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BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
ELKHORN, NEBRASKA  
FEBRUARY 6, 2005  
PASTOR WENDA FRY

1           (The scene is the middle of night in suburban  
2 American. Joe is in the kitchen wrapping the kitchen knives  
3 in paper and putting them in a box)

4           SUE: Joe, is that you? You scared me to death.  
5 What are you doing? Turn on the light.

6           I said, you scared me to death. You did. All the  
7 noise you are making in here, I thought somebody was -- come  
8 on, talk to me.

9           JOE: Where else do you keep do you keep knives?

10          SUE: Where I deep the knives?

11          JOE: Where?

12          SUE: Oh, I don't know. Let me think. Maybe the  
13 bathroom? No laughter. I can see you're not in the mood  
14 for joking.

15          JOE: Where?

16          SUE: Tell me what you're doing.

17          JOE: I need all the knives.

18          SUE: I've never seen you like this.

19          JOE: Just tell me where.

20          SUE: You've already found them.

21          JOE: Are you sure?

22          SUE: You'll wake the kids.

23          JOE: What about scissors?

24          SUE: What?

25          JOE: Scissors .

1           SUE: The scissors are kept in the junk bin with  
2 all that kind of stuff, tape, glue, thumbtacks.

3           JOE: Thanks.

4           SUE: Tell me what you're planning on doing with  
5 all my knives.

6           JOE: I'm putting them away.

7           SUE: Away?

8           JOE: Yes, I'm putting them away.

9           SUE: As long as I can get to them.

10          JOE: No. No one will touch these knives. I'm  
11 putting them away.

12          SUE: I can't cook without my knives, Joe. I can't  
13 do anything in the kitchen without my knives.

14          JOE: You will not ever touch them again. Do you  
15 hear me?

16          SUE: Tell me what is going on with you.

17          JOE: I can't.

18          SUE: Is it Phil?

19          JOE: I don't want to talk about it.

20          SUE: It's about him, isn't it?

21          JOE: I said, I don't want to talk about it.

22          SUE: Across the street.

23          JOE: Excuse me?

24          SUE: That's it, isn't it?

25          JOE: I said, I don't want to talk about it.

1           SUE: You need to talk about it, Joe. Come on.  
2 Look at me for a minute. Come on. We need to talk about  
3 it.

4           JOE: Leave me alone.

5           SUE: You couldn't have done anything.

6           JOE: You don't know that.

7           SUE: Yes. I do know that without a doubt. You're  
8 not Superman meant to save every person in trouble.

9           He lost his job. Are we responsible for everything  
10 that is on the news? Is it my responsibility to save all  
11 those people?

12          JOE: You know this is different.

13          SUE: No, I don't.

14          JOE: Then you're fooling yourself.

15          SUE: Really? Do you hear what you're saying? I'm  
16 not the enemy here. I'm on your side.

17          You know, you have not been able to sleep for the  
18 last week, that's one thing, but now this?

19          JOE: Yes, now this.

20          SUE: Joe, come on back to bed. Put all that away.

21          JOE: Aren't you scared?

22          SUE: Come on.

23          JOE: No. Answer me. Do you ever get so scared  
24 and want to give up so badly that you don't know what to do?

25          SUE: No.

1           JOE: Answer me truthfully.

2           SUE: I would never do that.

3           JOE: Are you sure?

4           SUE: Yes, I'm sure. What are you implying?

5           JOE: I'm not implying anything. I'm asking you as  
6 your husband, as their father --

7           SUE: I'm their mother.

8           JOE: Are you really so sure?

9           SUE: I would never leave my children.

10          JOE: Do you really know that?

11          SUE: Yes, I know that. Now stop doing this.

12          JOE: I don't know. I don't know what it would  
13 take for me to do something like that, what he did, so I'm  
14 not taking any chances, none at all.

15                 I'm getting rid of all the knives and scissors in  
16 the house.

17                 We don't need them. We can store them away  
18 somewhere, somewhere where we can't get to them.

19          SUE: You need some sleep, Joe.

20          JOE: We were right here. Right here, Sue. I was  
21 watching the game. I was watching Monday night football and  
22 I didn't hear a thing. I didn't do a thing.

23          SUE: What could you have done?

24          JOE: Something.

25          SUE: What? What could you have done?

1           JOE: I could have done something. They were our  
2 neighbors. Doesn't that mean something to you?

3           When I was a kid, when I was a kid I knew all my  
4 neighbors. They used to walk in our house. We would play  
5 ball together. Being neighbors really meant something.

