

# *GRACE-PACED LIVING*

**#1 THINK**

#2 WORK & REST

#3 RELATE

#4 LIMIT

## *OUR CREATED DESIGN*

**We are** \_\_\_\_\_. Made from dust, we must understand and embrace our God-given limitations.

**We are** \_\_\_\_\_. We are more than just a body or a soul. The health of body and soul affect each other.

\_\_\_\_\_ *and* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ *and* \_\_\_\_\_

**We are** \_\_\_\_\_. Sin has messed up every part of our complex beings—including how each part interacts with the others.

# *GOD'S GRACIOUS CHARACTER*

**God is a gracious \_\_\_\_\_.** He offers an endless supply of all we need to live a grace-paced life.

*Grace* \_\_\_\_\_  
**1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Tim. 2:1**

*Grace* \_\_\_\_\_  
**Heb. 10:22; 2 Cor. 5:21**

*Grace* \_\_\_\_\_  
**1 Cor. 3:6, Eph. 3:20**

*Grace* \_\_\_\_\_  
**2 Cor. 1:9, 1 Pet. 5:6-7**

*Grace* \_\_\_\_\_  
**Weekly Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11; Mark 2:27)**  
**Sufficient sleep (Psalm 127:2)**  
**Physical exercise (1 Cor. 6:13)**  
**Family and friends (Prov. 17:17; 27:6)**  
**Christian fellowship (Rom. 1:12; 2 Cor. 1:4)**

# *WORK IT OUT TOGETHER*

**1A** - *Although none of us would say we are unlimited, most of us think we are less limited than we actually are. How do you know when you are living beyond your creaturely limitations?*

**1B** - *What are some practical implications of the truth that God is our Creator and we are His creatures?*

**2A** - *In what ways does Striving Adam take center stage in our culture? In what ways do we see a longing for Soulful Adam?*

**2B** - *Do you know anyone who integrates well both the Striving Adam and Soulful Adam parts of themselves? If so, what is that person like?*

**3A** - *The interconnectedness of the physical and the spiritual means that the health of the body affects the health of the soul and vice versa. How have you seen that kind of interconnectedness play out in your life?*

**3B** - *"Behind many seemingly practical problems are theological problems." What are your thoughts about that statement? Can you give an example of this from your own life?*

**4A** - *Most of the reason we don't live grace-paced is because we don't connect our theology of grace to our daily lives. What is one practical way a man or woman can live in the motivating, moderating, multiplying, releasing, and receiving power of grace? (give one idea for each)*

**4B** - *Some of God's best gifts are available through receiving grace: a weekly Sabbath, sufficient sleep, physical exercise, family and friend relationships, Christian fellowship. Which of these is notably absent in our culture and why?*

# GRACE-PACED LIVING REALITY CHECK (WOMEN)

Read through the following warning signs worksheet\* and check ones that you resonate with from your life over the last month.

## PHYSICAL WARNING SIGNS

- You suffer with the over 70% of Americans with stress-induced physical symptoms (*headaches, stomach cramps, sore joints, back pain, ulcers, breathlessness, bad skin, an irritable bowel, chest pain, and palpitations.*)
- You feel tired, exhausted, and lethargic all the time.
- You find difficulty getting to sleep or getting enough sleep when you do go to bed. You wake up frequently, and then you are unable to get back to sleep, and, therefore, no matter how many hours you spend in bed, you never rested or refreshed.
- You find that you can do nothing but sleep. *“Generally, when I’m stressed or anxious, I feel like I can’t get enough sleep. I think it can be both physical need and emotional—as in, I’d rather stay in bed than face the day.”*
- You are gaining weight through overeating, irregular eating, unhealthy eating, constant snacking, and lack of vigorous exercise.
- You are losing weight through loss of appetite and skipping meals.

