



## TIME OF GRACE®

# Burned Out: Physically

## Study Notes

### Summary

If we want to avoid burnout, we need to recognize this simple reality: God created us to function in specific ways physically. We can spend so much time trying to do everything for everyone in our fast-paced, modern culture that we don't realize we're sprinting at an unsustainable pace—and doing the exact opposite of God's intention for our physical bodies. Pastor Mike teaches us how to slow down and rest our bodies and our souls so we don't miss God's incredible blessings.

- The recipe for burnout = \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_.
- Genesis 1:1 — In the beginning God created...
- The Creator creates the \_\_\_\_\_.
- The path to burnout = \_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_.
- Luke 5:15-16 — Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. 16 But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.
- The answer to burnout = Behave like a \_\_\_\_\_.

### Points to Ponder

1. Evaluate: Adding weekly church to your schedule (or continuing your habit) will decrease your likelihood of burning out. Read Matthew 11:28 for additional insight.
2. Share your personal habits of sleep, nutrition, and exercise with a trusted friend. Listen humbly to their reaction and advice.

3. Materialism is a treadmill that exhausts all who embrace it. Generosity and simplicity are lifestyles that lead to freedom and joy. No wonder Jesus himself said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).
4. Do you know anyone who is constantly stressed? Share this sermon with them to connect them with the peace that only Jesus offers.

## Homework for Next Week

Read Matthew 11:25-30

Time of Grace Ministry  
**Burned Out?: Physically**  
Genesis 1:1, Luke 5:15-16  
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*Pastor Mike Novotny*

It struck me the other day that you and I live in a culture that sets us up, chews us up, and then burns us out. I'm not just trying to be weak and whiny. I was actually thinking about the time in which you and I live, compared to other times in the past. And if you're not watching from some distant country or culture, I've been thinking about the place and the culture in which you and I are living. And I think when you combine those two things, you might agree with me that you and I live in a time and place that sets us up, chews us up, and then burns us out.

A culture where we're not just busy, but as the average American says, "I'm busy, busy, busy." You have to say it three times for it to count. Well, it's not just occasional periods where we're rushing and behind and kind of overwhelmed with everything on the to-do list. That's not the exception for a lot of us in the room today; that's become the norm. The stress of having lots to do turns into the anxiety of, "What if I can't do all this?" turns into feeling overwhelmed. "I'm never going get this done," turns into a burnout for both body and soul.

Now, I say that because I think you and I live in a culture that has the perfect recipe to burn people out. And if you're watching at home or here live, I'd love for you to grab a pen and write these three things down. Here's what I think is the recipe for a burnout culture.

First of all, is the fact that we live a modern culture. You might not think of this because you live within it. But in the days of Moses, or in the days of Jesus, or in the days of George Washington, before there was the light bulb and the laptop, most of life was governed by the simple rhythms that God built into creation. There was day. There was night. There was light when you could do your work. There was darkness when you couldn't. There were times that you would have to talk to other people, and when you went back to your home, you were physically separated, and most people didn't violate that physical separation, right? If you were a farmer, when sunset came, there wasn't much farming to do.

But oh, the times have changed. First, Thomas Edison gave us the light bulb so we weren't bound by light and darkness. Then people invented the internet and the laptop so work didn't exactly have to stay at work. Now, if you want to talk with your boss, you don't have to wait until Monday morning. You grab your cell, and you text, you grab your laptop and you email. The boundaries and the barriers that prevent burnout are totally off, in a modern culture. How many of you own smartphones? If you do, your manager, and your pastor, your brother, your sister, your son, your

daughter, your mother, your father, your next-door neighbor, and a million marketers can call you, and text you, and ring you, and ding you, and ping you, and DM you, and get your attention. When you think it's your day off, it's never your day off as long as that device is in your hand.

