

DEVOTIONS FOR HONDURAS MISSION TRIP February 11-18, 2025

Group Devotion #1 (Wednesday)

Busyness: How we feel Important

One of the phrases we hear often in our culture today, and we even use ourselves: "I am so busy!" OR "I am too busy!" OR "I am stressed out!"

There are a variety of reasons for this:

- It makes us feel important
- It's a measure of our worth
- We are wanted or needed
- We are popular and in demand

Often, the end result is that we are at the **C**enter, we are in **C**ontrol or seeking control, and our **C**ommitment is to **O**ur **A**genda and may not be the Lord's Agenda (our commitment is to ourselves, though we don't often see it that way)

Read: Psalm 46 (especially verse 10) and Romans 8:28

Questions for Discussion

- Do you feel that you are too busy? Stressed out? Why?
- Do you recognize one, two, or all of the three **C**'s in your life?
- How can you "Be still" before the Lord? With the Lord?

Group Devotion #2 (Thursday)

Busyness is a Mindset

The reality is that busy-ness comes and goes in our lives. In the middle of our busy days, busy times, we can sometimes notice a “slow down.” Then, what we often do is fill the time so that we stay busy: our phones (texts, calls, searches, scrolling, social media); television (shows or movies, the news); books or blogs; activities, entertainment, sports, exercise. We have a knack (because of the variety of opportunities in today’s culture) for being able to stay busy 24/7.

Jesus had a “warp and woof” in His life and ministry. He got up early and went to a quiet place to pray (Mark 1:35f) and, on His way to an Official’s home (important “mission/ministry”), with a crowd pressing in on all sides, He heals a woman, then pauses to recognize and affirm her (Mark 5:21-43).

We need to have the “mind of Christ.” See Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 2:1-11; 4:4-9. Jesus was filled with joy, as was Paul (see Acts 16:16-40). Sacrificial, loving service; not just busy-ness!

Questions for Discussion

- We all have busy times and slower times. Do you recognize the “warp and woof” of these times in your life? When you are not busy with demands or commitments, how do you fill the slower times? Why do you fill them in the way that you do?
- Have you begun to develop, with the help of the Holy Spirit, the “mind of Christ?” How can you?
- Do you know the difference between “sacrificial and loving service” as opposed to “being busy” or even “being too busy?” If not, how can you learn to distinguish and implement in your own life?

Group Devotion #3 (Friday)

Tyranny Of The Urgent - Is there really enough time to do all that God requires of you?

- By Charles E. Hummel

A mother's work is never finished, and neither is that of any student, teacher, or minister. However, our dilemma goes deeper than shortage of time; it is basically the problem of priorities. Other people's demands can drive us to frustration! From the Prayer Book: "We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done."

We live in constant tension between the urgent and the important. Our greatest danger is letting the urgent things crowd out the important. We've become slaves to the tyranny of the urgent.

On the night before He died, Jesus said: "I have finished the work which Thou hast given Me to do." How could Jesus use the word "finished?" His three-year ministry seemed all too short, but Jesus never seemed to be in a hurry. He had time for people. He could spend hours talking to one person, such as the Samaritan woman at the well. What was the secret of Jesus' work? We find a clue following Mark's account of Jesus' busy day. Mark observes that "in the morning, a great while before day, He rose and went out to a lonely place, and there He prayed" (Mark 1:35). He prayerfully waited for His Father's instructions. He discerned the Father's will day by day in a life of prayer. By this means He warded off the urgent and accomplished the important. Jesus' prayerful waiting for God's instructions freed Him from the tyranny of the urgent.

When we fail to wait prayerfully for God's guidance and strength, we are saying, with our actions if not our lips, that we do not need Him. But, as we wait for direction in prayer, the Lord frees us from the tyranny of the urgent. He impresses on our minds the assignments He wants us to undertake. If the Christian is too busy to stop, take spiritual inventory, and receive his assignments from God, he becomes a slave to the tyranny of the urgent. We must make adequate time for daily waiting on God. As we continue in the Word, He will free us from the tyranny of the urgent and free us to do the important, which is the will of God.

Questions for Discussion

- Do you have trouble prioritizing?
 - At the end of the day do you often feel like: "I have left undone those things which I ought to have done; and have done those things which I ought not to have done."
- Do you sometimes (or often) let the urgent take priority over the important?
- Do you feel like spending more time with God in the morning would help you prioritize your day? If you haven't yet, can you see yourself taking this step?

Group Devotion #4 (Monday)

Knowing yourself in the Lord

When it comes to the activities in our lives, sometimes we have a real sense of “who we are” and what we are called to do in this world: whether it be in ministry or in the secular world. At one level we are to be consistent, the same person, in character, fruit and our morality/holiness. But, at another level we need to be clear on our talents, gifts (especially Spiritual Gifts: Romans 12; I Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4), our “style” (are we task oriented or people oriented, or a mixture of both), our passions, and how much time and energy we have.

Everyone has a call on their lives from the Lord: a general call to come to Him as Savior & Lord (Romans 1:19,20; I Timothy 1:14, 15; 2:4), but also a calling personally, particular to each one of us. This is helpful and important, especially when challenges, disappointments and interruptions come along!

Consider Jesus, both early in His ministry, and three years later as He heads to Jerusalem and the Cross (in Mark 1) amidst the busy-ness of demands and ministry. Jesus gets up early in the morning and finds a “lonely place” to pray (Mark 1:35), as well as saying what His priority in ministry is (Mark 1:38). And, as He was heading to Jerusalem to suffer and die on the Cross, at the end of His public ministry, though He is surrounded by crowds, building momentum, heading to Jerusalem, a blind man interrupts Him. Though the crowds try to silence the blind man, because Jesus is “busy and important,” Jesus takes the time to hear the man’s need. Jesus gives Him attention, the focus, His love and His healing! (Mark 10:32; 46f).

Questions for Discussion

- Are you aware of your gifts, talents, passions, personal style, time & energy, enough to make good decisions regarding God’s call on your life?
- Do you spend time with Him daily: to get to know Him, love Him, be filled by Him and know His call?
- How do you handle “interruptions?”