The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry: Emotionally Healthy and Spiritually Alive in the Chaos of the Modern World

Author and pastor John Mark Comer in his convicting and convincing book *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* doesn't beat around the bush. He calls it as he sees it in these wake-up-call words: *Hurry kills all that we hold dear: spirituality, health, marriage, family, thoughtful work, creativity, generosity…name your value. Hurry is a sociopathic predator loose in our society.* From there, like a faithful family doctor, he tells you the truth about your condition. And at times, it hurts to hear the diagnosis. But fortunately, he doesn't stop there. Comer provides a buffet-like assortment of next steps, creating a pathway to what he calls a "slowdown spirituality".

If you ever find yourself overwhelmed by the dizzying and ever-increasing demands of life and leadership—and who doesn't—then this book has got your name written on (and in) it. Check out these Book Notes to see what's in store for you and why it needs to be on your gotta-read-next book list.

Title: ***The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry:*** *Emotionally Healthy and Spiritually Alive in the Chaos of the Modern World*

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Book Description:

"Who am I becoming?"

That was the question nagging pastor and author John Mark Comer. Outwardly, he appeared successful. But inwardly, things weren't pretty. So he turned to a trusted mentor for guidance and heard these words:

"Ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life. Hurry is the great enemy of the spiritual life."

It wasn't the response he expected, but it was—and continues to be—the answer he needs. Too often we treat the symptoms of toxicity in our modern world instead of trying to pinpoint the cause. A growing number of voices are pointing at hurry, or busyness, as a root of much evil.

Within the pages of this book, you'll find a fascinating roadmap to staying emotionally healthy and spiritually alive in the chaos of the modern world.

Book Quotes:

Speaking of Jesus, I have this terrifying thought lurking at the back of my mind. This nagging question of conscience that won't go away. Who am I becoming? LOCATION: 146

Why am I in such a rush to become somebody I don't even like? LOCATION: 157

My favorite invitation of Jesus comes to us via Matthew's gospel: Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. LOCATION: 224

First, I'm not you. While glaringly obvious, it needs to be said. I'm guessing this anti-hurry manifesto will grate on some of you; it did on me at first. It exposes the deep ache in all of us for a life that is different from the one we're currently living. The temptation will be to write me off as unrealistic or out of touch. LOCATION: 237

Secondly, I'm not Jesus. Just one of his many apprentices who have been at it for a while. Again, obvious. My agenda for our time together is simple: to pass on some of the best things I've learned from sitting at the feet of the master. LOCATION: 244

For me Jesus remains the most brilliant, most insightful, most thought-provoking teacher to ever walk the earth. And he walked slowly (more on that in a bit). So rather than buckle up, settle in. LOCATION: 251

Dallas Willard: "There is nothing else. Hurry is the great enemy of spiritual life in our day. You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life." LOCATION: 292

Corrie ten Boom once said that if the devil can't make you sin, he'll make you busy. There's truth in that. Both sin and busyness have the exact same effect—they cut off your connection to God, to other people, and even to your own soul. LOCATION: 306

The famous psychologist Carl Jung had this little saying: Hurry is not of the devil; hurry is the devil. LOCATION: 308

The problem isn't when you have a lot to do; it's when you have too much to do and the only way to keep the quota up is to hurry. LOCATION: 321

This new speed of life isn't Christian; it's anti-Christ. Think about it: What has the highest value in Christ's kingdom economy? Easy: love. Jesus made that crystal clear. He said the greatest command in all of the Torah was to "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul…and with all your strength," followed only by, "love your neighbor as yourself." But love is painfully time consuming. All parents know this, as do all lovers and most long-term friends. LOCATION: 332

Hurry and love are incompatible. All my worst moments as a father, a husband, and a pastor, even as a human being, are when I'm in a hurry—late for an appointment, behind on my unrealistic to-do list, trying to cram too much into my day. I ooze anger, tension, a critical nagging—the antitheses of love. LOCATION: 337

To restate: love, joy, and peace are at the heart of all Jesus is trying to grow in the soil of your life. And all three are incompatible with hurry. LOCATION: 363

