

E² vs. M²

Pursuing an Equilibrium of Excellence vs. Living in the Morass of Mediocrity

There are three, and only three, type people in the world – those who:

- Know they are under attack and do something about it – those seeking E².
- Know they are under attack, but don't do anything to thwart it – those who would like to seek E², but instead live M².
- Those (the vast majority) who are unaware to this constant attack – those also destined to live in the Morass of Mediocrity.

What is most amazing is how we can be so oblivious to what should be so obvious – how we can ignore the constant drumbeat of war, all around us, and not take up the weapons available to us to defeat these enemies!

In Pursuing E² (Equilibrium of Excellence):

Bad News – We are in the midst of a battle.

Good News – In the battle is where Grace is!

The reality of life's trials is a central theme of the *Bible*, beginning early in *Genesis* until the final restoration of peace at the end of *Revelation*; with much of the *Bible* devoted to telling us how to fight our enemies now so we can have a better current and eternal life.

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. James 1: 2-3

The best strategy, used by our enemy to defeat us, is to:

- ❖ Make his opponents complacent – minimize the danger.
- ❖ Then attack and destroy their weapons (if, in fact, the weapons have been maintained).
- ❖ Lastly, kill them!

Most of us are given just enough to keep us doped up and unaware of what we are facing – much like the Indians trading Manhattan for a few trinkets (probably a good deal now, but not when they made the trade). A little bit of money, a few decaying possessions, TV (hour after hour) to distract us . . . and there are even worse things that we could divert ourselves with. All the while the big battle, the end of life, approaches with little or no meaningful preparation; everyone's personal Armageddon is approaching whether they acknowledge it or not! Death is inevitable. While the precise way it occurs can surprise, death itself should not surprise anyone as it so often does! Success in life is, to a large measure, our dealing with and coming to grips with death – deciding what price we are willing to pay for our short earthly life as opposed to the investment in the eternal, looming, life right around the corner for all of us!

We can largely (and only) neutralize our enemy when we listen to Jesus and can then say with Paul:

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Mt 10:28

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. Phil 1:21

Once we take this threat of death out of the hands of our enemy, the devil, we are about 80% of the way “home.”

True religion is not that difficult:

... the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. ^{1Pe 1:9}

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. ^{Phil 3:12 - 14}

There are 2 type trials with different successful approaches to each – trials we can be delivered **from** and those requiring us to go **through**. And for each trial we face we take one or the other fork in the road:

2 Approaches to Life		
Devil's Way -->	The Inevitability of the Inertia of M2	No Hope - No Help
God's Way -->	Seeking E2	God's Grace (we certainly cannot do much on our own!)

Choose Your Religion

The “proof” of most religions is how their gods responds to what they do. The proof of Christianity is exactly 180° opposite – Jesus Christ turned “common” religion upside down by proclaiming Truth as how we respond to what God has done for us. Life is a constant display of what God has and continues to do for us – if we take our heads out of the sand and look around!

An Example A Picture Can be Worth a Thousand Words

Seeking E² (an Equilibrium of Excellence) vs. the inevitability of M² (the Morass of Mediocrity) is largely a matter of breaking the daily habits of neglect and inertia by replacing them with a positive discipline; for example, taking things and people for granted vs. thankfulness.

One of the key aspects of any relationship there is great thankfulness, between the when there is not conscious thankfulness



is in its perspective of thankfulness – where parties, there will be great strength just as the connection will be weakening.

Think of newlyweds basking in the glow of love and mutual thanksgiving for each other. Then, after a few years (if not months), this happiness typically lessens because they have not developed the discipline of consciously being thankful for each other; the common joke being that newlyweds openly proclaim to others how fortunate they are to have found their partner while, after a few months or years they (while maybe not openly, at least to themselves) think how fortunate their spouse was to have found them! This is an excellent example of the results of thankfulness versus thankfulness lost from taking each other for granted; the fight is one of developing the discipline of thankfulness.

The discipline of thankfulness is a key component of any E² life – having an equilibrium of thankfulness so that in times of extreme trials (when a close person dies rather than getting well, a

spouse divorces rather than reconciling . . .) we can “fall back” on this discipline to help bring us through the trial since God has not chosen to deliver us from it. Many aspects and relationships of life (a new home, new job, new child . . .) can begin with great thankfulness, yet without precise and continued (disciplined) thought and action, our feelings begin a steady, but sure, decline – resulting in M^2 rather than E^2 . E^2 , on the other hand, is not even satisfied with maintaining the initial level of thankfulness – its objective is to find ways to increase and enhance our appreciation! And we do this in practical ways:

- Focus and prioritize what is most important.
- Throwaway, destroy, ignore, corral, fight . . . , as appropriate, things that attempt to take us off our goal of E^2 .
- Not become over-extended time-wise, financially, emotionally . . . so that we are overwhelmed by obligations to relatively unimportant things and tasks to the detriment of what is far more important!

Just some thoughts on making

2007 – The Year for Seeking



Seeking an Equilibrium of Excellence!

To refresh your memory – print the next page and test yourself on how you are doing in your personal attempt to fight the enemies of our bodies, minds, souls, relationships, eternity . . . E^2 is a great goal, investment and objective!

2007 - The Year for Seeking



Physical ^{Body}	Spiritual	Financial	Physical ^{Possessions}	Relational ^{Personal}	Relational ^{Work}	Mental
Proper Rest	Proper Rest	Live within means - start paying down debt	Dispose of clutter	Be Thankful!	Proper Rest	Be Thankful!
Dedicate Time	Dedicate Time		Clean/maintain what you keep	Dedicate Time	Be Thankful!	Proper Rest
Exercise	Seek 1st ^{Mt 6:25-33}			Take Sunday off!	Take Sunday off!	Dedicate Time
Be Thankful! ^{Key for good attitude}	Be Thankful!	Be Thankful!	Be Thankful!	Every day have a "devotional" time	Every day have a "devotional" time	Exercise
Floss your Teeth!	Every day have a "devotional" time	Clean/maintain physical possessions				Start/increase giving ^{rather than seeking "entitlements"}
Take Sunday off!			Take Sunday off!		Take Sunday off!	
Every day have a "devotional" time	Start/increase giving ^{rather than seeking "entitlements"}	Exercise ^{Even if there is no immediate impact, in the long run this is the best financial investment a person can make}			Be THE person, in the office, that has the best attitude ^{Encourage others}	Start/increase giving ^{rather than seeking "entitlements"}
		Take Sunday off!			Challenge yourself with new tasks	Every day have a "devotional" time
						Challenge yourself with new tasks
		Start/increase giving ^{rather than seeking "entitlements"}				