

## Weekly Study of Sunday's Message

May 3, 2026. *"Fight Club: Fighting unnecessary urgency"*

### I Intro.

We're into May, finishing out the school year, and beginning a new series. We're glad you've chosen to use this resource. You'll want to keep up with everything that's happening at NCC. Stay connected through our social media to keep up with everything that's going on. This is our companion devotional to Sunday's message. It's just a part of all we have to offer to you. Whether you were able to participate in this service or not, this devotion is free-standing. We hope you find this tool helpful on your spiritual journey. We don't want you to miss out on anything. We consider you part of our community. We have many ways you can plug into life at NCC. You can find all those through our website, app, and social media sites. Our app is the best way to livestream our services, but you can also livestream on FaceBook and YouTube. You can revisit past services, sign up for events and even give. We're encouraged by your presence when you gather with us. New and familiar faces join us every Sunday. If you join us online, we appreciate your presence. We are fully committed to our virtual attenders. We are your church family. If there is anything you need, prayer, or anything else, please let us know.

### II Sunday.

So, let's start with an open ended question: **What are inventions or developments that have made being able to do everyday things faster?**

Just a few are: Instacart. Amazon Prime. Next day delivery. Walmart Delivery. Door Dash. AI. The Internet. Chick-fil-a drive through. I'm sure you can think of others. All of these are great. I wouldn't want to get rid of them. **But— are we aware of what they do to our perception and expectations for life and for ourselves?**

Our culture worships speed and efficiency. Getting things done fast. We want everything fast. What's worse is we're willing to give up quality for speed. We get sucked into an instant gratification (everything has to happen yesterday) mindset, lifestyle and expect everything in our life to also happen immediately.

**Will you permit me some personal old man rants?** Feel free to disagree. You'll be wrong. But feel free to be wrong.

**First old man rant.** I believe Tik Tok, online gambling, (prediction markets) and the lottery, are ruining people. I do believe in living in a free country that allows us to have these. But— in the freedom of living in a place that allows these, we also have to be honest enough to examine the downsides of these. There are always trade offs in the choices and preferences we have. I believe these lead to shortening attention spans, and diminishing our ability to grow patience for the good things to come to fruition over time. Our lack of an attention span (exacerbated by short form videos) we haven't grown the ability to hang in there and allow things that take a long time to take the time they need. And the lottery, and online gambling, sells us the dream of an easy workfree path...quickly. Watcha think?

**Second old man rant.** Many of this upcoming generation want the lifestyle they grew up with. But without the 15-30 years that it took us to get there. Not all Gen Z. or Gen Alpha are like this. Lots of them are hard workers, out there busting it. But many of them want the nice car, house, clothes, eat out all the time, multiple streaming services, without having to work their way up through the ranks. There is this urgency I see expressed online all the time, where people in their 20's and 30's feel like

failures because they can't buy a house, can't find a job that will support a family, and don't have the things that other people have at their age. And I am very sympathetic. Things are way too expensive. But think about what it took to get you to where you are now. Hardwork, commitment, sacrifice and especially patience. I think having it all now is an unfair expectation that has been placed on 20 and 30 year olds because their peer group is now the entire world. Our peer group were just the people on our street, and maybe in our church.

Now...let's turn the tables. Some of us who are 40 years old and older, need to accept a good bit of the blame for this. These upcoming generations are like this because WE DID IT TO THEM! Many of us wanted to save our kids from what we went through. Many of us had fairly tough upbringings and we wanted to save our kids from that. We did need to let go of a lot of the unnecessary struggle we were put through. But, we fell in love with speed, efficiency, just to get nicer stuff. We bought the lie that fast was more important than good. Like our desire for fast food over real food. And we made it their expectation. See this belief in our tech world. The motto is: *"Move fast and... break things"*.

Clearly some things demand urgency. I want to be careful about throwing everything out if it smells of unnecessary urgency. There are some things that demand urgent attention and action. Fixing things at your house. Going to a doctor. Behavioral problems in your kids—husband. Some financial situations. Let me give you permission (as if you actually need it) to be able to say some things in your life need to be addressed with some semblance of urgency.

But for this particular message we're talking about "unnecessary urgency". When we rush through, don't allow time to work but force it, we actually do more harm. This is elevating all things to be worthy of being urgent things. Even if they're not. Here are some warnings of unnecessary urgency. I'm just going to hit them quickly. They don't need a whole lot of unpacking.

**1. Unnecessary urgency can create false crises.** We make things that are regular everyday struggles into crises. Then we wonder why we're anxious, stressed, frantic, and tired all the time.

**2. Unnecessary urgency can cause us to rush to poor decisions.** Since we've created, and amped up the threat level on a lot of issues, we also create an artificial deadline when they need to be 'fixed'. **How many of you have rushed into a decision because you felt a sense of 'urgency', then found out more info later and wished you had waited?** We will value a poor decision made hastily rather than a thoughtful one that took time.

**3. Unnecessary urgency can cause us to miss the moment.** Because we're rushing in the moment to get to some sort of 'felt' solution, or at least an attempt of one, we miss other important things happening in the moment. Because we unnecessarily label something as 'urgent', we can become hyperfocused at the expense of other equally, or even more important things.

**4. Unnecessary urgency unfortunately just reveals a lack of trust.** This one stings. When we pull the fire alarm on our feeling or reaction to something, we're saying that that thing needs a response—often before we seek wisdom from God.