The need of the hour is for a slowdown spirituality. LOCATION: 406

Cue a terrifying trend: our attention span is dropping with each passing year. In 2000, before the digital revolution, it was twelve seconds, so it's not exactly like we had a lot of wiggle room. But since then it's dropped to eight seconds. LOCATION: 536

Psychologists make the point that the vast majority of Americans' relationship to their phones falls at least under the category of "compulsion"—we have to check that last text, click on Instagram, open that email, etc. But most of us are past that to full-on addiction. LOCATION: 560

Technological, and even economic, progress does not necessarily equal human progress. Just because it's newer and/or faster doesn't mean it's better (as heretical as that sounds). Don't get sucked into the capitalistic marketing ploy. LOCATION: 578

To summarize: after millennia of slow, gradual acceleration, in recent decades the sheer velocity of our culture has reached an exponential fever pitch. My question is simple: What is all this distraction, addiction, and pace of life doing to our souls? LOCATION: 592

It's fairly straightforward. Rosemary Sword and Philip Zimbardo, authors of The Time Cure, offer these symptoms of hurry sickness: Moving from one check-out line to another because it looks shorter/faster. Counting the cars in front of you and either getting in the lane that has the least or is going the fastest. Multi-tasking to the point of forgetting one of the tasks. LOCATION: 621

Here are my ten symptoms of hurry sickness. Check if the symptom rings true for you:

1. Irritability—You get mad, frustrated, or just annoyed way too easily.
2. Hypersensitivity—All it takes is a minor comment to hurt your feelings, a grumpy email to set you off, or a little turn of events to throw you into an emotional funk and ruin your day.
3. Restlessness—When you actually do try to slow down and rest, you can't relax.
4. Workaholism (or just nonstop activity)—You just don't know when to stop. Or worse, you can't stop.
5. Emotional numbness—You just don't have the capacity to feel another's pain.
6. Out-of-order priorities—You feel disconnected from your identity and calling.
7. Lack of care for your body—You don't have time for the basics: eight hours of sleep a night; daily exercise; healthy, home-cooked food; minimal stimulants; margin.
8. Escapist behaviors—When we're too tired to do what's actually life giving for our souls, we each turn to our distraction of choice: overeating, overdrinking, binge-watching Netflix, browsing social media, surfing the web, looking at porn—name your preferred cultural narcotic.
9. Slippage of spiritual disciplines—If you're anything like me, when you get overbusy, the things that are truly life giving for your soul are the first to go rather than your first go to—such as a quiet time in the morning, Scripture, prayer, Sabbath, worship on Sunday, a meal with your community, and so on.
10. Isolation—You feel disconnected from God, others, and your own soul. LOCATION: 630-669

The point I'm driving toward is this: an overbusy, hurried life of speed is the new normal in the Western world, and it's toxic. LOCATION: 679

Hurry kills all that we hold dear: spirituality, health, marriage, family, thoughtful work, creativity, generosity…name your value. Hurry is a sociopathic predator loose in our society. LOCATION: 691

As apprentices of Jesus, this is our main task and the locus of the devil's stratagem against us. Many have noted that the modern world is a virtual conspiracy against the interior life. LOCATION: 702

Because what you give your attention to is the person you become. LOCATION: 716

Put another way: the mind is the portal to the soul, and what you fill your mind with will shape the trajectory of your character. In the end, your life is no more than the sum of what you gave your attention to. LOCATION: 717

You see, not only is hurry toxic to our emotional health and spiritual lives, but it's also symptomatic of much deeper issues of the heart…I love how John Ortberg framed it: "Hurry is not just a disordered schedule. Hurry is a disordered heart." LOCATION: 726

All too often our hurry is a sign of something else. Something deeper. Usually that we're running away from something—father wounds, childhood trauma, last names, deep insecurity or deficits of self-worth, fear of failure, pathological inability to accept the limitations of our humanity, or simply boredom with the mundanity of middle life. LOCATION: 728

We have a problem. Time. But here's the thing—and please listen carefully—the solution is not more time. LOCATION: 750

Here's my point: the solution to an overbusy life is not more time. It's to slow down and simplify our lives around what really matters. LOCATION: 763

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? LOCATION: 910

So maybe better questions are, How do we "live deliberately" without going off into the forest to scavenge our own food or abandoning our family? 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. LOCATION: 914