Welcome to the modern world. And then, Covid happened. And more and more of us who used to leave work at work now shifted our work to our home. Before, all the papers and the stuff and the device where you do your work was far away on the other side of town, and now it's in your office, which is in your home. The modern world has made it so easy to work all the time and so difficult to actually step away and rest. And if that weren't enough, then there's these devices which convince us that rest looks like sitting down and scrolling. And based on everything the neurologist and our doctors tell us, it's not actually good for providing peace and rest for our hearts. Internet use and social media increases, if not skyrockets levels of anxiety and depression.

And so, you put all this together in the modern, world and you and I, what most humans, what Jesus himself didn't have to deal with, we deal with every single day. No barriers, no boundaries, just constant work and a very rare ability to truly rest. Are you stressed yet? And that's just the first one. That's the modern culture. Combine that with the American culture. Not every culture shares America's passion/idolatry for bigger, and better, and progress, and profit.

I just read a study that the average American worker in a year, compared to the average German worker, works 435 more hours a year. Forgive the stereotype, but I've never thought of the Germans as lazy. But, the average American puts in ten more weeks of full-time work. Compared to the average Japanese worker, the average American worker puts in 169 more hours every single year. You live in it. You don't realize it. Other countries have huge policies with maternity and paternity leave, not in America. Others have huge cultural times where people don't work, they take holiday, not in America. We work because we want bigger and we want better.

I recently read a study, in the 1950's, the average American family was bigger than the average American family today. They had more kids. But on average, that family lived in a home that was, ready for this, nine hundred and thirty-five square feet. Have you ever driven around the original downtown of a city and you see the one-car garage and the small home? That was what bigger families than ours used to live in. But welcome to America. Things get bigger. Now we need, you know, two-car garage, or three, or the stuff doesn't fit. Now we need the shed in the back for all the toys. We need the walk-in closet, not just one closet -- who has enough closets? We have more storage units than we know what do with, right?

We have accelerated our need for consumption and materialism, and in the process, we've had to work more and more hours to afford it, to fit into it, to fill it, to pay for it, and to care for it. This is the American culture. But it's not just our houses. Actually, it's the callings that we have in life. A hundred years ago, what was expected of a pastor? Preach the Bible, you show up when someone has a question

or is sick. Yeah, that has gotten bigger. Now there's the church website, and the church social media, and you have to make videos, and you have to edit this, and you have to do that, and you have to know how to do YouTube and Facebook ads, and reach your community, and have events, and Trunk or Treat, and Christmas, and Easter, and the stuff for the kids, and the Sunday school, and the teen group, and the mom's group, and all the other groups. I bet that's happened to you too. Are you stressed yet? Because I'm not done.

There's one last thing. It's not just a modern culture. It's not just American culture. Finally, many of us are a part of a Christian culture. In a Christian culture, especially in America, has gotten bigger and faster too. We encourage people to come to church, right, to take time to work on your faith and read your Bibles, not just once in a while but every single day. Maybe at the start of the day and the end of the day. And prayer is valuable. Fasting can be valuable. Journaling can be valuable. You should volunteer. Get a T-shirt that says, "You first." And speaking of that, put other people first, serve your neighbor. Which one of your neighbors? Both of your neighbors? All of your neighbors? Everyone that's your neighbor, right?

Jesus was sacrificial and selfless and he served people. So, if you're going to be a Christian, you should be sacrificial and selfless and serve people. Say yes when someone needs help. Or if someone is on the side of the road, stop and fix their tire. If your mother needs someone to move her furniture, go up and help and honor your mom. There are all these commands. All these to-dos. We think that's what Christian culture looks like. Modern, plus American, plus Christian equals...

There is a current that is moving so fast in modern culture that unless you swim against it, it will burn you out. It will fill up your schedule and beyond. It will push you past the point where you want to be. And here, as a pastor, is why that matters so much to me. Because I've noticed in my life, and I've noticed in a lot of your lives, when you are burned out, exhausted and overwhelmed, you are rarely like Jesus. You can make it to church, you can squeeze in the Bible reading and the religious stuff, but are you joyful like Jesus? Do you have the peace of God that Jesus had? Are you patient and kind?