6           SUE: Things are different now from when we were  
7 kids. It was none of our business.

8           JOE: But why?

9           SUE: It's a violent world.

10          JOE: No kidding, Sue. What kind of an idiot do  
11 you think I am? I know it's a violent world.

12          SUE: I have had enough of this.

13          JOE: Our neighbor took his own life. Because why?  
14 Because he couldn't pay the bills.

15          SUE: Stop it. I am not going to listen to this  
16 again.

17          JOE: They were our neighbors. Those little girls  
18 were younger than our kids, and what is going to happen to  
19 them now?

20          How did I find out? I saw it on the news. The  
21 news, Sue.

22          We didn't even open the doors when the police came,  
23 the ambulance, we stayed safe inside.

24          SUE: It's none of our business.

25          JOE: We could have helped him, or what if that was



1 police. We didn't do anything.

2 When I was a kid, I knew all my neighbors. How  
3 about you?

4 When you were a kid did you know all your  
5 neighbors?

6 When I was a kid I knew all my neighbors. How  
7 about you?

8 I grew up in Montana and I never spent longer than  
9 four years in a town or a city.

10 My parents, when they retired, they retired at the  
11 base of the Bear Paw Mountains.

12 They named their cabin Last Resort and I finally  
13 figured it out; that all that time they have must have been  
14 running from the law.

15 (Laughter)

16 But wherever we did move, we moved to Montana, we  
17 moved to San Diego, we moved to Minneapolis, and wherever we  
18 lived we played with our neighbors and the kids down the  
19 street.

20 My parents didn't put us in the Stuebaker and  
21 drive us across town to play with our friends.

22 We played kickball and kick the can and under the  
23 streetlights and in the summer nights we would just play  
24 until we couldn't see anymore, until our parents called us  
25 home.

1           And we made friends with our neighbors and the kids  
2           in our neighborhood.

3           It was the same for Pastor Mark. He grew up in  
4           Vinton, Iowa, and he never moved around, but he did the same  
5           thing I did.

6           He played with the neighborhood kids and they  
7           played kick the can and they played hard ball, they played  
8           softball, and they did it until they couldn't see anymore,  
9           until their parents called them in at night.

10          He grew up with a kid named Mike, went to school  
11          with him all his life.

12          They played basketball growing up together, ran  
13          cross country in high school, and then played basketball in  
14          high school, too.

15          And then they ended up going to neighboring  
16          colleges. He told you this story a couple weeks ago.

17          They ended up going to neighboring colleges,  
18          Wartburg College in Waverly Iowa, and Luther College in  
19          Decorah. They are rivals, actually.

20          And one weekend there was an opportunity for them  
21          to go to an Alice Cooper concert.

22          He called up Mike. He said, "Hey, I've got tickets  
23          to the UNI dome in Cedar Falls and see Alice Cooper. Do you  
24          want to go?"

25          He said, "How much are the tickets?"

1           "Twelve dollars."

2           "Can't afford it."

3           Mark found another friend to go with him. The  
4 Tuesday after that weekend his mom called him and said,  
5 "Mark, I have bad news. Mike has taken his life."

6           Mark was shocked, because it was Mike, he grew up  
7 with him, he thought he was his best friend. He was  
8 shocked.

9           And just a few short months ago a neighbor in  
10 Elkhorn, we live in old Elkhorn, took his own life.

11          I didn't know him, but Pastor Mark knew him from  
12 Kiwanis Club.

13          He lived one block down the street from me on  
14 Pacific Street and again we were shocked. We just couldn't  
15 believe it.

16          When we hear that our neighbors have taken their  
17 own lives, or are dying of cancer, or whose teenager has  
18 become pregnant, we do three things.

19          We shake our heads; we realize how close we live to  
20 them; and we say, like Joe in the drama, "I could have done  
21 something. I'm sure there was something I could have done."

22          And we know that we are supposed to be doing  
23 something, because we know that Jesus says love your  
24 neighbor like you love yourself.

25          We know we are supposed to be doing something, but

1 we don't know what and we don't know how.

