



Slowing

Session 10 – 15th July 2018

Bible Readings

Mark 1:32-39, Luke 5:12-16, Romans 12:1-8, Mark 6:30-31

Sermon Notes

We hear Jesus had the whole City lined up at his door and unable even to find time to eat? Does it seem like that in your household at the moment? Is hurry keeping you from living well?

How do we take a step back and regain vision and strength for our lives? The summer holidays can be an ideal time to slow down and make space to reflect on our lives.

Jesus told the parable of the sower – how the good seed doesn't always take root – or is strangled by the weeds – compared to the seed that fell on good earth producing a harvest beyond our wildest dreams.

After a busy period for Jesus just before feeding 5,000 - He invited his followers to "Come off by yourselves; let's take a break and get a little rest." Following Jesus cannot be done at a sprint. We can't go faster than the one who is leading and Jesus wasn't chaotic.

This does not mean we should never be busy. Jesus often had much to do, but he never did it in a way that severed the life-giving connection between him and his Father. He observed a regular practice of

withdrawing from activity for the sake of solitude and prayer. And if we intend to follow Jesus - we would do well to imitate him.

We might reduce the speed at key moments of our day – for example at mealtimes – eating our meals slowly and thankfully - preferably with someone else. If you study Jesus’ life, mealtimes were great moments of relationship, recreation and reflection with his disciples.

Find moments of solitude during the day to reflect on our walk with God and those things that are shaping us. Come just as we are – with nothing except ourselves and a bible. Starting each day praying for the people we will be with and placing our meetings in God’s hands; during the day reminding ourselves that one day the office and the business will be gone but we will still belong to God; at the end of the day quiet our mind, reflect on the day with God, give thanks, hand any anxieties or regrets over to Him, listen for His voice.

During a year try to find extended times alone. John Ortberg reminds us of the old grandfather clock that needed resetting and rewinding twice a day once in the morning and once in the evening and then once a year is taken apart to tackle clogging dirt, to straighten bent parts. So it is for us.

One opportunity for extended time with God next year might be joining us for the New Wine holiday and conference on Peterborough Showground – 27th July 2019. Debbie and I have found those weeks inspirational and we’d love to host you just up the road next year!

Key Quotes

“People nowadays take time far more seriously than eternity.”
THOMAS KELLY

“Hurry is not of the devil; hurry is the devil.” CARL JUNG

“The press of busyness is like a charm, it’s power swells.... it reaches out seeking always to lay hold of ever-younger victims so that childhood or youth are scarcely allowed the quiet and the retirement in which the Eternal may unfold a divine growth.” KIERKEGAARD

“In solitude I get rid of my scaffolding” HENRI NOUWEN

“For many years I was bothered by the thought that I was a failure at prayer. Then one day I realized I would always be a failure at prayer; and I’ve gotten along much better ever since.” BROTHER LAWRENCE

Discussion Questions

John Ortberg says, “Hurry is the great enemy of spiritual life in our day. Hurry can destroy our souls. Hurry can keep us from living well.” How have you experienced the destructive power of hurry in your life?

What is one thing you would need to change in your life so you could slow down?

Busyness can cause us to settle for mediocrity in our faith rather than a deep experience of God’s presence and power? How have you experienced this reality in your life?

We might say that “Love and hurry are fundamentally incompatible.” How is hurry the enemy of love in one of these relationships?

- ✓ Your relationship with God
- ✓ Your relationship with your family members
- ✓ Your relationship with other followers of Christ
- ✓ Your relationship with those who don’t yet know Jesus

Read: Mark 1:32–39 and Luke 5:15–16 where Jesus models an unhurried life. What could we learn from Jesus’ example?

What are some biblical truths we can hold on to that will counteract the inherited values and attitudes that cause us never to stop?

Prayer

Pray that God's Spirit of peace will fill your hearts, homes, workplaces, and thought patterns. Ask God to teach you the life-giving discipline of slowing down.

Living the Life

This month eat your meals slowly – preferably with someone else - and be sure to chew each bite completely and give thanks!

Personal Reflection

If I have identified a high level of busyness in my life, what is it that is driving me to push so hard all the time? What am I trying to accomplish? Who am I trying to impress? Does God really ask me to do all I am doing?

Additional Small-Group Questions

Identify a time in your life when you really slowed down and enjoyed each experience that came your way. *What helped lead you to this time of slowing?*

How do you feel during the times you are not working or producing something?

Blog, Vlog and Social Media

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www.stmarysely.org and join the conversation on our [Facebook Group "Ely Team Holy Habits"](https://www.facebook.com/groups/267574210421687) www.facebook.com/groups/267574210421687