

## The Gift of Limits | Dave Geldart | March 12, 2023

1. Continuing our series on Rest. Coming down the homestretch.
2. And a reminder that you can find more about Rest and our Rule of Life tool on our website at
  - a. [Mosaicmhk.com/ruleoflife](https://mosaicmhk.com/ruleoflife)
3. Today we're talking about limits.
4. Limited. – what comes to your mind?
  - a. **Some positive connotations**
    - i. Limited edition (I have a limited edition Keeley compressor guitar pedal I like)
    - ii. The Limited clothing company
    - iii. Your small business owners may appreciate the LIMITED liability offered in an LLC
  - b. **Imagine many have a negative reaction**
    - i. Your options are LIMITED
      1. That stinks
    - ii. You feel limited in your potential
    - iii. Your job
    - iv. Where you can travel
    - v. Your relational satisfaction
    - vi. credit limits
    - vii. Speed limits
5. **You tell your kids don't hang on the fridge doorhandle**, what are they gonna do?
  - a. No devices in your bedroom, what are they gonna try to sneak under their covers?
  - b. Don't climb on the car ----- dents on the car
6. **Story about me pushing against limits:**
  - a. In high school, a buddy named Nate and I found a no-trespassing sign at the end of a road.

- b. In his old black 300zx with the t tops off.
- c. We both had a settled conviction that this limit was not for us
- d. Then Warning: trespassers will be shot on site
- e. THIS Warning Sign must mean there's something cool over there
  - i. So of course we went on to keep exploring
  - ii. Found some fascinating slag pits and abandoned industrial machinery
  - iii. Also found a cave opening.
- f. So of course we came back the next weekend with friends from youth group and explored the cave.
  - i. One of my better stories actually
    - 1. Includes explosives, airplanes, being chased by a man with an assault rifle, missing cars, stolen signs, and lots of police cars.
    - 2. Ask me about it sometime!

## **7. Human nature to generally push against and resent limits**

- a. Especially when you don't trust the limit giver!

## **8. WHAT'S A LIMIT YOU FIND YOURSELF PUSHING AGAINST?**

- 9. To be fair, not ALL limits are good for us. Some limits are to be pushed through so we can become more whole and healthy and mature:
  - a. Sin patterns
  - b. Trauma,
  - c. Shame
  - d. Abuse
  - e. Insecurity
  - f. Limits of understanding
  - g. Exploration
  - h. Endurance and strength
  - i. To be sure, there are some limits that we are **meant to push through so we can grow** and become more fully ourselves.

## **10. But many limits placed on us are for our good.**

a. To keep ourselves and others safe

**11. Some of those limits are simply a part of our inherent human-ness.**

a. We struggle sometimes to know the difference

b. **Am I tired because I need to manage myself better**, exercise more, eat better, be stronger?

i. Or is it a foundational reality that my body requires sleep? – more than I've been giving myself.

c. **Am I driven to try to meet all the needs around me** because that's what God requires?

i. Or am I actually over functioning, desperately trying to get my sense of worth and purpose by performing and feeling needed by others

ii. When in truth, I'm only able to do so much.

**d. All of us are limited in some degree by our personalities and abilities**

i. Some recharge their energy by being with others

ii. Others recharge most by being alone.

iii. Some have a great aptitude for details and numbers and administration, but are weaker in interpersonal skills.

iv. Some have strong, healthy bodies, others are limited by the realities of age, or disease, or injury.

**e. To be human is to be limited. All the more since the fall.**

i. **It takes discernment** and wisdom to know the difference between healthy growth limits that are to be broken through, and which are part of our created humanness and to be respected.

