

Forty Days of Purpose Devotional

Day 39 "Blessed are the balanced."

"Balance" is a very flexible word, with meanings ranging from an instrument to weigh things, a verb meaning to so arrange things that they don't fall over, to the capacity to walk upright. Let us consider the third – "to walk upright". The life of a Christian is often referred to as his/her "walk", and "uprightness" is synonymous with "righteousness". "Balance" – the capacity to 'walk uprightly' – is a good term for the ability to live righteously. To "lose your balance" is to fall, i.e. to sin. Sin can be intentional or unintentional. If I am unwilling to be transformed into the likeness of Christ it is because I still have carnal, sinful desires. If I do all the religious "stuff" but don't truly love God, I'm living a life of sin. If I "love God" but don't love my brothers and sisters in the Lord, I'm living a life of sin. If I "love" others but don't serve them, I'm living a life of sin. Finally, since Jesus commanded that we go into the world to make disciples, to refuse this mission is sin. God knows our problem and provides a remedy, including restoration of balance:

"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives." (1 John 1:8-10 [NIV])

God does not command obedience and then withhold opportunities to obey. Jesus said: *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled"* (Matt 5:6 [NIV]).

- To "hunger and thirst for righteousness" is to desire to obey ALL of Jesus' commands, which is to live a life of balance.
- The ultimate blessing for obedience is described as follows: *"If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him"* (John 14:23-24 [NIV]).

"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David" (Isa 55:1-3). "I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2). "Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you" (Ps 32:9) [all NIV].
