
MONDAY MANNA
May 12, 2025**BALANCE FOR AN INTENTIONAL LIFE**
By Erenia Mendoza

Modern life often pushes us into a frenetic pace for productivity. As a consequence, health, relationships, and spiritual well-being can be neglected. But those of us who are followers of Christ in the marketplace are called to strive for balanced living, reflecting the values of God's Kingdom in all areas of our lives. The "8+8+8 rule" offers a simple model to help us achieve this balance: 8 hours of work, 8 hours of rest, and 8 hours for leisure and personal activities. With God at the center of these areas, we can live intentionally and with purpose.

Work (8 hours). The Bible teaches us that work is a divine calling. In Colossians 3:23, we are reminded: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters." When we apply this perspective, work becomes a way to worship God, serving others with excellence and dedication. In our work, we seek to reflect the three H's: Honesty (Proverbs 12:22) – "The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in people who are trustworthy"; Humility (James 4:6) – "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble"; and Humor (Proverbs 17:22) – "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones." These principles can transform the work environment.

Author Tim Keller wrote, "Christians should be fully engaged in work as complete people, dedicating their minds, hearts, and bodies fully to do the best work possible in the task at hand." When we place God at the center of our work, everything becomes an expression of His grace and purpose in our lives.

Rest (8 hours). God teaches us to rest. Rest is not just a pause, but a form of physical, mental, and spiritual renewal. In Exodus 20:8-10, the command to set aside time for the Sabbath reminds us: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work..." Rest is a way to trust God as our provider and our sustainer.

Here, the three S's can guide us: Silence (Psalm 46:10) – "Be still, and know that I am God"; Solitude (Mark 1:35) – "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed"; and Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-10). Dedicate time to listen to God's voice, reflect on His Word, and rest in His presence.

Leisure and Personal Activities (8 hours). God created us to live in community, and this includes moments of leisure and interpersonal relationships. In Ecclesiastes 3:1, we are reminded: "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens." Leisure and personal activities should include time with family, friends, and also with God.

Here we can use the 3 F's – Faith (Hebrews 11:1) – "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see"; Family (Ephesians 5:25) – "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her"; and Friends (Proverbs 17:17)

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– "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity" – help us stay focused on what truly matters, strengthening our relationship with God, others, and ourselves.

By following the "8+8+8 rule," aligned with biblical principles and the 3 F's, 3 H's, and 3 S's, we find a path to live more balanced and intentional lives. Balance is not a luxury, but a necessity to fulfill our purpose as we work with excellence, rest with trust, and cultivate God-honoring relationships.

© 2025. Erenia Mendoza is the National Director of CBMC Brazil and a member of CBMC International's Global Leadership Team. She also serves on CBMC's Executive Committee for Latin America. Born in Nicaragua and raised in Brazil, Erenia built her career in the Entertainment industry, specializing in Distribution and Marketing for films and series. She has worked with and for major studios, including Sony Pictures and The Walt Disney Company, across Latin America.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. How would you define having balance in life?
2. How successful are you in achieving a measure of balance and a proper perspective about different areas of your life? Do you think that having a balanced life sounds like a good idea, but is basically wishful thinking? Explain your answer.
3. Why it is sometimes so difficult to achieve a proper balance of work, rest, and leisure and personal activities? What are some of the obstacles or threats to enjoying a balanced life?
4. What role – if any – do you think the spiritual dimension of our lives play in our desire and successful achievement of balanced living?

Challenge for This Week

If you realize your own life's work/rest/leisure balance is not what it needs to be, it might seem difficult to find time to reassess how your days are being spent. However, if you do not start working to achieve the desired balance, it will never happen by itself.

Try to schedule a time to meet with a mentor, trusted advisors or your CBMC group if you are in one to discuss where you are in this respect, and where you would like to be. Be willing to consider suggestions and advice.

NOTE:

For more about what the Bible says, consider the following passages:

Exodus 35:30-31,35; Psalm 37:7, 46:10; Ecclesiastes 5:18, 8:17; Mark 6:31; Colossians 3:17

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