2 That's why we have been reading this book in light  
3 of scripture, "Making Room For Life".

4 The adult discipleship team saw Randy Frazee talk  
5 at a workshop in Chicago at the end of September and we all  
6 looked at one another as soon as we came out of his keynote  
7 and we said we have to share this with the Bethany  
8 community. That was incredible.

9 He was not even supposed to be there. He was  
10 filling in for somebody else. That's how we knew it was a  
11 God thing.

12 So many of you are reading this book, and if you  
13 have not purchased it, or if you would like to, you can  
14 still see me or one of the adult discipleship team members  
15 at the table for the pancake breakfast here this morning.

16 But Randy Frazee put forth some very simple but  
17 challenging thoughts in this book.

18 He divided it into four sections. He said the  
19 problem that we have here in America, and in particular in  
20 America, is crowded loneliness. He said it's a toxic  
21 disease.

22 Crowded loneliness is this. Let me give you one  
23 picture of it.

24 I've done it, you've done it, you have had an  
25 especially hard day.

1           You punch up on the visor on your van or car, you  
2 punch that wonderful button so that you don't have to get  
3 out, that garage door opener, and you punch that and you  
4 drive into your garage.

5           And while you are still in your car you hit it  
6 again so that that door comes right down behind you so that  
7 you can go into the house, recover from that stressful day  
8 and get up tomorrow and do it all over again, right?

9           And the last thing you need to do is to talk with  
10 your neighbors about, I don't know, the garbage pick up.

11           You don't have time for that right now, right?  
12 That's a picture of crowded loneliness, according to Randy  
13 Frazee.

14           Crowded loneliness is toxic. He said it's toxic  
15 because we were created with a connection requirement. We  
16 were created for community.

17           When God created the heavens and the earth and all  
18 that is in it, the sky, the seas, the stars, on the sixth  
19 day God created Adam.

20           And up until that time everything was great. God  
21 said this is good.

22           But all of a sudden something was not good, and  
23 what was not good was that Adam was alone.

24           So God created Eve and when Adam saw Eve he said,  
25 "Yeah, now you're talking."

1           Scripture says, "Here at last is bone of my bone,  
2           flesh of my flesh."

3           In other words, this is someone I can relate to.  
4           This is someone I can live with, laugh with, love with, talk  
5           with.

6           We were created with a need for community, with a  
7           connection requirement. So that is crowded loneliness.

8           We could be down at the Qwest Center, and we often  
9           are, or at a basketball game, or down at Memorial Stadium,  
10          we can be in a group of people and we can still feel lonely.

11          He says that's toxic. He says that is symptomatic.  
12          We are lonely in crowds like that.

13          It means we have not gone deep enough. We have not  
14          lived life deeply with those that are in proximity to us  
15          most often.

16          And those three groups are the people we work with;  
17          the people that live in our neighborhoods; and the people we  
18          love; our friends and our families, our children.

19          So the problem is crowded loneliness. His solution  
20          is restructuring our relationships and our time.

21          I gave Pastor Mark the two hard sermons, actually.  
22          Restructuring our relationships and our time and, remember,  
23          he gave out a piece of paper and we had to put ourselves in  
24          the center and we were asked to put down all our  
25          relationships and draw out our circles.

1           And here is my personal galaxy. There I am in the  
2 center.

3           There are all my linear relationships I try to keep  
4 going. Brad, are you ready?

5                    "That's me in the corner,  
6                    that's me in the spotlight,  
7                    losing my religion,  
8                    trying to keep up,  
9                    and I don't know if I can."

10           Trying to keep up, losing my religion all right.  
11 We were created to enjoy the precious gift of life and  
12 that's what that song reminds me up.

13           There I am, there you are, I know you saw that in  
14 your own paper that you drew.

15           There you are in the center in the spotlight,  
16 trying to keep up, and I don't know if I can do it.

17           That's what I came to the conclusion of. I have a  
18 lot going and I stopped. I didn't even get like my  
19 neighbors' names on there. I just became overwhelmed and  
20 stopped.

21           Because I realized that that's what it looks like.  
22 I'm trying to sustain all those relationships and I'm not  
23 doing a very good job of that.

24           In fact, there is a name on there that she has  
25 wondered, are we going to be friends or not?

1           I have not been able to sustain that relationship  
2           and do a good job of it because we don't travel in the same  
3           circle.

4           She is not a co-worker, she does not live in my  
5           neighborhood, and she's not a member of my family, and  
6           that's hard.