Here's my paraphrase of the secret of the easy yoke: If you want to experience the life of Jesus, you have to adopt the lifestyle of Jesus. LOCATION: 1005

We read the stories of Jesus—his joy, his resolute peace through uncertainty, his unanxious presence, his relaxed manner and how in the moment he was—and think, I want that life. We hear his open invite to "life…to the full" and think, Sign me up. We hear about his easy yoke and soul-deep rest and think, Gosh, yes, heck yes. I need that. But then we're not willing to adopt his lifestyle. LOCATION: 1028

Your life is the by-product of your lifestyle. By life I mean your experience of the human condition, and by lifestyle I mean the rhythms and routines that make up your day-to-day existence. The way you organize your time. Spend your money. LOCATION: 1043

If you want to experience the life "to the full" of Jesus, his nonstop, conscious enjoyment of God's presence and world, all you have to do is adopt not only his theology and ethics but also his lifestyle. Just follow his way. LOCATION: 1058

People all over the world—outside the church and in—are looking for an escape, a way out from under the crushing weight to life this side of Eden. But there is no escaping it. The best the world can offer is a temporary distraction to delay the inevitable or deny the inescapable. LOCATION: 1080

That's why Jesus doesn't offer us an escape. He offers us something far better: "equipment." He offers his apprentices a whole new way to bear the weight of our humanity: with ease. At his side. Like two oxen in a field, tied shoulder to shoulder. With Jesus doing all the heavy lifting. At his pace. Slow, unhurried, present to

the moment, full of love and joy and peace. LOCATION: 1083

And this story isn't a one-off, outlier, or enigma. Jesus was constantly interrupted—read the Gospels; half the stories are interruptions!—yet he never comes off as agitated or annoyed. (Well, he does with religious people—that's yet another book—but not at interruptions.) LOCATION: 1110

This rootedness in the moment and connectedness to God, other people, and himself weren't the by-products of a laid-back personality or pre–Wi-Fi world; they were the outgrowths of a way of life. A whole new way to be human that Jesus put on display in story after story. LOCATION: 1114

Jesus made sure to inject a healthy dose of margin into his life. It's been said that margin is "the space between our load and our limits." For many of us there is no space between our loads and limits. LOCATION: 1118

We could go on, but my point is simple: he put on display an unhurried life, where space for God and love for people were the top priorities, and because he said yes to the Father and his kingdom, he constantly said no to countless other invitations. LOCATION: 1133

Stephen Covey (of 7 Habits fame) said that we achieve inner peace when our schedule is aligned with our values. That line isn't from the Bible, but my guess is, if Jesus heard that, he would smile and nod. LOCATION: 1146

What a trellis is to a vine, a rule of life is to abiding. It's a structure—in this case a schedule and a set of practices—to set up abiding as the central pursuit of your life. It's a way to organize all of your life around the practice of the presence of God, to work and rest and play and eat and drink and hang out with your friends and run errands and catch up on the news, all out of a place of deep, loving enjoyment of the Father's company. LOCATION: 1162

If a vine doesn't have a trellis, it will die. And if your life with Jesus doesn't have some kind of structure to facilitate health and growth, it will wither away. LOCATION: 1165

The hard truth is that following Jesus is something you do. A practice, as much as a faith. At their core the practices of Jesus are about a relationship. With the God he called Father. And all relationships take time. LOCATION: 1183

Whatever you call them, these habits, practices, or spiritual disciplines are how we follow Jesus. How we adopt his lifestyle. How we create space for emotional health and spiritual life. LOCATION: 1232

A discipline is any activity I can do by direct effort that will eventually enable me to do that which, currently, I cannot do by direct effort. LOCATION: 1244

Here's Dallas Willard's definition of a spiritual discipline: The disciplines are activities of mind and body purposefully undertaken, to bring our personality and total being into effective cooperation with the divine order. They enable us more and more to live in a power that is, strictly speaking, beyond us, deriving from the spiritual realm itself. LOCATION: 1257

Simple: this new normal of hurried digital distraction is robbing us of the ability to be present. Present to God. Present to other people. Present to all that is good, beautiful, and true in our world. Even present to our own souls. LOCATION: 1307

