

## ICEBERGS: BUSYNESS

Luke 10:38-42

- We are in week # 3 of our new series called "Icebergs that will sink your family's ship!"
- If you haven't been here the last two weeks we've talked about unforgiveness and family idols and today we're talking about busyness!
- One of my favorite pastors is Chuck Swindoll who hosted a Christian Radio Show, has written dozens of books and pastored a few very successful churches.
- As you can imagine, a guy like that is probably busy!
- Here's what he wrote in his book "Stress Fractures"
- "I vividly remember some time back being caught in the undertow of too many commitments in too few days.*
- It wasn't long before I was snapping at my wife and our children, choking down my food at mealtimes, and feeling irritated at those unexpected interruptions through the day.*
- Before long, things around our home started reflecting the pattern of my hurry-up style. It was becoming unbearable.*
- I distinctly recall after supper one evening the words of our younger daughter, Colleen.*
- She wanted to tell me about something important that had happened to her at school that day.*
- She hurriedly began, "Daddy-I-wanna-tell-you-somethin'-and-I'll-tell-you-really-fast."*
- Realizing her frustration, I answered, "Honey, you can tell me... and you don't have to tell me really fast. Say it slowly."*
- To which she replied...."Then **listen** slowly."*
- Do you ever feel like you're just too busy?
- Like you're too busy for the things you love, the people you love, the God you love and maybe; like you're too busy for your family?
- By a show of hands how many of you often feel like you are busier than you'd like to be!***
- You just stepped into my carefully laid trap! ***Ahaha***
- This is the part where I tell you an amazing truth that you may not want to hear.

### **We are not victims of busyness; it's a choice. (Luke 10:38-42)**

- There it is! The plain ugly truth!
- Busyness isn't something that happens to us it's something that we willingly sign up for and participate in.
- There's a familiar story about busyness in the Bible that centers around a pair of sisters named Mary and Martha.
- [Luke 10:38-42](#) "As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home.

-Now, you have to imagine this scene playing out!

-Jesus comes to town and this lady named Martha welcomes him into her home.

-It was common for Rabbis to travel from town to town teaching and preaching and they would be housed and fed by locals.

-It's funny how things change! In our world putting a guest speaker in someone's spare bedroom would be low class, but in their day it was a way of showing honor!

-If YOU knew Jesus was coming to your house...how much fuss would you make about it? Probably a bit?

-Carpet vacuumed, lawn-mowed, dust the ceiling fan!

-You'd definitely want to feed him a good meal right?

-You wouldn't be staring into the refrigerator saying, "What are you in the mood for Jesus? We got baloney and cheese, leftover lasagna, PB and J! It's Jesus! You'd want to pull out all the stops!

-That's precisely how Martha was feeling about the occasion; we gotta put out our best for Jesus! But not Mary.

39 Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught. 40 But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing.

She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, doesn't it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me."

-I can't prove it but I've always suspected that Martha was a firstborn and Mary was the baby of the family!

-Martha was a flurry of activity! She was getting everything ready, making a big dinner, rushing around.

-And meanwhile, Mary was just sitting there listening to Jesus.

-And Martha got mad! And she did that thing that people do that's kind of passive aggressive.

-She talked to Jesus about Mary while Mary is in the room!!!

-She sitting right there and Martha says...

"Jesus, Doesn't it seem a little unfair that I'm over here busting my hump while my little sister is just sitting there being lazy!!!"

-You can almost imagine Mary rolling her eyes and Martha's face getting a little red as she fumed!

-She may have been a little surprised at the way Jesus responded.

41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, 42 but few things are needed—or indeed only one.

-Only moments before Mary was on the spot but Jesus turned things around. Now Martha was in the spotlight!

-And Jesus pinpointed with stunning accuracy the truth that none of us want to face; he said:

Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

**-In short; Martha wasn't busy because she had to be.**

**-She was busy because she CHOSE to be.**

-Most of us don't set out to be busy.

-We just say "yes" to too many things and suddenly we're there!

-Busyness is a weird thing.

-Being busy stresses us out but it also makes us feel important.

-Being busyness is one of the few things that is socially acceptable to brag about. "I'm so busy!"

-They say being busy keeps us out of trouble...true...to a point.

-But most busy people have a **DEEP DOWN** sense that we're too busy and that it's not good!

-And it's not just a sense we have, it's the fact about the American way of life.

-Did you know that 86% of American men work more than 40 hours a week? And 66% of American women!

-For comparison, average Americans work 137 more hours a year than workers in Japan.

-And while we work more than almost all the other civilized nations we get and take much less time off.

-We have been labeled internationally the "non-vacation nation!"

-The average American gets 2 weeks of vacation time each year which doesn't seem like much. But you know what the real travesty is? Many people don't even take all their vacation days!!!