7           And what Randy Frazee says in that book is that we  
8           probably have a lot of people that we call our friends and  
9           really what they are are mere acquaintances.

10          And he's challenging us to live life deeply with  
11          those we come in contact with the most; our kids and our  
12          spouses.

13          You tell me this a lot. "I don't have enough time,  
14          Pastor Wenda. I can't find enough time to be with my kids  
15          or the people that I really love."

16          You tell me that. I know it. It's frustrating,  
17          but what Frazee suggested is that we restructure our time  
18          and he suggested the Hebrew day planner.

19          I gave this one to Mark because it was tough, but  
20          Pastor Mark lives pretty closely to this.

21          And I am challenged by this book and I'm trying to  
22          move to this Hebrew day planner.

23          6:00 to 6:00, productivity time. That's time for  
24          emails, soccer games, grocery shopping, this is according  
25          the Randy Frazee, but it's also the way the Hebrews live

1 their lives. That's why he calls it the Hebrew day planner.

2 So 6:00 to 6:00, time for productivity. You get up  
3 and you get after it and he says even the most gifted person  
4 among us only gets three hours of good work done a day.

5 Think about that. The Europeans got it right.  
6 They are done at 2:00 o'clock and then they get off the  
7 subway, go get their fresh bread and fruit and go home and  
8 have some convivia with their neighbors and friends and they  
9 eat together and laugh and share about their day.

10 They got it right, but not in America. We are  
11 bigger, better, and we are open a lot longer, right?

12 We think it's because we have to have everything at  
13 our disposal, but it's taking a toll on us.

14 Doctors say that the stress-related diseases are at  
15 a record level, and depression is at a record level,  
16 insomnia is rampant, and obesity as well.

17 These stress-related diseases are toxic, and that's  
18 why we wanted to share this with you, because it's worth  
19 listening to.

20 Time for relationships, 6:00 to 10:00. Sleep time  
21 10:00 to 6:00.

22 Thank God for Randy Frazee who came across a huge  
23 crack, crevice, in his life.

24 For 45 days he wouldn't sleep in one section. I  
25 thank God for that, because out of that came this, and there

1 are others who suffer from that, but he's suggesting that we  
2 do this.

3 I told you I'm kind of shifting, I tell you, if you  
4 go to bed at midnight it is harder to get up.

5 So I've been trying to shift and go to bed with  
6 Mark and actually it's kind of fun.

7 I'm enjoying going to bed at 10:00, 10:30, with  
8 him. It's better.

9 I'm not there yet, but I'm making some shifts and  
10 I'm wanting to do that.

11 So the solution is to restructure our relationships  
12 or our time.

13 And then he says there are obstacles, and the  
14 obstacles or overcoming bad habits and myths about raising  
15 children.

16 I also gave that one to Pastor Mark. I said I'm  
17 not going to touch that.

18 And I think he did a really faithful job last week  
19 when he talked to us about our boundaries, the need for  
20 boundaries in our families.

21 And I'm encouraged because some of you are saying  
22 to me, "Wenda, someone called me just the other week and  
23 said is Sophie going to play softball? And I said just  
24 simply said no."

25 Just cutting one thing out, so it's causing a stir

1 amongst us.

2 We don't have do it all just because we are  
3 Americans, just because we have discretionary money to do  
4 it.

5 We don't actually have to do that. That's the way  
6 of the world.

7 We can say no to some of these things and  
8 restructure our time and challenge some of those myths about  
9 raising children.

10 They don't have to be in everything and he did a  
11 faithful job of reminding us about the precious gift of time  
12 last week.

13 And then finally today we are going to talk about  
14 the how-to, the last section of the book.

15 And I'm going to talk about some practical steps  
16 that we can do as people of God and appreciating the  
17 precious gift of life, but before I do let's pray together.

18 God of life, thank you for the gift of life. Thank  
19 you for the gift of time.

20 You promise us in your word that there is time  
21 aplenty.

22 There is time to deeply connect with those we love.  
23 There's time to celebrate joys and sorrows with one another.

24 There is time to do all that we want to do. So we  
25 ask that you would help us today.

1           We know you have a word for each one of us. So we  
2 pray your Holy Spirit's power to work through your Holy Word  
3 today as we look at it together.

