

Momentum 3 - "Running Alone is Dangerous"  
Psalm 128

- I. Two Sundays ago we began this series on Momentum with the goal of getting to the finish line.
  - a. First, we looked at the start of the race; breaking the inertia in our spiritual lives and committing ourselves to getting out of the blocks.
  - b. Last week we talked about the first lap of the race; sustaining our initial momentum by committing ourselves to growing to become more like Christ.
  - c. We've lifted up a key word each week that encapsulates our theme for the morning.
    - i. First, devotion (how committed [devoted] are you to God)?
    - ii. Second, growth (are you learning and growing in your faith)?
    - iii. Today, that key word is "*together.*"
  - d. We're focusing on the middle part of the race this week. The part of the race where you find your pace.
    - i. When you get your stride and set yourself up for the rest of the race.
    - ii. How can we "set ourselves up" for the rest of our journey with God?
    - iii. The answer to that question is found in this one word = together.
  - e. You can go through life alone or together. You have a choice.
    - i. Which option you choose will have a dramatic effect on your happiness, your fulfillment and your outlook on life and the future.
    - ii. Let me illustrate this for you with a short video. *{play: "together and alone"}*
    - iii. In short, how you choose to do this will dramatically impact the way you run this race.
- II. Psalm 128 focuses our attention on one important aspect of "together" – our relationships.
  - a. Particularly, our family relationships.
    - i. The Psalm mentions parents, children, wives, husbands, grandchildren.
    - ii. From these relationships and the hard work you put into them, you find blessing and prosperity.
  - b. This leads us to our first observation – as we consider running the race of faith "together."
- III. It might seem self evident, but People Matter.
  - a. That's why the Psalmist mentions these important relationships in just a six verses.
  - b. Matthew 6:21 says, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."
    - i. What is your treasure?
    - ii. Is your treasure your possessions?
      1. Jesus had something important to say about that.
      2. Matthew 6:19-20 – "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven,"
    - iii. Is your treasure your own success?
      1. Jesus had something important to say about that, too.
      2. Matthew 16:26 – "What good will it be for you to gain the whole world, yet forfeit your soul? Or what can you give in exchange for your soul?"
    - iv. I believe part of that treasure is found in the people around us.
      1. No one can steal that relationship away.
      2. Even when we are separated by time, distance, and even death, the treasure of that person (memories, affection) remains.
  - c. People Matter – it's about a legacy. It's about the future.
    - i. The people that invested themselves in me.
    - ii. The people who added value to my life.
- IV. Margins Matter.
  - a. Before we go too far out of our lane, let me explain what I mean by margins matter.
    - i. People matter. Worship matters. Work matters. Devotion matters.
    - ii. If it all matters – if its all important – then we're going to go crazy trying to do it all!
  - b. Let's make sure as we run the race that we keep a key word in mind –
  - c. Balance.
    - i. If we become so people focused that we neglect work or worship, we're out of balance.
  - d. This is illustrated well in this mornings Psalm.
    - i. Psalm 128:1-4 – Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in obedience to him. You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours. Your wife will be like a

fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table.  
Yes, this will be the blessing for the man who fears the Lord.

- ii. Here is a beautiful balance of work (labor), people, and worship (fear of the Lord).
- e. God wants us to have this kind of balance.
  - i. This balance is what will sustain us over the long strenuous length of the this race – this journey of becoming more like Christ.
  - ii. Ecclesiastes (3:1) says “There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens.”
  - iii. When I’m not in balance everything suffers.
    1. If I’m too wrapped up in work – home suffers.
    2. If I’m preoccupied with home (yes, it too can be out of balance) – my worship is out of balance.
- f. This is where margin becomes important.
  - i. In order to find and maintain balance in your life you have to set boundaries.
  - ii. Clear places that let you stack all the various pieces and roles of your life in a coherent and consistent order.

Often we pack things into the finite time and space of our lives so tightly that we have to shoehorn the last few things into place.

    1. It all fits, but its all so tense that its ready to burst.
  - iii. What we need, to find true balance, is margin.
    1. Margin is white space.
    2. Margins are places in our lives where nothing fills the space.
    3. Margin is room to breath.
  - iv. One author tried to express this balancing act this way.
    1. Work + Relationship = Worship.
    2. When work and relationships and all our responsibilities are in balance – then we worship.
    3. I like that.
      - a. It feels “whole.”
      - b. It feels “(w)holy”

#### V. Together Matters.

- a. People matter. Margin matters.
- b. Together matters.
  - i. Judges 2:10-11 – “After that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, another generation grew up who knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord.”
  - ii. How tragic these two verses are.
    1. One generation didn’t understand that people matter.
    2. One generation got so taken up in the work of taking possession of the Promised Land that their lives were out of balance.
    3. And the entire nation, unto the next generation paid a horrible price.
  - iii. This life together matters so much that Scripture says that Jesus died “for the church.”
    1. Sure, Jesus dies for each one of us.
    2. But Jesus died for all of us. He died for the church.
    3. Ephesians 5:25 says, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.”
- c. Are you running this race of faith alone or together?
  - i. When I think of my race –
  - ii. I think of my wife –
  - iii. I think of my kids –
  - iv. I think of those I mentor –
  - v. I think of those I disciple –
  - vi. I think of my mentors –
- d. In my life they are how I demonstrate that together matters.

#### VI. What are your Strategic Investments?

- a. Who are the people that matter to you?
  - i. How do you show them that with your time, energy, and emotion?
  - ii. Where do you need margin?
  - iii. Where is God showing you that you are out of balance?

- b. Find some white space in your bulletin notes and make a list of the people that God brings to mind in answer to these questions –
    - i. “What people matter most to me?”
    - ii. “Do my actions bear that out?”
    - iii. “What is God telling me needs to change?”
  - c. Now think about the margin and balance in your life.
    - i. “Is my life in balance?”
    - ii. “What part of my life is causing me to be out of balance?”
    - iii. “What is God telling me to do today that will make a difference?”
  - d. If together matters, am I running alone or together?
    - i. “I would like to have a prayer partner(s).”
    - ii. “I would like to be part of a small discipleship group (3 or 4).”
    - iii. “I need someone who will mentor me and add value to my life.”
    - iv. “I would like to be a mentor to someone and be a Paul to their Timothy.”
    - v. “I am struggling with something that I need support to get through and I don’t want to be alone anymore.”
- VII. Running Alone is Dangerous.
- a. Your spiritual life and health is at stake. This race was never meant to be run by yourself.
  - b. Team Hoyt. *{play: “Team Hoyt”}*
  - c. Running alone is dangerous – never run alone!