The noise of the modern world makes us deaf to the voice of God, drowning out the one input we most need. LOCATION: 1317

I love this. Jesus “often withdrew.” He frequently got away. He made a point to sneak off to pray on a regular basis. It was a common habit in his repertoire. In Luke’s gospel in particular, you can chart Jesus’ life along two axis points: the busier and more in demand and famous Jesus became, and the more he withdrew to his quiet place to pray. LOCATION: 1418

Usually for us it’s the exact opposite. When we get overbusy and life is hectic and people are vying for our time, the quiet place is the first thing to go rather than our first go to. The first thing we lose is unhurried time to just sit with God in the quiet. To pray. Read a psalm. Take an internal inventory. Let our souls catch up to our bodies. LOCATION: 1421

Again, solitude is pretty straightforward. It’s when you’re alone, with God and with your own soul. For clarification, by solitude I don’t mean isolation. The two are worlds apart. Solitude is engagement; isolation is escape. Solitude is safety; isolation is danger. Solitude is how you open yourself up to God; isolation is painting a target on your back for the tempter. Solitude is when you set aside time to feed and water and nourish your soul. To let it grow into health and maturity. Isolation is what you crave when you neglect the former. LOCATION: 1465

Through church history most of the master teachers of the way of Jesus have agreed: silence and solitude are the most important of all the spiritual disciplines. LOCATION: 1482

As I see it, we have two options. Option A: we neglect this practice, make excuses, get sucked into the rat race, and face emotional unhealth at best and “spiritual oblivion” at worst. Or B: we recapture this ancient yet timely practice and experience the life of Jesus. LOCATION: 1544

Why doesn’t anybody talk about that anymore? Or, when they do, why do people mock it or shrug it off as some legalistic hangover from fundamentalism? I have a secret. Don’t judge me. I still practice a quiet time. Every day. I wouldn’t miss it for the world. It’s usually the best part of my day, hands down. And I’m not even a morning person. LOCATION: 1570

Here’s to tomorrow morning, six o’clock. Coffee. The chair by the window, the window by the tree. Time to breathe. A psalm and story from the Gospels. Hearing the Father’s voice. Pouring out my own. Or just sitting, resting. Maybe I’ll hear a word from God that will alter my destiny; maybe I’ll just process my anger over something that’s bothering me. Maybe I’ll feel my mind settle like untouched water; maybe my mind will ricochet from thought to thought, and never come to rest. If so, that’s fine. I’ll be back, same time tomorrow. Starting my day in the quiet place. LOCATION: 1574

Ultimately, nothing in this life, apart from God, can satisfy our desires. Tragically, we continue to chase after our desires ad infinitum. The result? A chronic state of restlessness or, worse, angst, anger, anxiety, disillusionment, depression—all of which lead to a life of hurry, a life of busyness, overload, shopping, materialism, careerism, a life of more…which in turn makes us even more restless. And the cycle spirals out of control. LOCATION: 1625

Is there a practice from the life and teachings of Jesus to mitigate against the chronic restlessness of our condition and culture and to tap into Jesus’ rest for our souls? You already know the answer: heck yes. Many, but at the top of the list is Sabbath. LOCATION: 1639

The word Sabbath comes to us from the Hebrew Shabbat. The word literally means “to stop.” The Sabbath is simply a day to stop: stop working, stop wanting, stop worrying, just stop. LOCATION: 1641

God rested. And in doing so, he built a rhythm into the DNA of creation. A tempo, a syncopated beat. God worked for six, rested for one. LOCATION: 1710

My point: This rhythm isn't the by-product of human ingenuity—the ancient version of The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People—that we're free to adapt or change as we see fit for the modern era. It's the way a brilliant mind designed our souls and society to flourish and thrive. Fight it, fight God. Fight God, fight our own souls. LOCATION: 1723

But when we fight this rhythm—ignore it, suppress it, push past it, bully it, make excuses, look for a way to get out of it—we reap the consequences. Consider the mind: we grow mentally lethargic, numb, uncreative, distracted, restless. Emotional unhealth becomes our new normal. Irritability, anger, cynicism, and its twin, sarcasm, overwhelm our defenses and take control of our dispositions. Or consider the body: we get tired and worn out; our immune systems start to falter, miss a step. Another cold. It's like our nervous systems are trying to get our attention. LOCATION: 1766