4           Thank you, Lord Jesus Christ, for being our  
5 teacher. In your Holy Name, amen.

6           Let's go right to the Scripture and look at a  
7 picture of what the early Christian church did together.

8           I invite you to turn back to Acts, Chapter 2, page  
9 113 in the New Testament.

10          This is a great picture to begin with, because it's  
11 what the early Christian church did.

12          Chapter 2, it's at the end of that. At the  
13 beginning of Chapter 2 what happens is that the Holy Spirit  
14 comes.

15          Maybe you remember this story if you have been  
16 connected to the church. Maybe you don't know it.

17          But there is a story. Jesus promised when he left  
18 the earth that he wouldn't leave us alone.

19          And so he promised the Holy Spirit and he said to  
20 the disciples, Peter, James, John, all of them, he said,  
21 "Stay in Jerusalem, stay there, don't go until you receive  
22 power from on high."

23          All of a sudden there's power that comes and comes  
24 in the form of a huge wind and they look around, good idea  
25 to do, open your eyes and look around and see what God is

1 doing, and they see tongues of fire and people speaking and  
2 they just can't believe it.

3 At the end of Chapter 2, you can read that story  
4 for yourself, Peter is making sense of it for everyone.

5 So at Verse 38 he starts, he is helping others to  
6 make sense of it, but let's go to 43.

7 After he preaches a little bit, the Bible says awe  
8 came upon everyone.

9 As I'm going down this again would you note to  
10 yourself what constitutes the way they lived life together,  
11 okay?

12 Awe came upon everyone. There were wonders and  
13 signs. They believed and they had things in common.

14 They would sell their possessions and goods and  
15 would distribute as any had need.

16 Verse 46, they spent much time together. They  
17 broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and  
18 generous hearts.

19 They praised God having the goodwill of all the  
20 people and day-by-day God continued to add to their family  
21 of faith.

22 What constitutes life for the first Christian  
23 church? Talk to me.

24 CONGREGATION: Eating together.

25 PASTOR FRY: Where?

1           CONGREGATION: At home.

2           PASTOR FRY: They had food at home. We live in a  
3 fast food nation.

4           If you don't believe me, drive down Maple between  
5 12:00 and 1:00 and you will see twelve cars with single  
6 people in it in line at Arby's or Taco Bell or any number of  
7 those fast food places and they are waiting to get their  
8 food.

9           You talk about crowded loneliness. It's so  
10 awesome, if they got out of their cars, saved up some gas,  
11 right?

12           I read recently where the ozone layer is going to  
13 be repaired in 2050.

14           I won't be around, but I was thinking we could at  
15 least contribute to it now, but they could get out of their  
16 cars and they could go in the restaurant and get some new  
17 friends maybe, but that's the picture of crowded loneliness.

18           They ate their food at home. Amazing. What else?  
19 What else constitutes their life together? Shout it out,  
20 please.

21           CONGREGATION: They took care of each other.

22           PASTOR FRY: They took care of each other. Right.  
23 They loved each other; took care of each other. What else?

24           CONGREGATION: They spent time in the temple.

25           PASTOR FRY: Exactly. How often? What does it

1 say? Daily. That's right. Daily.

2 We have a little different setup. This is just  
3 refueling when we come to worship.

4 We are to be worshipping 24-7, as we go out in the  
5 real world, real worship really begins out there, but that's  
6 what I get from that, is daily did they worship.

7 What else constitutes their life together? Anyone?  
8 They sold their possessions.

9 CONGREGATION: They were generous.

10 PASTOR FRY: They were generous, weren't they? Who  
11 did they give it to? Anybody who needed it. Exactly.

12 So summing up now, they had enough time for  
13 everything.

14 They had family meals. They had friendly regard  
15 for one another.

16 That's what I get out of Verse 47, praising God and  
17 having the goodwill, the root of goodwill is quality, there  
18 was a quality of life.

19 Not quantity; not possessions; not accumulation.  
20 There was a quality of life to their lives together.

21 This is such a great picture. They lived life  
22 deeply together.

23 They prayed together, they ate together, very  
24 simple things to do together.

25 They talked about the Bible together, like what we

1 are doing.

2 That's what they did together. They had this  
3 friendly regard. It wasn't competitive.

4 How did they do that? How is it that they did  
5 that?

6 The key is in Verse 38. Look back with me. Does  
7 anyone recognize where the key lies?

8 It's in that word repent. Can you believe it?  
9 It's in that word repent, you sinners.

10 If you have been connected to the church for any  
11 length of time you have begun to associate that word repent  
12 with God spoiling all your fun, right? Or God being a  
13 punishing God.

