

Balance

Balance. When I hear that word I think about a seesaw. I see a board placed on a triangle and a man in the center. He has a foot on each side and his arms are outstretched. He is making small adjustments and it takes a great deal of effort. One false move and one end of the board falls to one side and so does he. It is precarious, uncertain, and exhausting!

When I think about balance I do not think of man standing or walking naturally. God has created (most) people with a body that balances itself without much effort. It is an amazing part of our everyday life most of us take for granted.

My question is which of these pictures best describes my life and walk with Christ? Am I pouring out effort to stay balanced in this wild world filled with uncertainty? Or on the other hand, am I standing and walking with ease and grace? If I had to choose, most days I spend my time on the seesaw engrossed in staying up. What then is holding me back from that natural balance I desire in my walk with God? What am I not doing right?

The Lord has been teaching me that both of these pictures of balance hold part of the truth. We try to do it all ourselves before we are saved and continue even afterwards. We spend so much time and effort working for approval and praise. We are trying to balance out our failures. We start to come to Christ and think once we are saved balance will come naturally. That does not seem to happen and we fall. We then climb back on our seesaw and resume our balancing act.

I think we are missing the whole point of living. Until we reach heaven, we will have to be on our guard to stay balanced. God saves us and gives us a new nature and continues to renew our minds daily. He has turned our lives right side up and sets us on our feet. The point we miss is that it is not for our benefit alone.

We too easily become obsessed with keeping ourselves balanced and get devastated when we stumble. We put ourselves back on the seesaw and start over. We are self-absorbed and inwardly focused. The evil one wins because our attention is taken off the Lord. To quote Dr. J.L. Williams, "what is evil? It is live backwards!" Evil is living opposite of what God wants.

God restores our balance so we can reach out to others, not so we can turn in on ourselves. God gives us balance and sends us out to tell others the Gospel. They too can be restored to balance in and with the Lord.

Then we come back to the seesaw. Instead of standing alone in the center, we can sit on one side and someone else sits on the other side. What a beautiful picture of marriage. It is also a perfect picture of the Church. God does not call us to a life of solitude, but to one of balance within relationships with others. We support each other. We give of ourselves to lift others up and they do the same for us. Sacrifices are made on both sides.

The Lord comes and balances us, but it does not stop there. Praise the Lord! He puts us in a community of believers to bring further balance to our lives. Then Jesus completes the balance by stepping up and standing in the center of the seesaw. He is the only one who can truly bring complete balance. How foolish were we to think we could stand in the center and stay balanced.

Our eyes are opened and we see the complete picture. Jesus picks us up and takes our place in the center. He puts us on the board and then our fellow believers on the other side. Perfect balance!

If we take Jesus out of the center balance is lost. If we push Jesus to one side and put ourselves in the center, balance is lost. If we put Jesus to the side and the people of the church in the center, balance is lost. Jesus has to be the center of all and we have to be in fellowship with our fellow saints. We also have to be balanced in our own walk with the Lord. If any of these pieces are missing we are in trouble and out of alignment.

This life will have ups and downs. The blessing is that if we are in God's plan of balance then we will never be alone. We will never go too high or too low. We will not collapse under the strain of trying to do it all by ourselves. We will not be frustrated and tired by trying to put others in our idea of balance.

God thank-you for this beautiful picture of balance to keep our focus on Your perfect will. Lord we do pray that You would be our center and our Lord of balance. Amen!

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