Due to our immaturity, dysfunction, and addiction, God has to command his people to do something deeply life giving—rest. LOCATION: 1782

Take note because this next line is crucial: the Sabbath isn't the same thing as a day off…On the Sabbath all we do is rest and worship. LOCATION: 1809

In fact, I find it fascinating that the Sabbath is the only "spiritual discipline" that makes it into the Ten Commandments…Not church or Bible reading, not even prayer. Sabbath is the anchor discipline of the people of God. So crucial that God lovingly commands us to remember to rest. LOCATION: 1828

In Exodus the Sabbath command is grounded in the creation story. In the rhythm that God built into the world. A rhythm we tap into for emotional health and spiritual life. That's the reason to Sabbath…But in Deuteronomy the command is grounded in the exodus story. In Israel's freedom from slavery to Pharaoh and his empire. That's a whole other reason to Sabbath. LOCATION: 1850

Notice, at the top is 0.7 percent of humanity, weighing in with 45.9 percent of the world's wealth. Those crazy rich people who, you know, drive a car, own a computer, have more than one pair of shoes (and possibly are reading this book over a latte that cost five dollars). LOCATION: 1876

Sabbath, as the Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann so famously said, is "an act of resistance."33 It's an act of rebellion against Pharaoh and his empire. An insurgency and insurrection against the "isms" of the Western world—globalism, capitalism, materialism, all of which sound nice but quickly make slaves of the rich and the poor. Sabbath is a way to stay free and make sure you never get sucked back into slavery or, worse, become the slave driver yourself. LOCATION: 1888

The Sabbath is like a guerrilla warfare tactic. If you want to break free from the oppressive yoke of Egypt's taskmaster and its restless, relentless lust for more, just take a day each week and stick it to the man. Don't buy. Don't sell. Don't shop. Don't surf the web. Don't read a magazine: ooh, that bathtub would be nice upstairs…Just put all that away and enjoy. Drink deeply from the well of ordinary life: a meal with friends, time with family, a walk in the forest, afternoon tea. Above all, slow down long enough to enjoy life with God, who offers everything that materialism promises but can never deliver on—namely, contentment. LOCATION: 1909

The Sabbath is like a governor on the speed of life. All week long we work, we play, we cook, we clean, we shop, we exercise, we answer text messages, we inhabit the modern world, but finally we hit a limit. On the Sabbath, we slow down; more than that, we come to a full stop. LOCATION: 1933

Point being: this practice is so foreign and alien to our culture, even our church culture, that it might take you a while to dial it in. That's okay. LOCATION: 1970

To begin, just set aside a day. Clear your schedule. TURN OFF YOUR PHONE. Say a prayer to invite the Holy Spirit to pastor you into his presence. And then? Rest and worship. In whatever way is life giving for your soul. LOCATION: 1972

The French sociologist Jean Baudrillard has made the point that in the Western world, materialism has become the new, dominant system of meaning.7 He argues atheism hasn't replaced cultural Christianity; shopping has. We now get our meaning in life from what we consume. LOCATION: 2028

Fast-forward to today: our "consumer" economy is now built around people spending money they don't have on things they don't need. LOCATION: 2062

Before any of this even started, Mark Twain perceptively noted, "Civilization is the limitless multiplication of unnecessary necessities." LOCATION: 2108

You see how upside down our culture's message about money and stuff is? Richard Foster called our culture's view of things "psychotic" in that it has completely lost touch with reality. He wisely observed, "We in the West are guinea pigs in one huge economic experiment in consumption." LOCATION: 2151

Every single thing you buy costs you not only money but also time. LOCATION: 2164

And less time means more hurry. LOCATION: 2173

In reality Jesus' moral teachings aren't arbitrary at all. They are laws, yes. But moral laws are no different from scientific laws like E = mc2 or gravity.26 They are statements about how the world actually works. And if you ignore them, not only do you rupture relationship with God, but you also go against the grain of the universe he created. Cue the splinters. LOCATION: 2185

