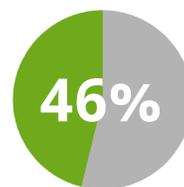


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## Lost in the List



ALISE & MARK JUANES



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I don't know about you, but I am a list person. I have always operated off a list or calendar to keep me focused and on task. The great thing about a list is I can write it down and forget it and then go to my list for reminders. The down side to a list is that I often live my life focused on the list! I often measure my day or judge my day based on how many tasks I accomplished from my list.

Lately my list has been exponentially growing with minimal decreasing. These last few months have been a season of an intense learning curve, pushing me beyond comfort and "normalcy" and honestly stretching my weaknesses. I know it's a good and necessary part of life in which God is molding me, changing me, and forcing me closer to him....but it's also exhausting! You see, I'm a type-A planner, plotter, introverted recovering-perfectionist! My life is mostly cyclical in which through large transitions, there are tasks, lists, and I often "muscle-up" and start tackling the list without turning to God. It's like I'm saying, "I got this God, relax a bit, I'll handle it." Until I inevitably find myself swamped, overwhelmed, exhausted, and distant from God and from my goal. Can anyone relate? I finally have a revelation of, "duh" ....I'm doing all this on my own with an occasional prayer to Christ....I'm lost in the list! I usually have an emotional breakdown, finally release it to Christ, and then allow HIM to lead! And He lovingly works in me and helps me to grow and trust and release my weaknesses to Him. Each time I come out a little more polished.

I wish I could say, I have only done this once....but again....it has been a cyclical trend and this week I found myself doing the same thing again! I finally came to the realization that I have been trying to do all of the things on my list ON MY OWN, instead of seeking God first and allowing Him room to guide me through this journey of planning and preparing for Thailand. I was on a walk after a frustrating disagreement with my husband and this realization of being "lost in the list" occurred to me as I walked by a bush! No, the bush was not burning and talking to me. But for some reason something caught my eye about this ordinary looking bush. I stopped to take a closer look and discovered these tiny, beautiful flowers hidden and lost within the bush. I could relate to those beautiful, tiny flowers, lost in the overwhelmingly large bush. How often do we get "lost in the list" or lost in the ordinary day-to-day that we don't allow Christ's beauty, joy, love, and compassion to bloom and shine large and in charge? I don't want to be a tiny flower, lost in the ordinary, never-ending list! I need to put God first, He will guide my day-to-day and I will bloom and shine all the more because of His great love!

*Psalms 37:23-24 "The Lord directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives. Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the Lord holds them by the hand."*

*Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest"*

What are you lost in today? How can we pray for you?

Serving Him,

Alise



Today was the first Sunday our kids were with us at a new church. They were very anxious last night going to bed and Sydney said this morning that she "had butterflies in stomach."

The reality of change is kicking in for them! I was so thankful they could tell us how they felt, Gavin and Kolin both said, "I'm nervous and scared!" We validated their feelings and spoke about the adventure that God has called us on as a family....it has already begun! This is part of the adventure. God is already stretching us and growing all 5 of us in so many ways. We spoke about how all churches do things a little differently and I challenged them to find 1 or 2 things they liked about today's church. Sydney liked talking to the people after the service. Gavin liked the merry-go-round on the playground. Kolin thought the ceiling and projector screens were really cool! Hahaha! I love experiencing this journey through their eyes too! Please pray that they can be at peace and adaptable as we amp up our traveling and church visits!

