

# BURNOUT & RENEWAL with *Jeremy Pate*

## LESSON TWO: PART OF THE PLAN?

**INTRODUCTION** - One of the recurring jobs at our house—and I'm sure this is true at your house as well—is changing light bulbs. No matter which ones you buy, it is a guarantee that, eventually, that bulb will burn out. In fact, since its inception/invention in the 1870's, not a single light bulb has ever been manufactured with a sticker that says: "Will Never Burn Out".

Anyone who uses light bulbs knows this. It can be an unexpected and expensive inconvenience when light bulbs need to be replaced (in some cases, VERY expensive and VERY inconvenient), but it will always need to be done.

The key to **reducing** the unexpectedness (and perhaps some of the inconvenience) of this chore is to adjust our expectations, and plan accordingly. For example:

- Set some money aside in your budget for light bulbs
- Take a sample of every light bulb that you might need to replace to the store and stock up on replacements
- Invest in longer-lasting light bulbs to reduce the frequency of changing them
- Turn your lights off when you aren't using them
- Burn torches instead

What about the human life? Are there some things about our lives that would qualify as "unexpected and expensive inconveniences"? Are these things part of God's plan for our lives, or can we eliminate them altogether? Specifically, is "burnout" (as we defined/described it last week) part of God's plan for our lives? If so, why, and how can we reduce its effects?

- I. **THE PLAN** - Genesis 1-2 - Originally, God created/designed human beings to live in intimate fellowship with Him. We were created in His image, and we were meant to live a productive, thriving life in His presence, with no knowledge of good and evil. God's original plan was, in a word, **perfect**.
- II. **THE PROBLEM** - Genesis 3 - Of course, this design was ruined by Adam and Eve when they both decided to sin against God. Their decision—often called "The Fall of Mankind"—had immediate and long-reaching consequences all of humanity is still living with.

- III. **THE PATH** - Various texts - Since the fall of mankind, life has been different. Either directly or indirectly, God laid out a new path for humanity, and this path is now fraught with peril, pain, and unexpected (and sometimes expensive) inconveniences. This happened immediately, with God giving unexpected, expensive, and inconvenient consequences to everyone involved in this sin (Genesis 3:14-24). If we trace humanity's earthly experience through Scripture, we see an emerging pattern: God blesses and gives clear commands/expectations; mankind sins; there are consequences. If we take some of the teachings found in the New Testament, we see a path that God has clearly laid out for us, as Christians. Let's examine this path, and whether or not "burnout" has a role to play. Here are some of the things that we can/should expect from life, according to the New Testament:
- a. **ABUNDANT [YET FOCUSED] LIFE** - John 10:10; Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:1-4; Mt. 7:13-14  
- What kind of life is Jesus talking about? What does this mean, and what does it **not** mean?
  - b. **SPIRITUAL WARFARE** - 1 Peter 2:11; Eph. 6:10-20 - How will this realization/awareness change the way we view life?
  - c. **TRIALS/TEMPTATIONS** - James 1:2-18; 1 Cor. 10:13 - "When", not "if"; what is the difference between trials and temptations?
  - d. **SIN** - 1 John 1:8,10; 2:1 - Although our goal should be to eliminate sin from our lives, we will never be completely successful; and even if we were, the consequences of our past sins would still have an effect.
  - e. **ANXIETY** - 1 Peter 5:7; 1 Cor. 7:32-35; 2 Cor. 11:28; Ph. 2:28; Mt. 6:25-34; Lk. 10:41; Ph. 4:6 - The only questions are, "What am I anxious **about**?" and "What am I **doing** with those anxieties?"
  - f. **CONTENTMENT** - Ph. 4:11-13; 1 Tim. 6:6-10; Heb. 13:5; 1 Cor. 6:12 - How much "burnout" is directly related to not being content?
  - g. **DEPENDENCE** - Mark 12:30; Ph. 4:6-7; John 15:5 (and context); 2 Cor. 12:9-10 - As a general rule, burnout happens when we focus on how much others are depending on us, instead of on how much we depend on God.
  - h. **SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS** - Eph. 1:3-14 - How should this affect us?
  - i. **PERSPECTIVE** - 1 John 2:15-17; Rom. 8:18-25 -

**CONCLUSION** - After reading these passages, how would you answer our initial question: Is burnout part of God's plan? Discuss. In what ways does this relate to our illustration about light bulbs? How can/do these passages help us reduce/minimize burnout in our lives?