## MENTAL WARNING SIGNS

- You have difficulty concentrating. *Maybe you are reading the same verses over and over during your devotional time but struggling to remember what you read. You can’t decide what to do next—empty the trash, make your bed, start supper, feed the dog, check email, or go to the shop.*
- You are forgetting things you used to remember easily.
- You spend endless hours second-guessing your choices and decisions.
- You spend hours and hours obsessing about the same thing. It’s like a repeating voicemail that you simply can’t switch off. Most of your thoughts are negative. You dwell on the bad, the sad, and can’t see the glad.

## EMOTIONAL WARNING SIGNS

- You feel sad most of the time, often on the verge of tears, and sometimes cry for no obvious reason. *Minor things make you cry. Laughter seems distant, faking it is becoming harder, and hearing others laugh is painful. Emotional numbness is the norm.*
- You wake with worry, live with worry, and/or go to sleep with worry. *Your heart pounds and your stomach churns when you think of the day’s decisions and people’s expectations. You fear your children are going to turn away from God and end up in immoral and ungodly lives. The future looks hopeless, and you feel worthless.*
- You take on additional emotional burdens that God has not called you to carry. *Stories of pain and need on social media and other media outlets capture our minds and our hearts, and every request for prayer seems to be addressed personally to us.*

## RELATIONAL WARNING SIGNS

- Frustration, irritability, and impatience are boiling inside you and often erupting. You’re angry at your husband, your children, the pastor, the shop assistant, and that other driver.
- Socializing is too much bother, and friendships are all in the past tense.

## VOCATIONAL WARNING SIGNS

- If you work outside the home, you're falling behind there, feeling constantly overwhelmed. *You are cutting corners and making more and more mistakes. Wrong decisions are easy and frequent. Indecision breeds procrastination, which breeds indecision. Instead of motivation and drive, there's apathy and passivity.*
- If you are a mother, you have little joy in your children and even wonder if they are worth all the effort. You feel trapped in an endless circuit of seemingly menial diaper changes, meals, lunches, dirty floors, crying kids, laundry, and generally being everybody's gofer. You hold yourself responsible for every accident, mess, crying fit, episode of bickering, and every failure of character in your children.
- You find it difficult to say no, and you agree to every request that comes your way: *school fundraising, making meals for needy families in the church, leading a Bible study, taking on nursery duty, driving your kids to multiple sports events, and saying yes to work that you know you can't possibly finish on time.*
- You feel guilty or anxious when you are not running yourself ragged and consider yourself lazy if you take even five minutes to sit and have a break.

## MORAL WARNING SIGNS

- You are reading books and watching shows and movies with language and images you'd never have tolerated in the past.
- You are fantasizing about close relationships with men to whom you are not married, or perhaps beginning to flirt with them at work or at church.
- You are shading the truth in conversations, exaggerating or editing as appropriate.
- You are medicating yourself (and your conscience) by overspending, overdrinking, overeating, or over-Facebooking.

## SPIRITUAL WARNING SIGNS

- Your personal devotions are becoming shorter and shorter. Or nonexistent.
- You find yourself checking email and social media before your quiet time or even during it. You spend more time chatting with strangers on Facebook than time in conversation with God.
- You have started skipping church for any reason you can think up. You find church boring, sermons sleep-inducing, and Christian fellowship a drudge.
- You are sensing a gnawing discontentment. *"In a relationship," for example, "if things are not going the way I had imagined or wanted, I am often dissatisfied. This results in anxiety, a bad attitude, and ingratitude."*

## ASSESSMENT AND RESULTS

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1. **How many checkmarks are there?** \_\_\_\_\_ More than 5 should be cause for concern.
2. **How serious are these issues?** Rate the intensity of each of checkmark from one to five, with five being the most serious.
3. **How long has this been going on?** The longer a symptom has lasted—especially if it has been a month or more—the more dangerous it is.

# GRACE-PACED LIVING REALITY CHECK (MEN)

Read through the following warning signs worksheet\* and check ones that you resonate with from your life over the last month.