Basic point? We worry about what we worship. If you worship money, it will eat you alive. LOCATION: 2257

Minimalism isn't about living with nothing; it's about living with less. LOCATION: 2278

Joshua Becker, a follower of Jesus and former pastor who now writes about minimalism full time, defined it these ways: The intentional promotion of the things we most value and the removal of everything that distracts us from them. LOCATION: 2287

To follow Jesus, especially in the Western world, is to live in that same tension between grateful, happy enjoyment of nice, beautiful things, and simplicity. And when in doubt, to err on the side of generous, simple living. LOCATION: 2349

First we'll hit on some principles, then the practice itself. Note: these are principles, not rules; this is about more freedom, not more rules. Here are my top twelve. LOCATION: 2355

1. Before you buy something, ask yourself, What is the true cost of this item? LOCATION: 2356

Finally, measure hurry. What will this do to the pace of my life? Speed it up or slow it down LOCATION: 2360

Before you buy, ask yourself, By buying this, am I oppressing the poor or harming the earth? LOCATION: 2361

3. Never impulse buy. LOCATION: 2385

4. When you do buy, opt for fewer, better things. LOCATION: 2395

Remember, the world is constantly asking, "How do I get more?" But the apprentice of Jesus is regularly found

asking, “How can I live with less?” LOCATION: 2402

5. When you can, share. LOCATION: 2404

6. Get into the habit of giving things away. LOCATION: 2409

7. Live by a budget. LOCATION: 2417

A budget is far more than a way to stay out of debt, as vital as that is. A budget is to your money what a schedule is to your time. It’s a way to make sure that your “treasure” is going to the right place and not getting squandered. LOCATION: 2418

8. Learn to enjoy things without owning them. LOCATION: 2425

9. Cultivate a deep appreciation for creation. LOCATION: 2429

10. Cultivate a deep appreciation for the simple pleasures. LOCATION: 2434

11. Recognize advertising for what it is—propaganda. Call out the lie. LOCATION: 2442

12. Lead a cheerful, happy revolt against the spirit of materialism. LOCATION: 2449

Remember: the question we should be constantly asking as followers of Jesus isn’t actually, What would Jesus do? A more helpful question is, What would Jesus do if he were me? If he had my gender, my career, my income, my relationship status? If he was born the same year as me? Lived in the same city as me? LOCATION: 2470

As Dallas Willard so astutely pointed out, the cost of discipleship is high, but the cost of non-discipleship is even higher. LOCATION: 2476

Yes, it will cost you to follow Jesus and live his way of simplicity. But it will cost you far more not to. It will cost you money and time and a life of justice and the gift of a clean conscience and time for prayer and an unrushed soul and, above all, the “life that is truly life.” LOCATION: 2478

I’m old enough and (hopefully) wise enough to know my personality and laugh about it, living in a way that works for me and not judging my antinomian friends who have other personality types or are in other stages of life. That said, I’ve started to notice that anti-rule people are often anti-schedule people; and anti-schedule people frequently live in a way that is reactive, not proactive. As more passenger than driver, consumer than creator. Life happens to them, more than through them. LOCATION: 2512

Again, the truism: we achieve inner peace when our schedules are aligned with our values. To translate to our apprenticeships to Jesus: if our values are life with Jesus and a growing in maturity toward love, joy, and peace, then our schedules and the set of practices that make up our days and weeks, which together essentially constitute our rules of life, are the ways we achieve inner peace. LOCATION: 2516

That said, here are twenty ideas for slowing down your overall pace of life. Yup, twenty. I warned you, I like rules. LOCATION: 2549

1. Drive the speed limit. LOCATION: 2553

2. Get into the slow lane. LOCATION: 2558

3. Come to a full stop at stop signs. LOCATION: 2564

4. Don’t text and drive. LOCATION: 2568

5. Show up ten minutes early for an appointment, sans phone. LOCATION: 2575

6. Get in the longest checkout line at the grocery store. LOCATION: 2578

7. Turn your smartphone into a dumbphone. LOCATION: 2588

8. Get a flip phone. Or ditch your cell phone all together. LOCATION: 2607

Parent your phone; put it to bed before you and make it sleep in. LOCATION: 2609

10. Keep your phone off until after your morning quiet time. LOCATION: 2613

Listen: do not let your phone set your emotional equilibrium and LOCATION: 2618

What I’m saying is, let prayer set your emotional equilibrium and Scripture set your view of the world. Begin your day in the spirit of God’s presence and the truth of his Scriptures. LOCATION: 2627