14 Unfortunately, we can't read it in the Greek. It's  
15 such a beautiful word and it's such a positive word.

16 In Greek it means changing heart, mind, and  
17 attitude.

18 That's what is so cool about some of those old  
19 languages like that. It's not just one word. It's a whole  
20 deal. Heart, mind and attitude.

21 In other words, repent means to look, make some  
22 observations. Look within and see how you're doing.

23 Look without and see what is happening in your  
24 neighborhood, in your marriage, in your friendships.

25 Repent means to look within and to look around and

1 if you do that, if you make some observations, which I  
2 believe some of you have started to do, honestly, you  
3 probably have already discovered that you are not living  
4 life the way God intended for you to live life.

5 It's a precious gift. We have squeezed the living  
6 out of life.

7 This is from my amplified Bible. "Change your  
8 views and purpose to accept the will of God in your inner  
9 selves instead of rejecting it."

10 We have a hard time with that C word. It's change.  
11 We often reject change.

12 That's what the word repent means. It means change  
13 your mind, change your view.

14 That is, look around with open eyes and observe  
15 that which is happening and see if that is the way God is  
16 intending you to live your life.

17 I find it interesting that the first sermon that  
18 John the Baptist preached was that same one.

19 Repent. Remember? When he got on the scene he  
20 looked around and said look around you; look within you.

21 It was not ironically the same sermon that Jesus  
22 preached, his very first sermon, Mark, Chapter 4, the  
23 Book of Mark was written first so we know that was  
24 Jesus's first sermon.

25 Four sentences. The time is fulfilled. The

1 kingdom of heaven is near. Repent. And believe. That was  
2 his first sermon.

3 In other words, the time is now. The kingdom of  
4 heaven is near.

5 In other words, I am near you, Jesus is saying,  
6 right here, right here, look, repent, look around you, and  
7 believe, hold fast, hold on to me, because that life that  
8 you've always longed for, joy and love and forgiveness,  
9 freedom in your marriage, the life you've always longed for  
10 with friends, deeply connected to your children, talking to  
11 them about what God is doing in their lives, connected to  
12 friends, your coworkers, talk freely about your faith.

13 That life you've always longed for is just right  
14 here, Jesus is saying.

15 The greatest change agent in the world says I am  
16 near, nearer to you than you are able to ask, and that life  
17 you've always longed for, I will help bring it into our  
18 future and your present.

19 Jesus was a radical, radical Savior. He came and  
20 did things radically.

21 Fortunately he's so kind and loving toward us that  
22 he doesn't really expect the same, he would really like that  
23 if we would make radical changes, just upside down, that's  
24 what he teaches in his holy word that we need to be doing,  
25 but he's okay if we make some changes.

1           And Randy Frazee lists out in this book, there are  
2 three levels of change.

3           You can make a modest change; you can make a  
4 substantial change; or you can make a radical change.

5           An example of a modest change when it comes to  
6 having a family meal at home would be to add one meal that  
7 you know that is going to be the meal that week, that you  
8 covenant together, and you shake hands on it, or whatever  
9 you need to do. That would be a modest change.

10          A substantial change would be three to four nights  
11 a week.

12          A radical change would be let's scrap the whole  
13 plan and let's start living by the Hebrew day planner.

14          Let's just try it, because after all that's what  
15 God has called us to do.

16          But some of us can do things cold turkey and some  
17 of us have to get our feet wet.

18          I'm challenging you, because God so values you and  
19 has given you the precious gift of life and the precious  
20 gift of your loved ones, maybe you can make a modest change,  
21 or maybe it's a substantial change, or maybe it's even a  
22 radical change for you.

23          It could be, he suggests, that you switch jobs  
24 even. That would be radical and that would be difficult.

25          But in order to live the life that God intends for

1 us to live we need to make changes, and it's not easy to do  
2 that.

3 He suggests in the last part of his book, and I'm  
4 not really going to talk about these too much, getting work  
5 done at work.

6 I already mentioned the most gifted person does  
7 three hours of quality work.

8 He also suggests in that that you provide a place  
9 at home so you can be there when the kids are there.

10 And I've started to do that, take my work home on  
11 Wednesdays, and I get so much more done.

12 I'm making some modest shifts, I'm hoping to get  
13 into some substantial ones, but I'm making some modest ones  
14 for now.