In my experience, it doesn't matter how much you go to church or how much you read your Bible. If you are overcommitted, it is so hard to produce the fruit of the Spirit, right? The same Christian goes to a very important meeting one day and she's 15 minutes early, she goes to the same meeting another day and she's five minutes late. In which situation is she bound to be more like Jesus when that sweet old lady is driving 17 miles an hour or honoring the school zone, right?

It's not what happens, it's the pace in which it happens. Every stoplight becomes a moment of frustration. Every stupid city planner who made this 25 miles an hour, "Why is this 25 miles an hour?" You get mad where you wouldn't get mad. You're impatient when we want to be patient. You don't have time for interruptions, and sick kids, and problems, right? When we are burned out and running, running, running, rushing, rushing, rushing, we actually lose some of the incredible blessings

that come from being a Christian, the joy of being forgiven, the peace of knowing that God controls the universe.

So, I'm not just concerned about your schedule in this sermon series. I'm concerned about your soul, the blessings it has and the blessings that it gives. And that's why we're going to try to change that. Starting today and for the next few weeks, we're going to talk about burnout from a physical perspective, and a spiritual perspective, and an emotional perspective, and a relational perspective. And really for me, the goal of this series is a single thing, is to help you run your race of faith. I chose that verb intentionally, run. I don't want you to walk, right? It's true, some people in the church are lazy, they're unreliable, they quit when things get hard. That's bad, but I'm not going to talk about that in this series. Instead, I want to talk about the people who aren't running their race, they're sprinting at an unsustainable pace. They're pushing so hard, they're barely getting by, and it's going to catch up with them soon.

So, if this is you, who just has too much on your plate, my goal is to slow you down, not too much, but just enough so that you can run a race of faith with peace and joy and love for other people in Jesus' name. Now, to get you one step closer to that, I want to start in the beginning, literally. Today, I want to teach you the first half of the first verse of the first book of the Bible. Because in that one half of a verse is a truth that is -- it's actually so obvious when you think about it, but so important for your life.

So, take note as we open our Bibles today to Genesis 1:1. Just the first half of the first verse which says this, "In the beginning God created." You and I as part of the creation don't get to decide what the rules of our bodies are. Just like scientist and doctors can study, well, here's how an eagle works and why it flies. Neurologist and nutritionist can study, well, here's how your body works and here's what makes your heart work and here's where your brain is functioning at a top level. Here is sleep, you don't get to decide if you need sleep or not. That's how God made you. Food and certain things with nutrition. You don't get to decide what makes you run at peak performance. That's been built into you by the creator who created the rules. Whether you need exercise or not, you don't get to decide that when you wake up in the morning.

The creator creates the rules and God created you with a need to eat, and to move, and to sleep. I'm guessing you already knew that, right? You didn't fly. You don't climb up to your roof and jump off like an eagle and fly to church. Like, no. My body wasn't made for that. But if I can push you a little bit, I would ask, does your lifestyle reflect an obedience to the physical rules that the creator created? If I could look at your schedule, your lifestyle, and your habits and compare it to what experts have found, here's how people like you work. How much obedience and how much rebellion to those rules would I see.

I think one of the problems that we often run into in the modern world is because culture pushes and the digital age pushes, and American business pushes; we sometimes forget, we don't get to decide how this works. It has already been

decided for us. And when you and I ignore that, we put ourselves on the path to almost certain burnout.

Alright, grab a pen and write this down. Three things happen. First of all, we compromise. We kind of know the rules of how the human body works, but we fudge them just a little bit. Now, just like we drive 32 in a 25 miles an hour zone. "I know the doctors and those people say we should sleep, like what, 7 to 9 hours, but I'm not going to. And I know, I know, I know, you got to be careful with sugar and alcohol, and everything else, desserts. It's not good for body. It messes with your heart, brain doesn't function, you crash. You can't stay awake. You're not alert, but I'm going to. I know, you know, exercise is supposedly good for your heart, and your memory, and your mind, and your sleep habits, but I just don't on that. I don't run," right? I have a sticker on the back of my truck that says O.O. I don't do any of it, right? So, we compensate. We know there's a rule, and I'm not talking about fad diets or real detail, but we know that's just a general way the human body functions. We compromise it.

