TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Don Taylor / Opening Prayer by: Robert Ward
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#2 We Praise Thee, O God
#837 I Need Thee Every Hour

Scripture Reading by: Joseph Girard
#701 My Jesus I Love Thee

Communion Devotional by: Zach Arthur
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#3 Hallelujah! Praise Jehovah
Sermon: Living with Contentment
Philippians 4:10-13

#940 Only a Step
#989 Soon and Very Soon
Closing Prayer by: David Smith

Our Small Groups will not meet tonight.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

May 12, 2024

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

The Biggest Roadblock to a Better Church

This article was published just this week by Jack Wilkie, and it touches on an issue that I have been concerned about for some time. We studied his book "Church Reset" a couple of years ago, and, as he says, the concept of a close-knit church family is at the heart of it. It lies at the center of our small groups too. That is the goal. But we cannot really be all we are called to be as a church unless we actually make time for it and prioritize it—and prioritize each other—in our lives. Evaluate your life in light of what he has to say here. BP

A truly close-knit church family in which we are surrounded by kindred hearts is something for which most people are starving.

In the response to my 2020 release, Church Reset, that one concept has received more feedback and follow-up questions than anything else discussed in the book. Looking at **John 13:34-35**, **John 17:21-23**, **Acts 2:38-47**, and the numerous "one another" verses in the New Testament, anyone who's studied the issue at all knows church is supposed to be more than it typically has been.

While we can talk about how to get there and share notes on what has or hasn't worked, that's the wrong place to start the discussion.

There's one significant roadblock to our growth: almost all of us are way too busy.

Relative to some, I haven't been around that long, and most of my life has been lived in the internet era. So, I may be speaking from ignorance here. But, it seems like there was a time when life wasn't so breathlessly overbooked.

People could sit on the front porch and catch up with the neighbors, or have a "third place" (somewhere aside from home and work) to hang out and catch up with friends they would regularly see.

Now, it seems like it's go, go, go all the time. Getting two people's calendars lined up so they can spend so much as an hour together can seem impossible. Families have it especially tough, as kids' activities often keep parents scrambling all over town. And I'm not looking down on anyone here, either. I struggle to find windows in the schedule just as much as anybody else.

But all of the going and doing makes any of the sitting and talking impossible. Hospitality and visitation, the secret sauce of a closer church, can't fit on the calendar.

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Steve Ward, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Donna Wilson, Jo Ella McKewen, Kelly McCain, Wayne Noonkester, Oscar Cantu, Rickey Lucas, Jennifer Stelly, Kevin Coleman, Cathy Stifflemire, Ken Coleman, Dr. Hugo Thomas, Gayle Coleman

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis, Debbie Merritt

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific, Mani Pagidopali in India

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister, meeting Monday, May 13th at 5:30 p.m..

We are working a new Friends and Family directory. A copy of the old one has been placed on the bulletin board. Please check your name, address, phone number and email to make sure it is correct.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Thursday, May 16th at 8:00 a.m.

Graduating High School Seniors

Kenadi FrauenbergerMatthew Girard, Joseph Girard are our three graduating High School Seniors. We will be honoring them on Sunday, May 19th. We will have a meal after morning service.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

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The weird thing is, in all of our busyness, we're setting all-time records for screen time. We have hours a day for Facebook and Netflix but can't hang out with each other. Mentally, having someone over or going to their house can feel like a chore, especially when you can sit on the couch, click "Like" on their post, and trick yourself into thinking you connected with them.

So, there are two steps needed.

First, we need to see how busy we actually are.
Start with the screen time, but take a look at everything else you do and see how much of it is actually needed. When we take stock of what's eating up our time, we might find we're not actually busy, we're just busying ourselves.

And if that's the case, it's pretty easy to correct. Put something on the calendar—whether attending a church event, getting together with a brother or sister, visiting the elderly, making a call, you name it—so once you get there you can't spend the time on the normal busy-making.

Second, if we're still too busy, we need to make some cuts.
Maybe your calendar audit reveals you aren't sitting around in front of a screen watching the hours go by, but you really are that occupied all the time. A lot (or even all) of the things probably look highly important. That's when it's time to choose—how badly do I actually want to be closer to my Christian brothers and sisters?

If there's not a single thing that can be cut back to get more involved with the people of your church, in most cases the priorities are probably out of alignment.

Hebrews 11:6 says we must believe God rewards those who diligently seek Him, and this is one practical application of that principle. We have to believe that acting in faith by trading personal time and wall-to-wall hobby pursuit for Christian fellowship will be rewarded by God.

And as we start to build that Christian closeness, I doubt anyone would say "Actually, I was happier when I was spending this time scrolling TikTok or running to activities all over town like my hair's on fire."

It doesn't take a lot. You probably won't be having other Christians at your table 7 nights a week, and that's just fine. I firmly believe cutting out just 5-6 hours a month for each other would transform our churches.

But until we can curb our addiction to hustle and bustle, I don't think we can count on becoming the close-knit church we say we want to be.