**12. What happens when we violate our basic human limits?**

a. Those who violate the need for rest and sleep..... **eventually suffer significant side effects**

i. Fatigue

ii. Foggy thinking

iii. Irritability

- iv. isolation
  - v. Relational brokenness
  - vi. Anxiety
  - vii. Depression
  - viii. Heart attack
- b. **Introverts**, what happens if you don't get some alone time .... For a long time.
- i. **Same things!**
- c. **Extroverts** who get isolated and cooped up
- i. Bad news (covid!)
- d. **What about if you don't eat healthily?** Too much or too little?
- i. The body breaks down. Ends up being able to do less.
13. But limits have more than personal practical implications.
14. **As Author and pastor Pete Scazzero writes in Emotionally Healthy Discipleship,**
- a. **How we choose to understand and respond to our limits goes to the core of our relationship with God. It's so foundational, in fact, that the Evil One made limits a target of his strategy from the very beginning.**
  - b. *Scazzero, Peter. Emotionally Healthy Discipleship (p. 91). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.*
15. **The original sin of humanity was actually our attempt to violate our God-given limits**
- a. In a garden of paradise, God provided everything for them. And everything was theirs.
16. **Gen 1: 8-9, 16-17** Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. <sup>9</sup> The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ... <sup>16</sup> And

the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

- a. Yet intentionally placed in the middle of the garden a tree he said was off limits for eating.
- b. God gave them a limit.
  - i. And a seemingly good reason for it

Ch 3:1, 4-7 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" ... <sup>4</sup> "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup> "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

<sup>6</sup> When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

- c. **Satan attacked Adam and Eve in the place of limits.....** with the original lie that God was not good and was holding out on them.
  - d. **Tempted adam and eve to believe that the limits God set for them were harmful,** and that the Good life was to be found in breaking free from the oppression of limits and becoming ..... like ..... God.
  - e. And to the great woe of our people since that day, they fell. And everything went sideways.
- 17. Yesterday Jack, our 7 year old went with me for some "special daddy time" to target** to return something and help me shop. On the way home I

decided to treat him to Taco Bell and we actually “went inside” to eat. He’s a flurry of off the wall questions and ideas. And as we were there, he said **“Dad, I wish I could do anything I wanted.”** We talked some about the reality that God made us limited and that’s OK. And only he can be perfect and unlimited in all he does. Jack said **God’s not perfect. No one can do everything right all the time. It’s NOT FAIR that he can do whatever he wants and we can’t.”**

**a. How many of you can in your heart of hearts relate to that?**

**18. We have a tendency to this very day to want to do the same thing our ancestors Adam and Eve did:**

a. Distrust God

b. Eschew our limits

c. And try to become God, the master of our own lives

d. We all have done it.

e. And **even those who have entrusted themselves to Christ still struggle** at times with this temptation.

i. Following Christ and becoming like him is an event and a process.

ii. You choose to give up trying to be the God of your own life and to entrust yourself to God through Jesus.

iii. But we’re not zapped into perfection.

iv. The Spirit works on the long process of helping us change from the inside out.

v. We continue to struggle with temptations to make life work on our old strategies... Though we also begin to experience victory over sin as the process continues!

**19. Get a little vulnerable with My story:**

a. *My desire to be like God has shown up in a basic need to control my world*

b. As a child I often felt rejected and bullied.

i. We moved around a lot.

- ii. Enough that the world outside the limits of my home felt unsafe
  - c. **So I unconsciously developed a style of relating to the world where I felt like I had to**
    - i. **Hold up the world**
    - ii. **Protect myself from disaster**
    - iii. Because I couldn't trust God to do it.
    - iv. It was up to me.
  - d. Less power-moves: pressuring/manipulating ppl, but more fretting fear: Think through every angle, be super cautious
    - i. Don't get taken in and abused or embarrassed by walking into situations unwittingly
    - ii. Wanting to appear put together, reliable, right, in control, and likable
  - e. **The weight of it slowly crushing me**
    - i. The cracks of fear and anxiety
  - f. Some significant progress starting in my seminary years.
20. **But still a knee-jerk way to make life work (apart from trusting God)**
- a. **Fearfully fretting** about needing to secure my life by not making mistakes, not being seen to fail
  - b. Trying to operate beyond the limits of my human ability and design
21. **Like adam and eve, we have a fundamental revulsion against living within the limits God has set for us.**
- a. **To some it's a safety concern.** To others a desire for freedom. Yet others for experiences of pleasure.
  - b. **ALL OF THESE WERE available to us in the Garden of God.** Yet instead we choose to live life outside his presence, outside the garden where we have to fend for ourselves.
    - i. **Scratching in the dry dirt** while the vultures screech overhead
  - c. Where.... **At least we're free.** And unrestricted. Self-determined
    - i. Just like Adam and Eve.
22. What are ways you try to do this? We all have them.

