

## Make Community a Priority

In his insightful book, *Making Room for Life*, Pastor Randy Frazee explains our need to make community with others a priority:

Most likely you would use action words like *prioritize, eliminate, simplify, consolidate*. This advice would be right on track and rooted in ancient wisdom. Social specialists use a different language to say the same thing. They tell us that we need to exchange a host of *linear contacts* for *a circle of community*.

What is the difference between linear contacts and a circle of community? Diagram the linear relationship theory, and it would probably resemble the drawing of your world. There is a relationship of some sort between you and another person (*a line* drawn to them), but they typically would not share a relationship with the other people in the other worlds you manage (they are not in the same *circle*). . . .

In a linear relational model, you run from one relational unit to another. You go to work; you call your father or sibling on the cell phone; you golf on Saturday with a group of guys; you attend your son's soccer game; you meet with your financial advisor; you answer an email from a former coworker; you go to church. As you exit one world and enter another, there may be some mention of the people you just left behind, but essentially they are not connected to the present world in any meaningful way. . . .

The most damaging aspect of linear friendships is that no one really knows the real you. This can even include your mate, as he or she is often completely out of the loop on significant relationships you manage. I'd like to offer this thought: *a person doesn't really know you unless they know most of the people in your other circles*. Why? Because the most important thing about you is the relationships you have – your relationship with God and your relationship with others. For community to be authentic and strong, people have to share in those relationships with you. . . .

The challenge is to find the center place that allows you to integrate as many relationships and activities as possible into a circle. Is there a way to bring the world of work, school, family, recreation, and church into one circle? For the Christian, is there a place where you can bring into one circle your relationships with believers in Christ and your relationships with those who don't believe?

At Hopevale we call this “circle” a Community Group.

***Just because you CAN doesn't mean you SHOULD.*** Parents, how are you helping your kids set priorities and avoid being over-busy. It's not easy, especially when our kids get to high school. Share some of the Scriptures in this study with your children, and tell them what you're learning. Help your children get a handle on this area of their lives now. They'll thank you for it later!

**Rhythm Within**  
*Rhythm series*

## Too Busy

*I believe that one of the biggest reasons we're out of rhythm is that we've got too much busyness and not enough priorities.* Pastor Dan

1. Would you say you're usually busy? What is your busyness keeping you from doing that you believe God wants you to do?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What do these Scriptures teach about how we use our time:
  - Ephesians 5:16—
  
  
  
  
  
  - 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12—
  
  
  
  
  
  - Proverbs 23:4—
  
  
  
  
  
  - Colossians 3:23—
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What can you control about your schedule? How would a close friend or your spouse answer this question for you?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Write at least one priority you got from each of these:
  - Your parents—
  
  
  
  
  
  - Popular culture—
  
  
  
  
  
  - Life just happened—
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Note the priorities God gives us in these verses. Which one strikes you most?
  - Ecclesiastes 12:13; 2 Corinthians 5:9—
  
  
  
  
  
  - 1 Peter 3:7; Titus 2:4-5; 1 Timothy 5:8—
  
  
  
  
  
  - Galatians 6:10; Romans 13:8—
  
  
  
  
  
  - Micah 6:8; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20—
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What one thing will you commit to doing this week to address your busyness or strengthen a right priority? Who will hold you accountable?

*Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.* John 17:3