[-https://www.americanexpress.com/us/small-business/openforum/articles/the-true-danger-of-being-too-busy/](https://www.americanexpress.com/us/small-business/openforum/articles/the-true-danger-of-being-too-busy/)

-We truly live busy and frantic lives. But what's the cost of it?

### **WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF BUSYNESS? (Ecc 2:22-23)**

-The Bible actually asks that very same question!!!

Ecclesiastes 2:22-23 "What do people get for all the toil and anxious striving with which they labor under the sun? All their days their work is grief and pain; even at night their minds do not rest. This too is meaningless."

-This is a great question to ask ourselves.

-What do I get for all my anxious striving. Just that phrase paints a picture for us.... "anxious striving".

-What toll does my busyness take on me?

-What toll does it take on my children? My marriage?

-What toll does busyness have on my relationship with Jesus?

-Busyness does come at a great cost.

### **Physical health. (Prov 12:25, Ecc 5:3)**

Prov 12:25 "Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down..."

In an article for the Boston Globe Dr. Susan Koven wrote:

-In the past few years, I've observed an epidemic of sorts: patient after patient suffering from the same condition.

-The symptoms of this condition include fatigue, irritability, insomnia, anxiety, headaches, heartburn, bowel disturbances, back pain, and weight gain.

-There are no blood tests or X-rays diagnostic of this condition, and yet it's easy to recognize.

-The condition is -excessive busyness."

-Anxiety, busyness, stress...however you call it: weighs us down.

-I have been in a really busy season of life and I feel it.

-It's affected my sleep, my eating, my exercise, my health.

-But I don't need to tell you all that; because most of you know.

-You know what it's like to be weighed down with all the many things that you are trying to balance in your lives.

[Ecclesiastes 5:3](#) "Too much activity gives you restless dreams..."

-We live in a culture that esteems busy schedules, long hours, and people tough enough to handle it.

-People wear busyness as a badge of honor!

-But is our busyness a badge of honor a sickness?

-Just like Martha in our story, we've convinced ourselves the busier the better.

-I shared last week that even too much ministry can be a bad thing. In my 20 years as a pastor I've seen:

- One of my pastors had a nervous breakdown.
- Several church pastors quit because of sheer exhaustion
- I have friends who've lost marriages to affairs; not with other women but with the ministry.
- Did you know that pastor is among the highest risk jobs for heart-attack, heart-disease and suicide?

-What's the point? We can justify busyness to ourselves if we believe we're doing important, good, and noble things!

-But busyness for a good cause, is still busyness and still has a negative effect on us!

-And not just on our physical health but our...

### **Spiritual health. (Lk 9:10 & 5:16)**

-While Martha was busy making the big meal, what was she missing out on?

-She had the opportunity to literally sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to him teach, but she decided to make dinner instead.

-What did Jesus say to Martha? "Mary has chosen what is better"

-She chose to do something that would fill her soul, instead of fill her schedule.

-She laid aside the frantic busy work to do something that was truly important and Jesus said, "She made a better choice."

-When we're too busy, we pay a price, and often times the price is our spiritual life.

-I've never heard someone say, "I had to miss work because I've had such a busy prayer life!"

-I've never heard someone say, "I had to cut back on my activities, because my Bible reading is just blowing up my schedule!"

-But I've heard the opposite **SO** many times.

-I wanted to pray, I wanted to read, I wanted to go to group, I wanted to be at church more often but...I'm so busy.

**-If you're too busy to for God...you're too dang busy!**

-We all make choices of what to do with our time.

-There are many things we can choose and they aren't bad.

-How you choose to spend your time is...**your choice!**

-But there are some choices that are better than others.

-It might surprise you to know that even Jesus had to withdraw from his busyness to charge up.

-After feeding the 5000 and sending his disciples out to do a ministry tour...Luke 9:10 says, "he slipped quietly away with them toward the town of Bethsaida"

-They'd had a busy season and so they slipped away from the madness of it all to recharge.

-And this wasn't an isolated incident.

**Luke 5:16 "But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer."**

-Please key in on the word "often". He often **chose** to set aside good things, ministry things, to get away and get filled back up.

-That's what he modeled for his disciples and for us.

-And we all have to make those choices. Doesn't matter what phase of life you're in.

-If you're retired, widowed, single, kids, no kids...you have choices to make about how busy you're going to let life be.

-Your busyness affects your physical health, your spiritual health and it will affect your...

### **Family health (Psalm 127:2)**

-Some of us are so busy we don't have time to even consider how our busyness can affect our families.

