

QTC571. Breaking the Hurry Habit. 15 May 2025

"Breaking the Hurry Habit" | Malcolm Cox | Quiet Time Coaching Episode 571

Introduction

Reflecting on a video by John Ortberg I watched recently, a simple but piercing truth struck me: hurry is a symptom. It's also a habit—but more than that, it's a signal. The deeper question is, what is hurry trying to achieve? And what is it trying to cover?

As I sat with that thought, I realised: behind my hurry, there's anxiety. That anxious drive to do more, be more, prove more. It's subtle, but it's real. And I suspect I'm not alone. In his book *The Life You've Always Wanted*, Ortberg famously says, "Hurry is the great enemy of spiritual life in our day." It's not just about being busy.

Jesus was not in a hurry

Jesus was busy. The difference is that Jesus was never hurried. He moved with intention, but always from a place of peace. Have you ever felt deeply loved by someone as they hurriedly flash in and out of your life? I think not. Love and hurry are mutually exclusive. Again, Jesus was busy, but the people around him felt deeply loved - because he was not in a hurry. So I've started to ask myself some questions:

- What's motivating my hurry?
 - Are these motivations rooted in my personality, or have I picked them up from societal expectations and church culture?
 - Am I confusing spiritual urgency with spiritual anxiety?
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The antidote to anxiety is trust

When Paul writes to the Philippians, he says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Phil 4:6). The antidote to anxiety isn't more activity—it's trust. It's a reorientation of the heart.

If I can identify the underlying anxieties that drive me to hurry—fear of not being enough, fear of disappointing others, fear of missing out—then, with the Holy Spirit's help, I can begin to loosen their grip.

There's a process here worth naming

1. Identify the drivers that push us toward hurry.
2. Discern the false beliefs behind those drivers—beliefs that run counter to the spirit of Christ.
3. Observe the damage that hurry does to our soul, our relationships, our ministry.
4. Establish new habits and disciplines—practices that slow us down and lead us toward peace, presence, and contentment.

This isn't about swinging to the opposite extreme and becoming complacent. It's about finding a new rhythm—one shaped by grace, not pressure. As Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Rest is not a luxury. It's a command, a gift, and a path to wholeness.

Reflection Questions

- Where do you notice hurry showing up for you?
 - What fear or belief might be fuelling it?
 - What would change if you trusted God more fully in that area?
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Conclusion

Take time to slow down. Pause in prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you the motivations behind your hurry. Then ask for help in trading anxiety for peace—and hurry for holy presence.

Your (slightly-less-hurried) brother, Malcolm

The Ortberg video can be found here: <https://youtu.be/GWspKRnVJ2Q?si=c9O2IH14jj51o1Kx>

Share your thoughts, insights, or questions with me and the other listeners. And if you haven't yet, grab a free copy of my eBook on spiritual disciplines, *"How God Grows His People,"* at www.malcolmcox.org by signing up for my newsletter.

Take care, and God bless, Malcolm

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