



MARGIN

FULLY DEVOTED

MARGIN



# WELCOME TO *MARGIN*...

Sometimes it seems like the only way to keep up with all the demands on our lives is to constantly run at maximum capacity. But there is another way--one where we have room to breathe and space to respond to what life brings our way. The key is learning how to live with margin. In this three-session series you will learn from God's word about the importance of living with margin and how you can build it into your already busy routine. You will also learn about the importance of living with financial margin and moral margin.

## WHO IS *MARGIN* DESIGNED FOR?

*Margin* is designed for anyone who feels trapped by the stress of their busy schedules, or is seeing that stress limit their relationships with God and others. It doesn't matter if you are a new follower of Christ or have been following Him a long time. This series can be used in a small group or in a larger group setting. You can also go through this series on your own.

## WHAT DOES THE *MARGIN* EXPERIENCE LOOK LIKE?

*Margin* consists of three sessions that feature teaching from Craig Groeschel and stories from people who are successfully living with margin. Each session is hosted by Dana Byers, who will lead you through the message, discussion questions, and life application strategies. This series is flexible. There are four videos per session. You can choose to watch all four videos or just watch the ones that would best fit you or your group. In each session the first video is an introduction with Dana, the second video features a short teaching from Craig Groeschel, the third video features a short story of someone who is living with margin in their life, and in the final video Dana will wrap up the session with discussion questions and Next Step ideas.

## WHAT OTHER RESOURCES DO I NEED WITH *MARGIN*?

The only resources you need for *Margin* are the accompanying videos and your discussion guide. You can access the videos by visiting <http://resources.lifechurch.tv> and searching "Sharing Your Story." You can also find them on the LifeChurch.tv YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/lifechurchtv> and on the LifeChurch.tv Roku channel.

## IF YOU ARE LEADING A GROUP THROUGH THIS SERIES...

Because this series is designed to be flexible and easy to lead a group through, it doesn't have a facilitator guide. However, on page 10 of this booklet, you will find some notes for leaders with ideas to help you if you are leading a group through *Margin*.

# SESSION 1 : SCHEDULING MARGIN

Watch the *Margin* Session One video, and use this discussion guide to follow along and take notes during the video. The answers to the fill-in-the-blanks can be found in the answer key in the back of your participant guide.

**MARGIN: THE AMOUNT AVAILABLE BEYOND WHAT IS \_\_\_\_\_.**

## WHEN YOUR MARGIN DECREASES

- YOUR STRESS \_\_\_\_\_.
- YOUR RELATIONAL \_\_\_\_\_ DECREASES.

### WHAT MATTERS THAT IS MISSING?

- 1) INTIMATE \_\_\_\_\_ WITH \_\_\_\_\_.

*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33 NIV*

- 2) INTENTIONAL TIMES OF \_\_\_\_\_.

*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Matthew 11:28-29 NIV*

**SAY “NO” TO MANY \_\_\_\_\_ THINGS TO SAY “YES” TO THE \_\_\_\_\_ THINGS.**

### TALK IT OVER

**What things in your life are keeping you too busy? How is that busyness affecting your life?**

**Describe a time when you said “no” to something good that ultimately allowed you to say “yes” to God’s best.**

**What things do you value most in your life? Does the way you use your time reflect those values? Why or why not?**

**What changes do you need to make that will allow you to create margin for the things you value most?**

## **NEXT STEPS**

**Consider taking these Next Steps, to put what you've learned into action.**

1. Take time to evaluate your life and look at where you need to create margin. Try to identify those areas of life that are causing you the most stress and where adjustments are needed. Then, look to see if there are one or two things that you could stop doing today so that you can create margin for tomorrow.
2. If you are not doing so already, begin spending intentional time with God over the next few days. Spend time praying, reading His word, and worshipping Him. If you are not sure where to start, then consider using the Bible App, which features tons of great Bible reading plans and devotionals including a reading entitled *Margin* designed just for this series.
3. Schedule some intentional time of rest over the next week. Schedule as much time as you feel would be best. It could be a full day or a few hours.
4. Watch Craig's full messages entitled *Margin*. For this session, watch week one and week two. You can find these messages at <http://www.lifechurch.tv/watch/margin/1> for week one and <http://www.lifechurch.tv/watch/margin/2> for week two.

# SESSION 2: FINANCIAL MARGIN

Watch the *Margin* Session Two video, and use this discussion guide to follow along and take notes during the video. The answers to the fill-in-the-blanks can be found in the answer key in the back of your participant guide.

## HOW DO WE CREATE MARGIN?

- YOU PUT \_\_\_\_\_ IN YOUR FINANCES!

## WHEN YOU PUT GOD FIRST

- 1) YOU EXPERIENCE GOD'S \_\_\_\_\_.

*Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. Malachi 3:10 NIV*

- 2) YOU BECOME SUPERNATURALLY \_\_\_\_\_.

*Better a little with the fear of the Lord than great wealth with turmoil. Proverbs 15:16 NIV*

- 3) YOU END UP WITH \_\_\_\_\_ OF WHAT \_\_\_\_\_.

