



WE DO HARD THINGS EVERY DAY

with Thomas Cox

▶ FOCUS VERSES

I can do all this through him who gives me strength.
Philippians 4:13

For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things,
holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.
1 Timothy 4:8

▶ DISCUSSION

- 1. Thomas talks about being good as a kid because he “didn’t want to let down Jesus,” but also because he had a certain image to maintain to his peer group.**
 - a. Looking back on your own teen years, how important was maintaining an image to you?
 - b. Did it motivate you to do things that were good and healthy, or did it cause you to make decisions you later regretted?
- 2. What’s the hardest thing you’ve ever done willingly (i.e., a challenge you chose for yourself, not something that was forced on you by circumstance)?**
 - a. Do you look back on that accomplishment with pride today?
 - b. Is that memory something you draw upon when you choose—or are called upon—to do hard things today?
- 3. Thomas says that managing people is one of the hardest parts of running a business, but “taking the best of” someone—choosing to see them and their actions in the best light, giving them the benefit of the doubt—can help ease conflicts, because you never know what hidden struggles someone’s going through. (See 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.)**



- a. When was a time recently that you gave a co-worker, friend, or family member grace even though your patience was being tested?
 - b. When was a time when you didn't give someone that grace?
 - c. Looking back, how did those decisions make you feel?
- 4. Have you ever had to transition from one job or environment into a new arena where you had to modify your old ways of communicating and dealing with people?**
- a. What changes did you make, and did they leave you feeling accomplished or frustrated?
- 5. Talk about the demands that work and family place on you. What are the biggest things you're asked to give consistently?**
- a. Do you take any time to be "selfish," as Thomas describes it, and focus on introspection and self-improvement?
 - b. What sorts of things do you do, and are they part of a regular routine?
- 6. In eating healthier, Thomas says that it can be more important to say no to unhealthy things than saying yes to adding new things. Apply that philosophy to life in general. (See 1 Corinthians 6:19.)**
- a. What's an unhealthy practice, habit, or indulgence you'd like to be able to cut out of your life?
 - b. What kind of help do you think you'd need to make that change?
- 7. Thomas returns to the concept of giving grace when he talks about the challenges of marriage. (See 2 Corinthians 9:8.)**
- a. What's something your spouse does (or did) that originally made you irritated or angry, but that you came to view less resentfully when you made more of an effort to view them in a better light?
 - b. What's a trait or tendency of yours that your spouse viewed less harshly after giving you some benefit of the doubt?

