I stare at it with a mind still busy asking, 'what's next?' and a sense of expectation urging me on. An expectation created by and encouraged within myself. Sure, some non-negotiable, day-to-day requirements exist. But it's all the in-between and over-the-top items keeping me most busy.

But it's more. It’s the unwritten items, the ones lingering in my head and forcing my feet to move to fast, etching my mind with exhaustion by the end of the day.

Can you relate? Do you reach the end of the day wondering where the hours went and what's pushing and pressing you into an abyss instead of purposing your actions with authenticity? That’s what we all want, right? To live inspired at a slower pace with purpose written all over our lists.

It’s what I want, anyways: A life of peace, purpose and God-pleasing items filling my lists...filling my life...so that each day, even the mundane makes me more of who He wants me to be.

But at the end of the day, have my hasty ways and tasks completed accomplished anything of meaning for my Maker?

Why do we drive ourselves so hard simply to busy our hands? Why do we create lists until the calendar overflows instead of taking time to write meaning into our days?

What if we paused to allow ourselves to feel *drawn forward by the Lord* instead of *driven by our own expectations*?

If we laid that list at the foot of the Lord and asked Him, ‘What really needs doing?’, I wonder how the items might change and if our actions might morph into a life with more meaning. So let's ask:

"*God, how would you guide my hand as I sit, pen to paper, listing my expectations for tomorrow, for the week coming, for my life? Lord, write my list for me...*"

I’ve always felt my own expectations pressing up against me from behind, forcing me forward into the face of a challenge or any endeavor. As a student, I sat studying for hours. Marriage and motherhood made my mind spin with a need to exceed any expectations put on me by people around me. Even my role as a daughter, early on, proved to be something I strived to ‘achieve’ in my longing for approval.

It wasn’t until my life turned upside down [1] and my list was utterly out of my control that I learned a little about surrendering my own expectations. I saw how what I wrote meant nothing in comparison to what God placed before me. He stopped my self-imposed demands in what seemed like a second and replaced them with necessary surrender, ***a surrender that has since saved my soul from selfish ambition.***

Because, you see, sometimes when we're forced to stop we can really see how there is space to replace the tasks and expectations we write into our own lives. And, really, isn’t it sometimes selfishness or shear maddness making its way with us when we drive ourselves to exhaustion?

So, I’ll say it again: ***I wonder what would happen if we allowed God to rewrite the ways we filled our days instead of driving ourselves with our own desires.***

If we allow God to walk before us, He draws us towards Him. ***If we look up to Him in the use of our time, talents and treasures, it’s a calling we follow instead of creating our own course of action.*** Even in our day to day duties can reflect an attitude of authenticity when we slow enough to hear His calling.

We have to slow the pace and create space on the list for the Lord to fill our lives up. So, take your list. Remove just one extra item and gaze at that open space with eyes searching for a Savior, surrendering your tendency to overwhelm your schedule.

Yeah, simply surrender a single space to start. Don’t wait until you feel forced or so overwhelmed that you ache with exhaustion. He’s created a calling just for you but if life gets too loud, you’ll drown it out as you drive yourself into a dead-end.

Spending all our days scribbled with self-imposed duties will only drive us crazy and put us at risk of missing our true callings. All we really have to do is keep some lines of our lives empty as we pause to listen to what He wants us to write.

Are you ready to make space in your fast pace?

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