## PHYSICAL WARNING SIGNS

- You are suffering health issues one after another. *77% percent of Americans regularly experience physical symptoms caused by stress, including headaches, stomach cramps, achy joints, back pain, ulcers, breathlessness, bad skin, an irritable bowel, tremors, chest pains, or palpitations.*
- You feel exhausted / lethargic all the time, lacking energy or stamina for sports or playing with your kids.
- You find it difficult to sleep, you wake up frequently, or you wake up early and can't get back to sleep.
- You are following the example of a young entrepreneur: *"I used my lack of sleep to justify sleeping in later, which only perpetuated that poor sleep cycle."*
- You use excessive sleeping as an escape.
- You are putting on weight through lack of exercise or eating too much junk food, or you are drinking too much alcohol or coffee.

## MENTAL WARNING SIGNS

- Your brain feels fried. Concentration is hard; distraction is easy.
- You think obsessively about certain difficulties in your life. *"Even little things began to fall on me with great weight. I would try to put them out of my mind, but it was like my brain was stuck spinning over and over."*
- You forget things you used to remember easily: *appointments, birthdays, anniversaries, phone numbers, names, deadlines, etc.*
- You find your attention drawn to negative subjects and are developing a hypercritical and cynical spirit.

## EMOTIONAL WARNING SIGNS

- You feel sad, maybe so sad that you have bouts of weeping or feel you are on the verge of tears.
- It's been a long time since you had a good laugh or made someone laugh. You feel emotionally numb.
- You feel pessimistic and hopeless about your marriage, children, church, job, nation, etc.
- Worry stalks your waking hours and anxiety climbs into bed with you every night.
- As soon as you wake and think about the day ahead, your heart starts pounding and your stomach starts churning over the decisions you face and people's expectations.
- You find it difficult to rejoice in others' joy, often forcing yourself to fake it.
- At times, you feel so hopeless and worthless that you think it would be better if you were not here.

## RELATIONAL WARNING SIGNS

- Your marriage is not what it once was. You don't delight in your wife as you once did.
- Your sex drive is erratic and often feel too tired to have anything but perfunctory, and mainly selfish, sex.
- You are irritable & snappy at your family. *They view you as angry, impatient, frustrated, critical (ask them!).*
- You spend limited time with your children, and time you do spend is interrupted by smartphone use or poisoned by thinking about all the other things you could be doing.
- You avoid social occasions, neglect important relationships, and withdraw from friendships, even with people you care deeply about.
- You frequently lose your temper and are in conflict with various people.

## VOCATIONAL WARNING SIGNS

- You work more than fifty hours per week, although not very efficiently, productively, or satisfyingly. *“We have the unfulfilling experience of making a millimeter of progress in a million directions.” - Greg McKeowan*
- Your work regularly spills over into evenings and weekends, or whatever days make up your “weekend.”
- You have little joy in your work, maybe even dreading it.
- Procrastination and indecision dominate as you flit from one thing to another to another with little sense of accomplishment.
- Motivation and drive have been replaced with avoidance, passivity, and apathy as you drag yourself through the day.
- You find it difficult to say no.
- You feel guilty or anxious when not working and regard yourself as lazy or weak for taking time off.

## MORAL WARNING SIGNS

- You view risqué material on the Internet or have even “graduated” to using porn.
- You watch movies with language and images you’d never have tolerated in the past.
- Your expense account or tax returns have some halfruths in them.
- You cultivate close relationships with women who are not your wife (or you think about it).
- You shade the truth in conversations, exaggerating or editing as appropriate.
- You medicate yourself (and your conscience) by overspending, overdrinking, or overeating.

## SPIRITUAL WARNING SIGNS

- Your personal devotions have decreased in length and increased in distraction, with little time or ability for meditation and reflection.
- You check email and social media before you meet with God each day.
- You skip church and/or listening to sermons sends you to sleep.
- You don’t enjoy fellowship with other Christians or serving God’s church.
- You are bored with the small stuff of ministry, thinking yourself above ministering to the children or seniors, the sick or “time-wasters.”
- You find it difficult to confess sin and even to admit weakness to God and others you are accountable to.
- You draw more on past knowledge and experience than you do a present walk with God.
- You believe the truths of the Bible, but you don’t believe them for yourself.

## ASSESSMENT AND RESULTS

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