

# IN *Earth* AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

Have you ever thought, “Why can’t I fit the things I am most passionate about and enjoy the most into my life?” If you, like every other person who has ever lived, feel this way sometimes (or all the time), then you are experiencing what philosophers and scientists call “*being human*.” God created humans to be dependent on him - for *everything*. We are dependent beings by nature, so we have to look outside of ourselves for that which will sustain us. Because of the pervading effects of sin, we will often look for things to sustain us other than God. Another effect of sin is that the things we desire to accomplish are not always the things God desires for us to accomplish. But God supplies all that we need, which must be sufficient for accomplishing what he desires for us to do. This is to remind us that one aspect of being a dependent being is that we are, well, dependent!

## **This Week’s Main Focus:**

***Assess how we steward the resources God has given us in order to glorify him.***

Rethinking our first question with the perspective of accomplishing that which God desires, namely that which will bring God glory, we still find ourselves unable to “get done” all that we want to do because we lack the necessary resources to do so. What are these resources? Generally speaking, there are five resources common to all people, and our misuse, mis-cultivation, or poor stewardship of these resources is what primarily hinders our ability to function the way God desires us to and bring him glory.

## **Five Life Resources:**

1. ***Spiritual*** - Every person’s heart yearns for something. Additionally, Jesus said that man was not meant to live on bread alone. Think of your soul as something with an appetite - and we are what we eat. Every human shares the same problem in that we love and trust the wrong things. When we love and trust things more than God, we begin to direct our lives toward those things in ways that do not bring glory to God.
2. ***Relationships*** - God made people to live in community with others. The only aspect of creation that God did not deem good was that Adam was alone without Eve. More importantly than the basic need for others, Christ’s death created a new community that is essential for engaging in the pilgrimage from grace to glory: the local church.
3. ***Physical & Emotional Energy*** - Our bodies have minds and muscles. Each of which need, at times, to be strengthened, fed, healed and rested. We are prone to worship or abuse these resources just like any other.
4. ***Finances*** - Possessions are a resource that will either be stewarded by us or will come to control us. We are prone to love things more than God who gives them; this is idolatry. When we see God as the one who owns everything and ourselves as the steward, they become a means to bless others and glorify God.
5. ***Time*** - Time is the resource that governs all the others. Your time is your life. As your time goes, so goes your life. We will invest or waste our time just like any other resource. Our lives are “a vapor” and the time we have is a resource and a gift from God to be stewarded just like the others.

For the Christian, we are to steward these resources in order to glorify God in all that we do. It is God's glory that ties every person's life, mission, and passions together. No matter what we are most passionate about, there is one basic question we should all ask: **Is God glorified in my \_\_\_\_\_?**

This week, Summit small groups are going to take a look at how we are stewarding all the resources that God has given to us. The background for this exercise comes from Pastor J.D.'s sermon (from the weekend of Jan. 15, 2017). The Good Samaritan was able to love his neighbor in part because he had the margin in his life to do so. *Margin is essentially the amount of anything that is available beyond what is necessary.* Biblical stewardship of our resources creates margin and it is this margin by which we are able to love and be generous in every way.

We are calling this ***The Summit Margin Audit*** - patent and copyright forthcoming!

Here are a few, quick tips to make this a successful exercise for your small group:

1. Have everyone in your group answer the questions ahead of time or have a pencil and paper ready to write down their answers as you go.
2. Really camp out on the Time Audit in question #2. It will be referenced often.
3. Recognize that this is different than "Bible study" like we do most weeks in Summit small groups. It is an exercise. This is a tool to help us recognize and/or create space in our lives to better engage in Bible study, community, and mission - the building blocks of discipleship.

## ***The Summit Margin Audit***

1) List the 3-5 resources you view as most valuable in your life. What depletes them most? What "recharges" them?

2) Time Audit. We have 168 hours every week. This tool is meant to give you a snapshot of how you are spending yours and how you wish you were spending yours.

**Complete columns #1 & #2** and be ready to reference it for subsequent questions.

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3		Column 4
List all your activities in a given week.	How much time does each activity take?	What resources does each activity <b>Deplete</b> / <b>Gain</b>		What changes need to be made?
Family 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.				
Work 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.				
Maintenance 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.				
Recreation 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.				
Ministry 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.				
Other 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.				

3) Prioritize. Think through your Time Audit and major commitments over the last year, and then **complete column #3**. What are your current priorities based on your time and resource commitments?

4) Simplify. We can create margin by combining commitments to intersect and therefore reserve resources. What are some ways that you can cause intersection between different activities? How can your small group do this together?

**Begin completing column #4.**

5) Stop. Based on what you have discovered so far, what are some commitments or resource drains that you need to bring to a close in the near future.

6) Start. What is something you need to start that will allow you to steward and prioritize your resources biblically in order to glorify God.

7) Build habits and rhythms. Reflect on your activities, the time they take, the resources they use and give, and the changes that may need to be made.

Brainstorm and discuss as a group the habits and rhythms that you, individually and as a community, need to implement in order to create the margin necessary to glorify God in every aspect of your life.

**Prayer:**

- Praise God for creating the world and structuring the world with us in mind.
- Confess ways that this exercise has exposed ways you have neglected to prioritize God rightly in your life.
- Thank God for supplying everything we need for life and godliness.
- Ask God to lead your group in stewarding the resources he has given you.