



Choosing to Cheat
Ephesians 5:21-25; Matthew 6:31-33
Message from Pastor Martin Hawley
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The Bottom Line: In your desire to get the most out of life, don't lose control of your life. Create breathing room.

Introduction: Life is better with breathing room. It reduces stress, broadens focus, and helps relationships thrive.

Breathing Room: The space between your current pace and your limits.

Some of you may be on the verge of your relational limits, and that's what our lesson is on today: How to have breathing room in your relationships.

Sometimes, when we force one more thing into the closet ... boom!

Emotional breakdown – too much pressure. One more boom!

Financial breakdown – too many bills/debt. One more boom!

Struggle for me was when I realized there was not enough time.

“Lord, take care of things at home while I do your work and build the church.”

What does ideal look like?

When we cheat our families for work, it's like asking our spouse and kids to “hold a rock.” The rock represents a load they were never meant to carry, but you've handed it to them. Because they love you, they accept it!

- You keep promising things will change.
- You keep checking on them.
- You repeat the promise to do better.
- You are chronically absent from important events.
- You point to the future to make up for the past.

One day, the rock drops! Grades plummet. Intimacy disappears. Distance is evident. Office is more desirable than home.

You were operating at your limits for too long.
Relationships require breathing room.

We love progress.

If you are going to cheat, cheat at work rather than at home.

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Ephesians 5:21, 25 (NIV)

Husbands, **love** your wives, just as Christ **loved** the church and **gave** himself up for her ... Ephesians 5:25 (NIV)

The real problem was **FEAR**.

So do not worry, saying,
“What shall we eat?” or
“What shall we drink?” or
“What shall we wear?”
Matthew 6:31 (NIV)

“For the pagans run after all these things, and **your heavenly Father knows that you need them.**”
Matthew 6:32 (NIV)

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

Instead of praying, “Lord, take care of things at **home** while I do your work and build the **church.**” Pray, “Lord, take care of things at **work** while I take care of things at **home.**”

Don't trade what's unique to you for something somebody else will do.

NEXT STEPS:

- Memorize: Matthew 6:33.**
- If you have to cheat, cheat at work not at home.**
- Pray: Lord, take care of things at work while I take care of things at home.**
- Create Breathing Room**