*With me are riches and honor. With me are lasting wealth and success. My fruit is better than fine gold. My gifts are better than the finest silver. Proverbs 8:18-19 NIV84*

## TALK IT OVER

**How have you seen financial stress limit your relationship with God and your ability to minister to and give to others?**

**Based on how you spend your money, which types of treasures are you currently storing up?**

**In what ways has God blessed you with more of the things that truly matter in life?**

**What steps do you need to take to create more financial margin in your life?**

## **NEXT STEPS**

**Consider taking these Next Steps, to put what you've learned into action.**

1. Take Dave Ramsey's *Financial Peace University* class. This video-based series is one of the best resources available to help people get out of debt and achieve financial freedom. This series has helped thousands of people break free from the bonds of debt. You can find out more about *Financial Peace University* by going to <http://www.daveramsey.com/fpu>.
2. Watch the four-part video study called *Money Matters*. This free series will help you take steps toward financial freedom. It features teaching from Davey Ramsey and Craig Groeschel. In *Money Matters*, you'll learn to create a budget and uncover ways to invest for the future. This series is available at <http://resources.lifechurch.tv> using the search term "Money Matters."
3. If you are not yet tithing, then consider taking the Three-Month Tithe Challenge. For more information on this challenge, visit <http://www.lifechurch.tv/giving/challenge>.
4. Watch Craig's full messages entitled *Margin*. For this session, watch week three. You can find this message at <http://www.lifechurch.tv/watch/margin/3>.
5. Read the *Margin* reading plan on the YouVersion Bible App. This plan can be found under the devotional section of reading plans.

# SESSION 3: MORAL MARGIN

Watch the *Margin* Session Three video, and use this discussion guide to follow along and take notes during the video. The answers to the fill-in-the-blanks can be found in the answer key in the back of your participant guide.

- **MORAL MARGIN: PUTTING \_\_\_\_\_ BETWEEN YOU AND \_\_\_\_\_.**

*When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. James 1:13-15 NIV*

## BETTER PLACES TO DRAW THE LINE

- **KEEP \_\_\_\_\_ FEET ON THE FLOOR.**
- **NO \_\_\_\_\_ OR PLAYING \_\_\_\_\_.**
- **NO TONSIL \_\_\_\_\_.**
- **AVOID DANGEROUS \_\_\_\_\_.**
- **MONITOR \_\_\_\_\_ ACTIVITY.**
- **AVOID TIME ALONE WITH THE \_\_\_\_\_ PEOPLE.**
- **GUARD YOUR \_\_\_\_\_, MIND, AND \_\_\_\_\_.**

*Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. Romans 6:12-14 NIV*

## TALK IT OVER

**In what ways does the world's view of morality conflict with God's view?**

**Why do you think sexual sin is such an easy trap for so many people to fall into?**

**Where in your life might you need to create moral margin? How will you go about creating that margin?**

**How can others such as your friends, family, and your group help you in living a life with moral margin?**

## NEXT STEPS

**Consider taking these Next Steps, to put what you've learned into action.**

1. Identify where you need moral margin in your life. If you're single, think about what boundaries you need to set in your dating life. If you're married, identify any areas where the purity of your marriage could be compromised. Also, identify those things that could cause temptation in your life.
2. Take steps to creating moral margin. Some suggested ideas include installing content filters on your phone, computer, and your television; severing a toxic relationship from your life; or setting boundaries with those who you feel could compromise your morals.
3. Establish some accountability in your life. Find someone that will help hold you accountable in taking your Next Steps toward achieving moral margin and will help you handle temptation.
4. Watch Craig's full messages entitled *Margin*. For this session, watch week four. You can find this message at <http://www.lifechurch.tv/watch/margin/4>.
5. Read the *Margin* YouVersion reading plan on the Bible App. This plan can be found under the devotional section of reading plans on the Bible App.
6. For more information on margin, Craig recommends reading the book *Margin* by Richard A. Swenson M.D.



# ANSWER KEY

Use this answer key to fill in the blanks found in each session.

## SESSION 1:

MARGIN: THE AMOUNT AVAILABLE BEYOND WHAT IS NECESSARY.

### WHEN YOUR MARGIN DECREASES

- YOUR STRESS INCREASES.
- YOUR RELATIONAL INTIMACY DECREASES.

WHAT MATTERS THAT IS MISSING?

- 1) INTIMATE TIME WITH GOD.
- 2) INTENTIONAL TIMES OF REST.

SAY “NO” TO MANY GOOD THINGS TO SAY “YES” TO THE BEST THINGS.

## SESSION 2:

### HOW DO WE CREATE MARGIN?

- YOU PUT GOD FIRST IN YOUR FINANCES!

WHEN YOU PUT GOD FIRST

- 1) YOU EXPERIENCE GOD’S BLESSINGS.
- 2) YOU BECOME SUPERNATURALLY CONTENT.
- 3) YOU END UP WITH MORE OF WHAT MATTERS.

## **SESSION 3:**

**MORAL MARGIN: PUTTING DISTANCE BETWEEN YOU AND TEMPTATION.**

### **BETTER PLACES TO DRAW THE LINE**

- KEEP FOUR FEET ON THE FLOOR.
- NO SLEEPOVERS OR PLAYING HOUSE.
- NO TONSIL HOCKEY.
- AVOID DANGEROUS PLACES.
- MONITOR INTERNET ACTIVITY.
- AVOID TIME ALONE WITH THE WRONG PEOPLE.
- GUARD YOUR EYES, MIND, AND HEART.

## LEADER NOTES

- This series is designed to be very flexible for leaders in that you can add as much or as little to it as you want. Dana Byers serves as the on-screen host and walks through each of the questions and Next Steps for your group, but feel free to include your own questions, thoughts, activities, and examples of how to create margin. You can also pick and choose the videos you want to use for each session. There are four videos per session that can be shown all together or separately. Do whatever you feel works best for your group.
- Be authentic and transparent as you lead your group through this series. This will help them better connect with the content.
- If time is limited, don't feel like you have to ask every Talk It Over question. Just pick the questions you feel will result in the best conversation within your group.
- Encourage your group to take the Next Steps listed in their discussion guide. If you don't have time to discuss them in your group, encourage group members to take their participant guides home, read through the Next Steps, and act on them before your group's next meeting.
- If you are looking for additional small group studies, visit <http://resources.lifechurch.tv>, where you can find a variety of series available for free download.