- a. Where are you trying to operate beyond your limits. And function like God?
- b. How's that working for you?

## 23. The Gospel

- a. Rom 3:23 “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”
- b. Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- c. Col 2:13-14 <sup>13</sup> When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you<sup>[a]</sup> alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, <sup>14</sup> having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.
- d. Eph 1:4b-8 In love <sup>5</sup> he<sup>[b]</sup> predestined us for adoption to sonship<sup>[c]</sup> through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. <sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace <sup>8</sup> that he lavished on us.
- e. Romans 8:14-17 <sup>14</sup> For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. <sup>15</sup> The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship.<sup>[f]</sup> And by him we cry, “Abba,<sup>[g]</sup> Father.” <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. <sup>17</sup> Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ

## 24. You don't have to live like an orphan any more!

- a. Fending for yourself



- b. Like sheep without a shepherd, anxious and malnourished and exposed to predators that prowl around, nipping away our friends and family day by day.
  - c. **Your God has come to save you.**
  - d. To lift off the crushing weight of our sin..... our need to control, be seen as right, please ourselves, secure our own lives.
  - e. You're called into His family!
  - f. Royal princes and princesses of the God of the Universe
    - i. CO-HEIRS WITH CHRIST OF HIS ENTIRE KINGDOM!!!!!!
  - g. INSANE
  - h. We're also like little sheep..... in his flock, in His pasture.
  - i. Protected and provided for my him.
  - j. Inside the safety of his boundaries.
25. We are the little sheep, and he is our good shepherd.
- a. **Ps 23: <sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.**
    - <sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters,
    - <sup>3</sup> he refreshes my soul.  
He guides me along the right paths  
for his name's sake.
    - <sup>4</sup> Even though I walk  
through the darkest valley,<sup>[a]</sup>  
I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
  - b. (guiding and directing the sheep LIMITS!!!), protecting from harm)  
He makes us to lie down in green pastures, beside quiet waters, he restores our

- c. Souls
- d. Our very being. Everything about us. Down to our cores.

**26. He beckons us into the darker areas of our heart where fear and anxiety and selfishness and pride still rule.**

- a. Still tempting us to take our lives in our own hands rather than being shnuckered again.
- b. Look out for number 1
- c. Finding Jesus where you've despised and blown past your God-given limits.

**27. You're not God.**

- a. A beautiful letdown
- b. Like a child throwing a fit pushing and punching and screaming and flailing.
  - i. Then the calm when they finally give up, and give themselves over to be cared for.

**28. Rest is inherently about embracing a limit**

- a. I am not God**
- b. He is untiring
  - i. I am not
- c. He is all knowing
  - i. I am not.
- d. He is everywhere
  - i. I am not.
- e. He is provider
  - i. I am not.
- f. He is protector
  - i. I am not.
- g. He is comforter
  - i. I am not.
- h. He is altogether right and true
  - i. I am not.

**29. As pastor Louie Giglio has said: I am not. But I know, I AM**

- a. I AM – God’s chosen name for himself. Yahweh! I AM.
- b. If his name is I AM, then that must mean, my name is I am not.
- c. I AM NOT GOD
  - i. But I know HIM

**30. He’s my daddy. And HE CALLS ME Beloved.**

- a. For all who call upon his name, all who seek HIM as our shepherd and leader
- b. Our God
- c. To them he has given the right to be called children of God.
- d. Beloved.
- e. His.

**31. Once we let go of trying to be the I AM, the ultimate determiner and upholder of my life**

- a. Then I can finally accept who I truly am.
- b. Blessed.
- c. As Ben said last week: Blessed mess.
- d. Held in his arms.
- e. As a beloved son and daughter.
- f. Once we stop trying to be God, we can begin to truly be ourselves.
  - i. And find peace and joy in the limits of his care.
  - ii. It’s one of the primary ways we grow up

**32. God’s limits are actually a gift**

- a. A call to lay down the world at his feet
- b. And let him carry it.
- c. Atlas – a Titan who was CONDEMNED to hold up the world for eternity. By Zeus after a failed revolt by the Titans for control of the heavens.
- d. In a way, its true

