

**Building Blocks - Rediscovering the Art of Neighboring**  
***Making the Time to Neighbor***  
**September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011**  
**Text - Mark 1:21-39**  
**Scripture Reading - Mark 1:21-39**

Video 2

Last week we established that Jesus calls His disciples to love their *actual* neighbors.

- Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37)
  - Our neighbor is anyone we come across who is in need
- Case for loving our actual neighbors
  - They are in need.
  - Their needs are right in front of us.
  - We are well positioned to meet their needs.
  - To cross over on the other side and ignore them is a bad witness.
- Block Map Exercise
  - Stranger - Acquaintance - Relationship
- Join the movement
  - Commitment Cards
  - Website
- Action Step
  - Work on learning your neighbors names
  - Magnets

This week we want to look at one of the two primary hindrances to loving our actual neighbors - TIME.

- We're all SO busy
  - "How are things going?"
    - "Busy" or "Good... Busy"
  - Work, school, sports, lessons, laundry, dishes, family, friends, exercise... How are we supposed to find time to breath, let alone to add one more *significant* thing to our plates like loving our actual neighbors?
  - "Church" alone can be overwhelming
    - Making Room For Life by Randy Frazee

Two important questions to consider when dealing with busyness

- Are we using our time to build God's kingdom or our own?
  - o Prior to being saved by Jesus, even the best of us are all about ourselves.
    - **Ephesians 2:1-3 (NIV)**  
<sup>1</sup>As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, <sup>2</sup>in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. <sup>3</sup>*All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts.* Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.
  - o The cravings of the sinful nature are by necessity selfish cravings.
    - To sin is to go against God. To reject God's will for our lives.
    - God's will for our lives is that we spend them loving and following Him and loving and serving others.
    - Thus to reject God's will for our lives (or in other words to follow our sinful nature) is to reject loving and following God and loving and serving others.
    - But if we reject these things, who else is there to love, follow, and serve? OURSELVES
  - o Some people's selfishness is obvious
    - **Luke 12:16-19 (NIV)**  
<sup>16</sup>..."The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. <sup>17</sup>He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' <sup>18</sup>"Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. <sup>19</sup>And I'll say to

myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."

- We all know rich fools
  - We all despise the rich fools we know
- o But some people's selfishness is far more subtle.
- Loving, responsible, hard working, middle class mother, who isn't following Jesus
  - She's still following the cravings of her sinful nature. She's still building her own kingdom.
- o God didn't create us originally to be selfish and He doesn't create us anew to be selfish either.
- God created us in His image, to rule over and enjoy His creation, under His loving authority.
  - He created us to love Him and to love others and to forge about ourselves.
  - But sin changed all that.
- **2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)**  
<sup>17</sup>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
  - **2 Corinthians 5:14-15 (ESV)**  
<sup>14</sup>For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; <sup>15</sup>and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.
  - **2 Corinthians 5:20 (ESV)**  
<sup>20</sup>Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.
- o Are we using our time to build God's kingdom or our own?
- What are we spending our time doing, reading, watching, thinking about, etc.?

- Are we spending our time on God and others, or are we spending our time on ourselves? Are we spending our time building God's kingdom or our own?
  - o If the answer is our own, then something is seriously wrong.
    - Haven't been created anew
      - Repent of your sin and trust in Jesus
    - Living in rebellion against our Father
      - Repent of your selfishness and start spending the precious time that God has given you on God and others, not yourself
  - o Jesus' example (Mark 1:21-39)
    - How did Jesus use his Sabbath day? Teaching in synagogue, casting out the unclean spirit, healing Simon's mother in law, healing many who were sick and casting out various demons, and getting up very early in the morning, while it was still dark, to go to a desolate place and pray
  - o Loren Harrison's example
    - "I live to serve"

So the first question we need to ask ourselves when confronting our business is, "Are we using our time to build God's kingdom or our own?" The next question we need to ask ourselves is...

- Are we making the BEST use of our time?
  - o God doesn't want us to simply make good use of our time He wants us to make the best use of it.
    - **Ephesians 5:15-16 (ESV)**  
<sup>15</sup>Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup>*making the best use of the time*, because the days are evil.
  - o *Making the best use of our time means doing exactly what God wants us to do, when God wants us to do it.*

- o It's possible to do all sorts of good things for God, and still be in rebellion against Him.
  - Human Example - One of my daughters
  - Spiritual Example - My quiet time
  
- o In order to make the best use of our time there are a few things we need to do.
  - We need to know what God's will is in general.
    - Romans 12:2
  - We need to know what God's will is specifically.
    - Allow God to set our agenda
    - Be open to interruptions
      - o "Flex and flow"
    - Be led by the Spirit
  
- o Jesus perfectly obeyed God's command to make the best use of His time (Mark 1:21-39)
  - Prayed
    - "Not my will but yours" "Your kingdom come, your will be done"
    - Teach in synagogue, lunch at Simon's, home in the evening (teaching disciples), prayer in the morning
  - Open to interruptions
    - Man with unclean spirit, Simon's mother in law, the crowds at night, the disciples in the morning
  - Led by the Spirit
    - **Mark 1:38 (ESV)**  
<sup>38</sup> And he said to them, "Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out."

Let's apply what we've learned to loving our actual neighbors.

- No question God wants us to do it. The only question is, what does it look like for us?
- If business is in our way, and we're using our time to build our own kingdom, then we need to make cuts to free up time.

- We need to let God set the agenda in regard to our neighboring
- We need to be open to interruptions
- We need to be led by the Spirit
  - o My example of downsizing my neighborhood plan

#### Action Step

- Pray

#### Next Week

- Talk about the other great barrier to being a good neighbor – FEAR.