And number two, we compensate. We start to reap what we sow. We don't get enough sleep and so we're tired. So, in the morning what do we do? Oh, we don't reach for the cup of coffee. We fill up the whole pot. It's like a monster and a granola bar for breakfast. We -- we're not awake for the first hour of school because we've been up late playing games with friends. We can't function like we're supposed to function, so we compensate. We push at a really stressful pace at work. We bring it home. There's just no downtime, we're checking emails until the time we go to bed, and we can't sleep, so we compensate. You reach for a drink, maybe two. You pour whiskey and you make it pretty stiff. You need a glass of wine. You need some extra time, there's a pill, maybe two, just to sleep. You go to the doctor and there's some unnecessary medication to compensate for the compromises you've made.

Or maybe you just know, you're always stressed, you're always on edge, "So, I'm going to take a vacation." Sometimes a vacation is just compensation, right? "I'm always stressed, so this is going to fix it. Not fixing the pace of my life. I'm going to slap a vacation on it for seven to ten days, all-inclusive binge," and think it's going to make it better. You haven't been a kind person to the people in your homes, so, you compensate with a gift. "I haven't been there, honey, so let me buy you something." "I know I haven't been a great father this year. It's been crazy at work, so let me splurge on something and act like it didn't happen." We compromise, compensate, and then finally, we crash.

It rarely happens right in the beginning, sometimes doesn't happen in the middle, but sooner or later, we crash. You just hit a wall and you have a physical breakdown. It's a panic attack. It's the depression you've never experienced before. It's like you find it hard to function or you just get numb. You know, you go to church, but you feel nothing. You read your Bible, but you don't get anything out of it. You crash when you get home. There's just no energy left, and so you take it out on the people that you really do love the most. It's not just your heart and your lungs and your muscles that get hurt when we compromise and compensate. It's our souls and the precious lives of the ones that we love.

So, here's a question. We know that when we're really hungry we can get angry. There is a name for that. We know there's a connection between physical habits and character choices. My question for you is, is it possible some of the things you're struggling with, with your character, are not some mysterious spiritual battle, but just a physical reality? You've pushed too hard. You used up your calories on all of these things and now there's none left for the energy to follow Jesus and love his people.

Let me show you a fascinating passage from the book of Luke 5. It says in verse 15 and 16, "Crowds of people came to hear Jesus," hundreds, maybe thousands of people, "And they came to be healed of their sicknesses." They were sick, struggling, desperate for a miracle. Notice the next word, "But." You would think crowds of people came to be healed and he healed them. Crowds of people needed a relief from their sickness, therefore Jesus -- that's not what the passage says. "Crowds of people came but Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed."

I wonder if our American culture has shaped our view of the Bible where we pick just some of the things that Jesus did and some of things the scripture say. Work, serve, help. And we've ignored this constant theme that God has a great place for his people just to be still and let him be God.

That's why I asked one of my former seminary professors a very important question. I've been reading some of the Old Testament, kind of the calendar that God set for his ancient Jewish people where there were religious holidays like Passover and Pentecost. I kind of noticed, God had a lot of time when he gave his people off from their jobs, right? If it's Christmas week, you might get one day or two from your employer, not ancient Jews. They were given huge chunks of time and I notice this chunk and this chunk and this day and two days over here. And then, I thought, "Well, if Jesus had to get all the way down to Jerusalem to celebrate some of those things, he lived like three marathons away and he was walking, not taking a plane or a bus. How much time did it take him to leave behind the carpentry and the work and the chores at home just to be on the road to be with family and friends to be with God?"

