

# 1 **Margin: Finding Balance for Overloaded Lives**

*Finding Emotional Margin*  
*Wednesday Night Bible Study*  
March 30, 2011

## 2 **Margin...**

- ...is the amount of resources that we allow for beyond that which is needed. It is the leeway between our load and our limits.

## 3 **Observations**

- We are living “marginless” lives because we don’t have a sense of when enough is enough. We cannot or will not be satisfied

## 4 **Philippians 4:11-12**

- <sup>11</sup>Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.
- <sup>12</sup>I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

## 5 **Four Areas**

- Emotional margin
- Physical margin
- Financial margin
- Time margin

6  **Emotional Overload...**

- ...comes from unrealistic expectations, unreasonable deadlines, uncontrollable anxiety among other things

7  **When we over...**

- ...extend ourselves, we have nothing left to respond to emergencies and unexpected circumstances

8  **We then become...**

- ...defensive about our overload because we have nothing left to give. Since we have nothing left to give, we tend to tune out the need.

9  **The Skin Analogy**

- Our skin is designed to be a physical boundary that keeps certain things in and certain things out. It also allows necessary interchanges between our outside environment and our bodies

10  **Our Emotional Skin...**

- ...functions in much the same way. It allows us to feel things but shields us for feeling too much.

11  **Some people are...**

- ...said to be “thin-skinned” and others “thick-skinned”

12  **Whether we are...**

- ...said to be thick or thin skinned refers to our relative sensitivity to people and to circumstances....it is a matter of our feelings.

13  **Thick-skinned...**

- ...people tend to be somewhat insensitive to the feelings of others, while thin-skinned people can be overly sensitive

14  **We have to feel...**

- ...but it is dangerous for us to feel too much. We cannot be ruled by our feelings. A well developed emotional skin (boundary) is the key to regulating our feelings.

15  **The more...**

- ...effectively we can find a balance between being thick-skinned and being thin-skinned, the more emotional margin we will have in our lives.

16  **The Emotional Bank Account...**

- ...functions very much like a regular bank account. The more deposits you make, the better. Too many withdrawals eliminates margin creating the possibility of an overdraft.

17  **Prescription for...**

## ■...restoring emotional margin

### 18 Social Support

- A nurturing system of social support is an excellent way for replenishing depleted emotional energy reserves

### 19 Reconcile Broken Relationships

- It helps to bring God close through our brokenness and it helps us accept God's grace through our humility

### 20 Serve One Another

- We do ourselves the most good when we are doing something for others

### 21 Rest

- Weekends and holidays rarely bring rest. We need quiet, solitude and a chance to do nothing without feeling guilty

### 22 Social Support

- A nurturing system of social support is an excellent way for replenishing depleted emotional energy reserves

### 23 Laugh

- God has given us the gift of laughter because He knew we would need it. Don't be

**reluctant to use it.**

24  **Cry**

- **Crying can indeed be therapeutic. A good cry lasts 6-7 minutes and can flush away a burdensome load of emotional pollution**

25  **Create Boundaries**

- **It is important to understand that most people are simply not sensitive. They don't even know they are hurting us. We will never regain margin until we learn to respond with sensitivity and with grace, but let our "no" mean "no".**

26  **Laugh**

- **God has given us the gift of laughter because He knew we would need it. Don't be reluctant to use it.**

27  **Envision Better Times**

- **If we believe in and work for something bigger than ourselves (church, family, community), then every expenditure of emotion will have meaning and will be reimbursable.**

28  **Offer Thanks**

- **We all have a great deal to be thankful for. Gratitude fill us up emotionally. Discontent drains us emotionally. The choice is ours**