- e. **Since the beginning, we've revolted against the God** of the Heavens, Yahweh our creator. In the garden we sided with the enemy and tried to overthrow him as master.
- f. We said, WE CAN HOLD UP THE WORLD JUST FINE ON OUR OWN.
  - i. When we no longer said thy will be done, but MY WILL BE DONE, he gave us what we asked for.
  - ii. **He said to us, THY Will be done.**
  - iii. You want to hold up the world and take control of life, here you go. As I told you before, it will crush you.
- g. We got what we wanted. And it's been crushing us ever since.
  - i. **And we're so. So tired.**

**33. Yet Jesus invites us to give up and lay down.**

- a. **To lay our burdens at his feet.**
- b. He's the only one who can carry the weight of the world.
- c. The Gospel invitation to you and to me and to all the people of the world is to come and rest
- d. It's EXHAUSTING trying to be God.
- e. In trying to secure your life, make yourself happy and fulfilled
- f. **No amount in the bank account ever ends up enough to let you rest**
- g. No amount of partying or pleasuring
- h. No amount of success or titles or children or friends or vacations or followers on Instagram will ever be enough

**34. Come, my friends.....stop trying to be God.**

- a. **Let God be God.**
- b. **And give you rest.**
- c. Embrace his limits on you as a gift, not a threat. And in so doing push against the original lie to humanity.
- d. No – God IS GOOD. He is not holding out on us. His limits and boundaries are good and kind. He knows how we flourish best.
- e. **Choose Rest. Let Him recreate the garden of eden again in your heart**

**f. As we await his return. To make ALL THINGS NEW**

- i. The Garden will fill the earth
- ii. And in its center
- iii. A city. And the tree of life.
- iv. For the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is gone.
- v. Christ was crucified upon it. And bought for us the redemption from its curse.
- vi. Amen – Come

35. **Lets finish out today looking at some ways we put this into practice.**

Ways we can take steps of rest with boundaries and limits that actually increase your overall ability to care for others.

**a. This is not ultimately about ourselves but also about increasing our overall ability to be present with and care for others.**

- i. To minister and love and serve for the long haul!

**b. Start with taking care of your body**

- i. Consciously Live within the limits of your body
- ii. Sleep
- iii. Rest
- iv. Nourishment
- v. SCREEN TIME
- vi. Consider your unique personal limitations based on your personality, stage of life, capacities, and time

**c. Practice the habits we've been talking about in this series.**

- i. Sabbath – limiting your work
- ii. Eliminating Hurry – limiting your pace
- iii. Self-Care – discovering and attending to the limits of your body and soul

**d. Pay attention to patterns of thinking where you feel like you have to be in control (situations, another person)**

- i. Counter them by reminding yourself you're not God, but I can trust him.

1. I am not, but I know I AM.

**e. Practice saying no to some things and people**

- i. Graciously but firmly
- ii. Especially if you tend to be a doer or a fixer, rescuer,
- iii. If you find yourself doing things you don't want to do or don't have time for because you'd feel bad letting someone down.
- iv. Saying no is pretty hard for me. So if you resonate we can try to take those steps together!

**36. God wants to meet you in your limits.**

**a. For you to receive them as a gift.**

b. Give you rest for your souls as you continue to recognize and repent of essentially trying to be God by ignoring your God given limits.

i. Rest!

c. A place for your self-will to come out into the light, and for you to let him replace it with trust.

i. Rest

d. For your anger and depression and anxiety to do what they're designed to do: point you to something deeper that's not right. The check engine light of the soul.

e. For you to flex your trust muscles as you risk stopping. Not doing. Not securing your own life. And risk letting him take over your care and provision and satisfaction.

i. Rest.

**37. Mat 11:28 28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 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.**

**38. Pray**

**39. Next week Josh teaching about apprenticeship.**

**40. Lords Supper**

a. For those who have chosen to trust Christ

- b. Instructions – come down center aisle, exit to the sides
  - i. Take at your own pace remembering and celebrating that Christ’s blood shed and body broken for you have made a way for your adoption and rest with God.
  - ii. Gluten free option as well.
- c. Lord’s prayer together
- d. **“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”**