And so, I sent an email to this professor I know that was -- had the subject line, "Jesus' vacation time." Now, this professor who is like an expert in the Old Testament, here's what he said to me, "An observant Jew in Jesus' day," so someone who's following the Bible, "would have had off 52 Sabbath days, every Saturday, one day for the festival of Purim, eight days for Passover, two days for Pentecost, two days for the Jewish New Year, one day for the day of Atonement, nine days for the Feast of Tabernacles. In addition, Jewish men were supposed to show up in Jerusalem for Passover and Pentecost and Tabernacles and would have taken most of them quite some time to get there. Then, the Old Testament says, 'If you're a farmer, your farm is supposed to lie fallow, unfarmed one year in every seven.'"

In other words, God said, to hardworking Old Testament farmers, "You work hard for six years and then you take an entire year off." A farmer sabbatical. Wisconsin



farmers, can you even imagine that? Also, the professor concluded, "Jesus' time off was time off, not time to cram full of activities, digital distractions, and the NFL." Unquote.

Isn't that amazing? God, when he created the calendar, said, "I'm not mad, and you're not bad if you take huge chunks of time to just rest." Work hard, but not for too long. So, here's my encouragement to you: God is not mad, and you are not a bad Christian if you rest. It's not selfish modern "me time" to take a break. It's the ancient rhythm of Jesus.

Now, if you're the mom who gets away for a half hour or a half a day, it doesn't make you a bad mom. If you say no to a friend who wants to hang out or another family gathering or to the pastor who needs someone to volunteer, doesn't make you a bad person. It makes you a creationist. It means that you are someone who believes that God is the creator and you can only do so much before things start to go very, very wrong.

So, write this down. The answer to burn out is to behave like a creationist. Don't just believe in creation. "I believe in God the Father who created the heavens and the earth." No, behave like you're following the rules the Father built into your body. So, I hereby release those of you who are responsible and compassionate from the guilt and necessity of needing to run. I hereby empower you in Jesus' name to sit, to take a nap, to do nothing, to pray. I'm allowing you today in Jesus' name to go to your cabin and not come back until Monday morning. I am giving you permission in the mighty name of Jesus to hear your phone bing and ping and ring and ignore it. I'm giving you full permission to rest because Jesus wants rest for your soul. I give this gift to you in Jesus' name, and all God's people say, "Amen."

Now some of you did not say amen right there and I know why. Because you're thinking, "No, but Pastor Mike, if I do that, what happens the next day, right? If I put my phone away today, when I pick it up tomorrow, what's going to happen? I'm going to have twice as much to do. I'm going to be twice as stressed. You're telling me to take a break like I shouldn't do this. Don't work all the time. But if I actually rest, there's going to be more work, more phone calls, more emails, more stuff, more responsibilities, more boxes unchecked. I can't slow down."

If that's what you're thinking, you have to come back next week. Next week we're going to lean in and listen to Jesus who knows how deeply in our hearts we want people to be impressed by us and we hate saying no and disappointing people. Just going to fix that part of us and right size our schedules as he said it, "Come to me if you're weary and I will give rest for your soul."

Brothers and sisters, we believe that God is our Savior and our creator. Today, I pray that you believe in your salvation and with the help of God you behave like his creation. Let's pray.

Dear Lord, thank you so much for the surprising things in your Word that maybe we haven't seen before. In those pages of the Old Testament that some of us skip, there is just a rhythm of work and rest, of pushing and then pushing pause. I pray that in our culture, we could swim maybe a little bit against the tide and not need to grow and progress at the cost of our soul. God, what good is it if we gain the whole world and yet give up our soul, or our marriage, or this precious time with our children, or the one and only body that you have given to us?

So, we're praying today both for your grace and for your wisdom. God, help us not to live with regret and shame because of the past. Help us to take all that to the cross and help us now to the best of our abilities, make decisions and change our schedules in the way that we need to, that we can be just like Jesus, full of joy and peace and love. That's a big change for some of us, God. So, we need your help and we're so grateful that you are right here to give it to us. We pray all these things in Jesus' beautiful name, and God's people said, "Amen."