15 The importance of sharing a meal. There is just  
16 nothing like it.

17 Every time we break bread together we go, "Oh,  
18 wasn't that good?"

19 What is so important about this is God is writing a  
20 novel.

21 You are a novel and what happens when you sit down  
22 at a meal is you share paragraphs with the people that you  
23 love that God has given you to love.

24 That's what you do, and thus you grow deeper, you  
25 begin to live life more deeply.

1           If you are set of older people and you don't have  
2 any children at home anymore, I challenge you to do that.

3           He says in there just start sharing about what you  
4 did, even if it's boring, and that goes for anybody, no  
5 matter what your age is.

6           What an older couple could do is just what did you  
7 think about today? What crossed your mind today? So many  
8 things could go from there.

9           That's how we begin to live life more deeply as God  
10 intended us to live it. The importance of sharing a meal,  
11 it's huge.

12           We are going to do that today actually. I hope you  
13 stay for the pancake breakfast, because we can share a meal.

14           The last thing is bringing church home. That's  
15 what we are going to continue to talk about.

16           By the way, this is just the ground work. This is  
17 just the beginning of sharing our vision for adult  
18 discipleship at Bethany. This is not just a worship series.

19           We are going to help you, as I said a few weeks  
20 ago, the vision is not crystal clear.

21           The one thing that is crystal clear is that God  
22 want us to live less stressed-out, less frantic lives, and  
23 I'm afraid the church has contributed to that in a big way.

24           We need to help you, I know this, know what you  
25 believe so that you feel comfortable in praying for your

1 neighbor; so that you are not left like Joe and Sue someday  
2 going, "We could have done something. They lived right next  
3 door to us." So that you don't find yourself there one day.

4 The one thing that is clear is that we need to help  
5 you to know what you believe.

6 I don't know exactly how to do that. Continue to  
7 pray for the vision for adult discipleship, because that's  
8 the most important thing right there, is bringing church out  
9 of here to there.

10 We've talked together about making room for life,  
11 the importance of it, the joy of it.

12 One of the steps, it's just a step today, meeting  
13 your neighbors at the breakfast.

14 Pastor Mark said he was eating with someone that  
15 lived in Fremont and someone that lived in Elk City and I  
16 said you didn't do it right.

17 You have to get with your neighbors I said. You  
18 have to get in that quadrant.

19 Go in there after church today and you will be  
20 directed to a quadrant.

21 I have a feeling you are going to hear, "I didn't  
22 know you lived four doors down."

23 I have a feeling you are going to discover that.  
24 It's just the first step.

25 If you know your who your neighbors are here at

1 Bethany, maybe there will be strength in that and then you  
2 can say, "Let's invite that Seventh Day Adventist family to  
3 come over to our house for soup."

4 It doesn't matter what religion they are. They are  
5 people that you live in close proximity with and Jesus said  
6 love your neighbor as yourself.

7 That's one of the hardest things that Jesus ever  
8 said to us, but we want to get after that and help you to do  
9 that, and we want to do that better and help you meet your  
10 neighbors today.

11 I'm going to close with the very back of Randy's  
12 book.

13 He said, in caps, "You can do it. You can make  
14 more room for life."

15 He says, "Before you know it you will be there.  
16 Where is there? It's a place where there is time for the  
17 most important things in life, a place where you rediscover  
18 the joys of your family and develop deep friendships with  
19 your neighbors. It's a place where you experience the  
20 richness of living life in Biblical community with God and  
21 the members of his family. In other words, it's a place  
22 where there is more room for life."

23 Let's pray together. God, we love the gift of  
24 life. It has so many challenges and struggles and strains  
25 and stresses.

1            Yet you promise us in your holy word that you are  
2 always near, nearer to us than we are able to ask, and that  
3 you will give us what we need, it won't be magic, but it  
4 will be your power, because you promised that you would give  
5 us your power to make changes.

6            Give us courage this week to look at our lives  
7 honestly, to look at our marriages honestly, to look at our  
8 community and our neighborhoods honestly, to invite you into  
9 our thoughts, our decisions, and our life.

10           You are the Lord of our life. You are the Lord of  
11 all life. We thank you.

12           We thank you so much that you have given us this  
13 gift. Bless us and keep us this week. In Jesus's name.  
14 Amen.

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