

## **Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.**

**Sunday March 8, 2020 "Breaking Chains: Busyness."**

### **I Intro.**

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work through from the message this past Sunday. Whether you were able to attend the worship service or not, this devotional is free-standing and you can still use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. Take as long as you need to dive into this material and feel free to share it.

### **II Sunday.**

Sunday we began a three week journey of learning what it means to break the chains that bind us. This is kind of a familiar understanding of how the choices we make and the life we choose to live can seem like freedom at first because we get to do what we choose to. And then we discover that in that appearance of 'freedom of choice' we actually enslaved ourselves to the consequences of those choices. And we find ourselves in chains. And we don't know how to get out of them.

This was the first message of Jesus when he began his ministry. Reading from the scroll of Isaiah, Jesus said he came to release us from the things that enslave, (such a strong word but paints a picture of what our choices often do), and to set us free. So read this passage first and then we'll hit the primary one later. **Luke 4:17-19.**

**What did this say about what Jesus proclaimed his work was to be about?**

**How does this compare with what we see from churches?**

The primary passage was from the oh so familiar book of Haggai. An old testament prophet who was tasked with rebuilding the temple. This passage was a challenge from God, about the people's priorities and choices, where it had gotten them, and what they needed to do to be able to put more important things in their life. So, read this next passage, and then we'll look at some of the specific things God told the people of Israel that can help us address the chains of busyness in our own lives.

**Haggai 1:5-11.**

**What jumped out to you about this passage and God's words about priorities?**

**How do you see this having application to your struggle with busyness?**

There were four questions Kal pulled out of this passage that we need to ask in addressing the busyness in our lives.

#### **1. What is your life filled with?**

Before you can begin to start unbusying your life, you have to do some inventory to determine what are the things you've filled your life with.

**Do I actually know what my life is filled with?**

**Have I ever sat down and done a ruthless and fearless inventory of the things I commit my time, energy, and attention to?**

A great way to answer this question is to journal the use of your time for a week. If you're serious about addressing busyness, it helps to see exactly what you fill your time with.

## **2. What do you have to show what your life is filled with?**

In the Haggai passage we see this is why God told the people right after the previous, 'take a look at your life' statement.

***"You have spent a lot of money, but you haven't much to show for it."***

So, in addition to doing an inventory of what's in your life, you have to answer the tough second level question; **for all you pour energy, time and resources into, what is in your life of value that has come from all of that?** This is a tough question, and requires honesty and some deep work.

## **3. Can you actually tell the difference between what is and isn't important?**

This third question is a pivot question. That means the first two questions push you to do some personal inventory, and this question asks if you possess the ability, a template, to determine if you can actually sift through your schedule and separate the important from the unimportant.

### **Do I understand what I need to be able to do?**

Another way to view it is.

### **What in my life do I use to help me decide what to say "Yes" to and what to say "No" to?**

Andy Stanley, a pastor in Atlanta, says that every "yes" to something will be a "no" to something else.

## **4. What are you willing to cut to lessen the busyness?**

Once you can adequately, not even completely, answer the above three questions, then you begin the work. After you begin working on figuring out what is and what isn't important, you will have to decide if you're willing to cut some of the less important things in your life. And just know, and brace yourself, you will have a very hard time sifting through all the stuff, trying to decide what to cut. Because since those things are in your life, you've come to believe/feel they're all important. You'll have to most likely rank the importance of things so you can begin to eliminate some.

Bob Goff who runs a consulting organization has what he calls his 'Thursday quit something' practice. Every Thursday, he identifies something in his life that really isn't necessary, and he quits it. Whether it's a habit, some memory he's holding onto, some objects around his house, or things he's let creep into his schedule he continually works to reduce his load.

## **III Challenge.**

The struggle with busyness is the slow creep of things we add to our schedule, become responsible for, and we rarely do the work to see what we can take off of our plate to keep from being overwhelmed. In this passage from Haggai, God challenged the people of Israel to justify what they spent their resources on by asking them "what did they have to show for all of their time and effort". And that can be our closing thought; **"What in your life can you pour your energy, resources, and time into that will grow the life you want and the relationship with God you desire?"**