-There was an article in Relevant Magazine called

#### **"7 Signs You're Way too Busy"**

- An Inability to Control Your Emotions (anger, tears)
- Lack of Self-Care (diet, exercise, personal hygiene)
- Illness (stressed out people have compromised immune...)
- Chronic Lateness (always behind because too much...)
- Self-Medicating and Excess (turning to unhealthy things...)
- Neglecting Important Relationships (family)
- Neglecting God

<http://www.relevantmagazine.com/life/7-signs-youre-way-too-busy>

-If we're too busy to take care of ourselves, spend time with family and spend time with God...we're too busy!

-Does any good come from our chronic busyness?

Psalm 127:2 "It is useless for you to work so hard from early morning until late at night, anxiously working for food to eat; for God gives rest to his loved ones."

- When we're too busy we're always looking for a chance to rest.
- We're trying to justify some rest, sneak in little moments of rest.
- Like so many things in life; busyness is an impostor that is trying to take some God-given thing away from us.
- God **gives** rest to his loved ones.

### **We exchange God's gift of rest for busyness**

- You don't have to earn rest.
- You don't have to justify it or explain it...you already have a God-given right to rest.

Ex 34:21 "You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but on the seventh day you must stop working, even during the seasons of plowing and harvest." NLT

<http://www.scpr.org/events/2014/05/23/1357/overwhelmed-work-love-and-play-when-no-one-has-the/>

- God set aside a whole day of rest for his people called Sabbath.
- Every single week God's people were given a whole day off.
- It was day set aside...for the specific work of resting.
- That's telling. Rest is something God wants for his people.
- Rest is given to God's people; and they understood it differently.
- Our day begins when we get up, then we go to work, and after a long day then we get to rest a little.
- The OT people considered sundown as the beginning of the day.
- For example, sundown tonight would be the start of Monday.
- In their way of thinking; each day began with...rest.
- The day began with the gift of rest...then they got up and worked
- They understood that rest is God given...it's a gift.
- So many modern people work themselves to death, fill their schedules with craziness and then almost apologize or try to justify that they are taking a rest.
- We're trying to justify or earn what God has given us for free.
- So maybe God's people need to be the ones who refuse to be impressed with really busy, self-important people.
- When people are bragging about busyness, maybe we should be the ones to say "that's not good for you."
- When everyone around us is caught in the whirlwind of busyness maybe we should be the one saying; I'm not going to do that.
- When we're taking vacation or having a day off to do nothing...we should feel good about that.
- We should feel loved by God when we get those days of rest because they're his gift to us.
- Maybe we shouldn't feel important over how busy we are.
- Maybe we should feel important because our God loves us and has given us rest from our weary, overflowing schedules.

-Americans love saying things like...“I’ll rest when I’m dead” or “I don’t have time to slow down.”

-But there will be a point when you slow down and look back over your life. And what will you be proud of? What will you regret?

-When you’re at the end will you be looking back and wishing you’d spent more time at work?

-Will you be wishing that you’d spent a little **LESS TIME** hanging out with your family?

-Will you wish that you accomplished more and spent less time enjoying your friends and family?

-Will you wish that you’d had more overtime and less play?

-More long weeks and less vacations?

-As you draw closer to the time when you’ll meet God face to face, will you wish you’d spent less time getting to know him?

-No. You won’t ever regret living a balanced life.

-You won’t regret your hard work, your family time, or even...your rest if it’s all kept in balance.

-I heard a story years ago and I saw it reposted the other day at Jimmy John’s. It was a “sign”...not from the Lord...an actual sign.

-A wealthy American went down to a fishing dock and saw an Mexican fisherman and asked him if he’d been out fishing.

-The Mexican man replied, “only a little while.”

-The American then asked why didn’t he stay out longer and catch more fish?

-The Mexican said he’d caught enough to meet his family’s needs.

-The American then asked, “but what do you do with the rest of your time?”

-The fisherman said, “I sleep late, fish a little, play with my children, spend the afternoons with my wife.

-I sip a little wine, play guitar with my friends.

-The business man scoffed, “You should spend more time fishing and with the proceeds, buy a bigger boat.

-With the proceeds from the bigger boat, you could buy several boats, eventually you would have a fleet of fishing boats.

-Instead of selling your fish to a middleman you would sell directly to the processor, eventually opening your own cannery.

-You would control the product, processing, and distribution.

-You would need to leave this small coastal fishing village and move to Mexico City, then LA and eventually New York City, where you will run your expanding enterprise.”

-The Mexican fisherman asked, “But, how long will this all take?”

-To which the American replied, “15 – 20 years.”

-“And then what?” Asked the fisherman. You’ll make millions!

“Millions – then what?”

- The American said, “Then you would retire. Move to a small fishing village where you would sleep late, fish a little, play with

your kids, take siestas with your wife, stroll to the village in the evenings where you could sip wine and play your guitar with your amigos.”

-Our busyness promises to give us so much, but maybe the things we *really want...the things we should really care about...*are already within our reach.

Matthew 11:28-30 “Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”