11. Set times for email. LOCATION: 2634

12. Set a time and a time limit for social media (or just get off it). LOCATION: 2649

13. Kill your TV. LOCATION: 2661

14. Single-task. LOCATION: 2688

One of the reasons I’m so pharisaical about my phone, email, and social media is because I’ve come to realize the obvious: multitasking is a myth. Literally. Only God is omnipresent. I inhabit a body. A body that can do only one…thing…at…a…time. Multitasking is just sleight of hand for switching back and forth between a lot of different tasks so I can do them all poorly instead of doing one well. LOCATION: 2689

15. Walk slower. LOCATION: 2708

16. Take a regular day alone for silence and solitude. LOCATION: 2726

17. Take up journaling. LOCATION: 2741

18. Experiment with mindfulness and meditation. LOCATION: 2748

19. If you can, take long vacations. LOCATION: 2767

Summer vacation is one of the most important spiritual disciplines in my life. Yes, that is a spiritual discipline. Jesus and most of the great spiritual masters of the Bible regularly went away for weeks at a time, into the eremos. LOCATION: 2786

20. Cook your own food. And eat in. LOCATION: 2789

I’ve reorganized my life around three very simple goals: Slow down. Simplify my life around the practices of Jesus. Live from a center of abiding. LOCATION: 2834

Nicholas Herman, the Parisian monk better known as Brother Lawrence, called this way of life “the practice of the presence of God”2 because it takes practice to live from attention and awareness. Especially in the

modern world. LOCATION: 2838

These four practices—silence and solitude, Sabbath, simplicity, and slowing—have helped me tremendously to move toward abiding as my baseline. But to say it yet again, all four of them are a means to an end. LOCATION: 2841

Lately, when that happens, I have this little mantra I repeat: Slow down. Breathe. Come back to the moment. Receive the good as gift. Accept the hard as a pathway to peace. Abide. LOCATION: 2848

As Frank Laubach, who self-identified as a "modern mystic," so beautifully said, "Every now is an eternity if it is full of God." LOCATION: 2856

All the great wisdom traditions of history, religious and secular, Eastern and Western, Christian and not, have come together on one point: if there's a formula for a happy life, it's quite simple – inhabit the moment. LOCATION: 2865

Each moment is full of goodness. Why are we in such a hurry to rush on to the next one? There's so much here to see, to enjoy, to gratefully receive, to celebrate, to share. LOCATION: 2867

As the poet William Stafford put it, "What can anyone give you greater than now?" LOCATION: 2869

Our days of pain are the building blocks of our character. Our crucible of Christlikeness. I rarely welcome them—I'm not that far down the path, not yet—but I accept them. Because my Rabbi teaches that happiness isn't the result of circumstances but of character and communion. LOCATION: 2877

Alas, I live in the same place as you: the modern world. With all its privilege and all its pain. All its wealth and hedonic pleasure and good coffee and urban delight, alongside its stress and digital distraction and overconsumption and bone-tiring demands. Hence, this book, which was for me as much as you. LOCATION: 2890

What's hard isn't following Jesus. What's hard is following myself, doing my life my way; therein lies the path to exhaustion. With Jesus there's still a yoke, a weight to life, but it's an easy yoke, and we never carry it alone. LOCATION: 2934

How will you live? LOCATION: 2942

In the years to come, our world will most likely go from fast to faster; more hurried, more soulless, more vapid; "deceiving and being deceived."14 Will you traverse that road? Will you follow the same old, tired, uncreative story of hurry and busyness and noisy, materialistic, propagandized living? Just try to add in a little Jesus as you careen through life? Make it to church when you can? Pray when you find the time? Mostly just stay ahead of the wolf pack? Or… Will you remember there's another road, another way? Will you off-ramp onto the narrow path? Will you radically alter the pace of your life to take up the easy yoke of Jesus? LOCATION: 2942