

## ***Busy, Then Renewed!*** February 4, 2018

### ***Mark 1:29-38***

INTRO:

We live in a busy world. It has probably always been relatively busy, it's just that now we are available every second of every day by way of telephone, email, text message. **How do we deal with all this and still have time for ourselves to be renewed and refreshed? It is a real problem that can affect our lives in a really bad way. There are things we can do, though. There are practices that we can engage in that will make us into fuller and deeper people. They will help us too be resilient too.**

ME:

I look for ways to feed my spirit in the midst of the busyness of life. I have told you before about praying the hours and how that can help orient our schedules around God. There are occasions when we are forced to wait where we can either choose to join in with others in making the wait miserable, or we can use it as an opportunity to breathe in and breathe out. We can look into other's eyes and see in them the image of God in which they were created. We can talk with them about life and about what we are each up to today. We can connect in the middle of a frustrating situation and try to make the best of it. After all, we were created in God's image too.

YOU:

**Have you forgotten this? Have you forgotten that you were created in the image of God? You were created in the image of God too.** And so we need to find a way to renew in the busyness of life. Let's see what Jesus can teach us about this:

GOD:

***Mark 1:29 As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. 30 Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. 31 He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.***

***32 That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. 33 And the whole city was gathered around the door. 34 And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.***

WE:

Busy:

After healing Simon's mother-in-law, Jesus heals a large gathering of folks from a wide range of issues. Although these other people may not have names and faces, the sheer volume of those healed in quick succession shows the far-reaching implications of Jesus' ministry. In the quick rhythm of Mark's Gospel, we are led to assume that what happened here, hap-

pened in many places. In the span of thirty seconds, we glimpse the bigger picture of what life was about in those days.

Apply:

A psychiatrist who studies burnout surveyed a random sample of 72 senior leaders and found that most of them reported at least some signs of burnout and that all of them noted at least one cause of burnout at work.

The article quoted one chief executive for a multibillion-dollar company who put it this way:

*"I just felt that no matter what I was doing, I was always getting pulled somewhere else. It seemed like I was always cheating someone—my company, my family, myself. I couldn't truly focus on anything."*

**I wonder if Jesus ever felt like that?** He probably did to a degree, but he had ways to avoid feeling like this. We can watch and learn from Jesus, lest we burnout:

***Mark 1:35 In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. 36 And Simon and his companions hunted for him. 37 When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." 38 He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do."***

Renewed:

Notice the importance of the “**quiet place**,” where Jesus takes himself to pray. That Sabbath moment appears in stark contrast to the flurry of activity. So, they come looking for him. “**Everyone is searching for you.**” **Well, wouldn't they be? After they've seen what he can do?**

**Renewed** in prayer, Jesus gets up and goes to the next place. There will be more teaching, more preaching, more healing of the masses. Perhaps he is ready—**renewed** in the spirit by his brief time of silence. Here's an opportunity for us to examine our “*religi-busyness*” practices. **Are we rushing through a packed program year, trying to be all things to all people, engaging in a flurry of high-energy activity, without pausing to fully renew ourselves in worship and prayer?** If so, how can we reimagine our shared ministry in ways that more faithfully reflect the Jesus kind of rhythm? Seeking a stillness in the heart from all the movement, where we can be made new for the journey ahead. Turn on the news and see if you can find an up-to-the minute story of peaceful protest: people showing up for racial justice, an end to hunger, or a ceasefire. Any place where people are standing still and silent in the midst of chaos. What can we learn from those modern-day images, and similar figures throughout history, about how to be a prayerful ‘ presence in the midst of great movement and change?

Apply:

We need to unplug from the busyness of life to renew and refresh ourselves. We need to put our own oxygen masks on first if we want to be of any use to anyone else.

THE SERMON IN A SENTENCE:

***Life is busy, and that's okay, as long as we take time to renew ourselves like Jesu models for us."***

YOU:

**How well do you take care of yourself in the busyness of life? What can you do to work on this?** You can begin by looking up from your phone.

CLOSE:

A city in Austria is using some creative measures to protect public safety from oblivious pedestrians staring at their smartphones. The city's Board for Traffic Safety said that nearly 40 percent of the injured pedestrians involved in accidents were injured because they were distracted by a smartphone device. "**Pedestrians are involved in more accidents in the city than anyone else on the streets, including cyclists, moped drivers, and car drivers.**"

"**Smartphone zombies,**" are a common problem in many highly trafficked areas around the world. Honolulu just signed a law that bans pedestrians from looking at their smartphones while crossing the street, thus becoming

the first city in America to pass a law aimed at reducing injuries and deaths associated with distracted walking.

The KFV in Austria has a more novel way to deal with the issue of distracted pedestrians:

*install large airbags around street-side lampposts that urge pedestrians to stay alert. The bags serve a double purpose.*

They may actually protect some people from absentmindedly wandering "*smack*" into a lamp post. But the messaging on the airbags reinforces the need for pedestrians to stay vigilant while walking the busy streets. Roughly translated, the airbags read:

*"Will the next car also be so well padded?"*

*We need to wake up in life!* We need to **rest** from the busyness of life.

*Let's pray about this together now...*