I'm not advocating we just let things slide. There should be a sense of urgency about our spiritual growth. I'd rather use the word intentional rather than urgent. We're doing our part, which is creating space, openness for God to move within us. I'm talking about getting ahead of God.

A profound philosophical and theological voice in the Christian community was asked what is THE PRIMARY way to grow in our relationship with God, and our personal spiritual maturity. Dallas Willard said this:

***“Hurry is the great enemy of the spiritual life in our day. You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life.”***

That was a lot. Fighting “unnecessary urgency” is going to be a real fight. Not with others. But with the things inside of us that stand in the way of our relationship with God, and our ability to grow.

Here is an interesting new testament teaching on fighting “unnecessary urgency”.

**James 5:7-8 Dear brothers and sisters, be patient as you wait for the Lord’s return. Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen. You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near.**

This was when the followers of Jesus were facing immense persecution, and considerable threat of death. They felt a powerful sense of urgency for God to fix things. For Jesus to come back. It wasn’t “unnecessary urgency”. Things were really bad. James was telling them to grow the ability to resist the draw into panicked urgency. **See anything that looks like that in our current culture?**

**Truths to learn from this passage about “unnecessary urgency”.**

**1. Farmers teach us that you simply cannot force what you want that are outside of your control.** Crops are extremely important. We need to eat, and feed others. But you’re at the mercy of forces outside your control. This desire, addiction, to forcing things to happen now, leads to making things outside of our control unnecessarily urgent. “I NEED IT RIGHT NOW!!” Unnecessary urgency is seen and often experienced as panic. Because important things outside of our control aren’t doing what we want them to. This particular truth teaches us there is a rhythm to life we have to learn to live in. Understanding, and learning to live in that natural rhythm, will bring about a spirit within us that God can use to grow us. Also the peace and contentment we believe will come from hurrying things.

**2. Practice courage.** We just don’t start doing this. Courage is a skill we have to intentionally grow and hone our practice of it. Courage is like patience. You can’t just download it. The Greek word for courage is: ‘sterixate’- it means to strengthen or establish. I love the word establish. To set up, create something permanent. It signifies stability. When you ‘establish’ something, you do the work, then the practice of it is set. This doesn’t mean you’ve mastered it. It means you’ve established the routine, practices that will grow courage. “Take courage” is the truth that courage will grow within us, over time, to face the pressing things of the world, with a powerful sense of peace from God’s presence.

**3. When it’s time...it’ll be time.** I hate this phrase, but I realize the wisdom of this phrase. I’m a 6 on the Enneagram (look it up) That means when I’m planning or talking about something, I want to know ALL the details (strengths and weaknesses) that could happen in the next several...months, even years. I’m just not good at all with letting the natural movement of the Holy Spirit, or work that requires time to actually do its work. A lot of time there’s work being done out of our awareness. It’s trusting the process! To avoid the trap of falling into “unnecessary urgency” I have to grow the ability to identify and acknowledge my desire for things to happen NOW. But I still live in the understanding, truth, that my work needs to be working on me, and not forcing things to happen before their time. But with that growing courage, trusting that I can join with God in this good work.

**4. This is about ‘grounding yourself’.** When your foundation is solid, steady, dependable, trustworthy, ESTABLISHED, then you don’t feel the need to do it all yourself, or force things to happen. This goes back to the phrase “take courage”. Establish. Do the work of creating something permanent and stable. “Unnecessary urgency” often comes from not being grounded. “If I don’t...RIGHT NOW then...” This is what God told the Israelites when they were in captivity. They

were looking for the same thing the people were in James. *“All of these things you promised– when will it happen?”*

**Isaiah 28:16. So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic.**

*“I set the stone. A ‘tested’, ‘cornerstone’.” “I have started, and am building this work.”* When you can trust in this work that the great I AM is doing, then you will begin to free yourself from *“unnecessary urgency”*. From anxiety, worry, stress, and an artificial, self-imposed, sense of timing. This is building quiet, margin, healthy rhythms into your life. The work we do isn’t rushing around frantically, seeing everything as urgent. This is doing the work of trusting, and leaning into the timeless work of God.

### **III Challenge.**

I was tempted to make us go through all of Ecclesiastes 3, *“There is a time for everything...”* But we know that. In a moment of panic, or frenetic hair on fire urgency, we just need a reminder. And carving out a sacred place, creating a moment, to slow down and align ourselves with the movement of God.

**Psalm 46:10 *Be still and know that I am God.***

It was at this point we did a meditation in the service. Even though you’re just reading this, let’s be still and know. So, let’s try that. Here are the question prompts we walked people through.

**Where do you find yourself waiting impatiently, feeling *“unnecessary urgency”*?**

**Where are you experiencing anxiety, fear, stress?**

**Where do you need to take courage...to strengthen...to establish?**

**What do you need to hear, see, know, experience, to find grounding?**

**We live in a world addicted to speed and hurry.** A human created and continually fed sense of urgency. And we allow ourselves to get swept up in this artificially induced sense of *“unnecessary urgency”*. In rushing around, moving more from inertia (just the fact that we’re moving) than by any intentionality to move towards anything in that movement. By fighting *“unnecessary urgency”* we can; find real peace by addressing any anxiety, stress or panic that washes over us. Establishing our hearts in waiting. Recognizing God is at work, accomplishing his will. We lean in and trust in that work. Knowing that trust in the work of God will grow our confidence in and relationship with God. Recognizing God is at work, accomplishing his will. We lean in and trust in that work. Knowing that trust will grow our confidence in and relationship with God. *“Take courage”* God **IS** at work.