



Surviving Busy Times

Adapted from “Home Improvement” series by Rod Loy

Family structures have changed over the years. Pew Research discovered the following:

Today’s American families are more likely than those of past decades to feature two full-time working parents. A new Pew Research Center report looks at how working moms and dads in two-parent households are balancing their jobs with their family responsibilities and how they view the dynamics of sharing child care and household responsibilities. Here are some key findings from the report:

1. Two-parent households with a mother who does not work outside the home have grown much less common in the U.S. since 1970. Today, both parents work full time in 46% of these households.
2. In homes with two full-time working parents, most parents say chores, discipline and quality time with kids are shared equally, but scheduling and sick days fall more on mom.
3. When both parents in a household work full time, most say neither’s career takes priority, but half say dad makes more money.
4. Working mothers are more likely than fathers to say parenting has interfered with their career advancement.
5. For many working parents, there’s just not enough time.¹

¹ Eileen Patten, “How American parents balance work and family life when both work,” Pew Research Center, November 4, 2015, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/04/how-american-parents-balance-work-and-family-life-when-both-work/> (accessed July 6, 2017).

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COURAGE

C1: Describe your meal times growing up. Include any rules you might have had.

C2: Describe your meal times today in your family.

C3: Keep a calendar of your life and family life for one month. After a month, what are your thoughts?

- Type the words “I am too busy” and “stress” in google. What are the results? What does this speak to you?

STRENGTH

S1: If your family is going to survive you need to determine your priorities as a family. Your families' priorities will determine the path of your family. Sit down this week and write out your families' priorities. Take a week to pray over these priorities asking the Holy Spirit to reveal to you if your priorities line up with His priorities and make adjustments. Describe this experience.

S2: It is not enough to determine your priorities, you must defend your priorities. Write out a plan to actively fight for your families' priorities. Include time on the calendar. What are some things you should say "no" to in this season of your life? When will you say "no?"

S3: This week, spend one hour together as a family. No cell phones or distractions allowed. Describe the hour.

ENDURANCE

E1: Read and answer the following.

Proverbs 17:22 (ESV)

Ecclesiastes 3:4 (ESV)

Genesis 21:6 (ESV)

Psalms 4:7 (ESV)

- From these verses, what is needed in order to survive busy times?
- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being often and 4 being not often, rate how often your family has fun together. Sit down with your family and write out a plan to improve your fun factor.
- Sit down with your family and ask, "What have been the top three fun and favorite things we have done?" What were your findings?

E2: When you are too busy for God, you are too busy. When you are too busy for spiritual disciplines, you are too busy. When you are too busy for your family, you are too busy. John Ortberg wrote, "For many of us the great danger is not that we will renounce our faith. It is that we will become so distracted and rushed and preoccupied that we will settle for a mediocre version of it. We will just skim our lives instead of actually living them."²

- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being not very busy and 4 being too busy, rate how busy you are in your life. Write out a plan to slow down.

² John Ortberg, *The Life You've Always Wanted* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 82.

- What can you give up in the next sixty days that God has not asked you to do?
- Schedule a day in the next sixty days where you get alone with God in an isolated place to communicate with Him without distractions. Describe your experience.

E3: Read and answer the following.

Matthew 11:28–29 (ESV)

- From these verses, what can you do to survive busy times?
- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate how well you put God first in the areas of:
 - Family
 - Schedule
 - Finances
 - Business
- Write out a plan to improve in each of these areas over the next sixty days.