

Making Time for Family

- We want to welcome everyone here this evening, and those listening on WJJM
- If you are a visitor, you're an honored guest - we'd love to meet you and have you be a part of this church
- **[SLIDE]** Our theme this year is Family Focus. We're spending all of 2014 dedicated to this topic.
- **[SLIDE]** We have another Families First Sunday approaching on May 18, the weekend after Mother's Day. It's another Church-Eat-Church format, and we will have Kirk Brothers, a professor at FHU, come speak to us
- So tonight, in keeping with our theme, we're going to talk about *Making Time For Family* (notice I didn't say *Finding* time)
- A little warning: Some of this may be hard to hear this evening
- Tonight I want to invite you to turn to Matthew 6

[SLIDE] + In the 1994 movie *Star Trek: Generations*, Captain Kirk is finding retirement a little boring + He's at the launch of the new *Enterprise* and can't believe how young the captain and crew are + He says to himself after seeing Mr. Sulu's daughter - "When did Sulu find time for a family?" + Scotty to Captain Kirk: "If something is important, you **MAKE** the time"

- If something is important to us, we **MAKE** the time to do it
- Our families must be important to us. We must be actively creating opportunities for ourselves to spend more time with our families, we must be searching out ways to do this, we must be firm and stand up to whatever demands are placed on us and draw a line and say "No"

The question we will try to answer today: **[SLIDE]** + So why is it so hard these days to seem to make time for our families? + I asked this question on Facebook and got some good responses **[SLIDE]**

[SLIDE]

I. BECAUSE WE DON'T HAVE OUR PRIORITIES STRAIGHT

- **[SLIDE]** I'm a youth minister - when August rolls around it means "Happy Time" for Chad and Bonnie
- I understand demanding jobs
- I understand crazy work schedules
- I understand that sometimes, the job just has to get done
- But the time we are taking away from our families is having long-lasting effects, **[SLIDE]** especially on our kids
- I'm a relatively new father, so I may not have practical experience here
- Example: "Workaholic" father I worked with - worked from 6:30-8PM every day of the week - where is the time for your family? His family suffered for that - daughters were no longer members of the church and he and wife's relationship was strained
- Parents that make their families a priority have happier, more spiritually-healthy kids
- Solutions to making time for families isn't easy, there's not what Dave Ramsey would call a "microwave solution", it's more of a "crock-pot solution" - you have to work at it, you have to keep trudging, and you have to stay on top of it

[SLIDE] Our lives should be structured like this:

1. God
2. Family
3. Work

But most times, they're structured like this:

1. Work
2. God

3. Family

4. We MUST make God the priority FIRST, then everything will fall into place

5. We must think of church as essential to our lives and the FIRST priority, not just simply another activity on the list

[SLIDE] + Matthew 6.33 - But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you. + Jesus is saying: When we don't put God first, our lives are out of focus + **[SLIDE]** Optometrist office - you don't notice how bad your vision has gotten until you need glasses sometimes! Sometimes we don't notice our lives are out of focus until it's too late, the changes and concessions are so subtle that we ignore them - a few hours more a week at work, a missed game or activity with the kids here and there - and pretty soon you realize you missed a whole month's worth of stuff

[SLIDE] + I admire Steve Jobs' ideas, but not the man himself + In 1997 when Steve Jobs returned to Apple, he inherited a disaster + Stocks were down, profits non-existent, products lackluster and spread thin + Jobs wiped the slate clean, and placed all products on a quadrant - pro, consumer, desktop, portable. + There were a lot of things Apple COULD do, but there were a ton of things that Jobs said they were not going to do, because it would detract their focus from the things they really wanted to make. **[SLIDE]** He famously said this line, "Part of focus is saying 'no.'" + Just because we CAN do it doesn't mean we SHOULD do it. + Now, 15 years later, Apple still sticks to those same four categories. Where other companies have crazy amounts of products that no one can keep up with (i.e. Samsung), Apple maintains the simple. They are the most profitable company in the world. + We need to be able to say "no." No may be the most powerful word we use when it comes to our making time for our families. "No" will help us focus on what's really important.

"No" + I won't work late tonight. I'll work again tomorrow. + I won't take on too much. I will say "no" to my employer piling on more and more. + I won't sacrifice weekends to be at the office. + I won't make promises I can't keep to my family (very important!) + I won't compromise when it comes to making my family's needs a priority + I won't make my

career more important than my children.

Sometimes saying “no” can be powerful. In a sense, Matthew 6.33 applies even more here: when we put God first, all other things we say “no” to. Being close to God will directly impact us being closer to our families.

According to Stephen Covey, the author of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, “the essence of effective time and life management is to organize and execute around priorities.” So ask yourself: what are my priorities? Is that service to God or something else? And if it is, are my children seeing that?

[SLIDE]

II. BECAUSE THERE'S JUST 'NOT ENOUGH TIME'

- Imagine for a second that you won the a contest. But there's a catch, in that you only get a certain amount (\$10,080) every week, and after that it's gone. Every Sunday morning it goes in, and every Saturday night at 11:59, the account is emptied to \$0, whether you've spent it all or not. You can't invest it, save it, transfer it, or buy stock with it.
- Well guess what? You do get 10,080 of something every week, and it doesn't carry over. However, it is not dollars - it is minutes.
- And you choose how to use them every time the big hand takes a lap around the clock. The question for today is whether or not you are spending those moments wisely or foolishly.
- Think of the time you have (it's 1,440 minutes a day, just 60 minutes an hour). What percentage of that do you think you spend doing good?
- **[SLIDE]** “There's not enough hours in the day”
- There's 24 hours in every day, we need to get used to it

- Encourage your kids to participate in ONE activity, not multiple ones
- Parents, maybe we're involved in too much as well
- Parents that placed other activities over God and church have raised kids to believe that God wasn't important, and they abandoned Him in college.
- Encourage worship and youth activities and God over extra-curriculars NOW
- Encourage them to form their own spiritual identities NOW
- Pray with your family (not just at the dinner table) NOW
- Ask hard questions about life decisions and spiritual decisions NOW
- Because later, when kids are off on their own, they WILL remember what you've said
- **[SLIDE]** Ecclesiastes 3.1-8 - "a time for everything"
- We need to be firm with our time, we need to realize there's a time for us to put down the cellphones and iPads, a time to turn off the TV, a time to just sit with our families at the dinner table and actually TALK to our kids and wives and husbands.
- **[SLIDE]** Colossians 4.5 tells us that we need to "Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time."
- How do you start influencing others for Christ? You start with your own family, with those closest to us. The time that we have is extremely valuable.
- Cheese Balls illustration - I saw this illustration done once and it really puts it in perspective
- **[SLIDE]** If you take the number of hours that you as a parent have with your kids versus the time that say, I have with them, you know what you can use to symbolize that? This huge cheese ball container that you might see at Sam's contains some 300-350 cheese balls. If you were to use this to symbolize how many hours you as a parent had with your kids in a year versus how many I have with them - I would only have four cheese balls. You would have the bucket.
- You see, we cannot depend on the church to teach our children all they need to know about being committed to God. That job is in our homes. There is a time for

everything, and we are to make best use of that time while we have these children with us.

[SLIDE]

III. BECAUSE WE HAVE FORGOTTEN WHERE OUR TREASURE LIES.

[SLIDE] + Matthew 6.19-21

- We have become slaves to the standard
- Meaning: we see the standard everyone lives by, and we want to keep up
- Instead of just keeping up with the Joneses we want to *BE* the Joneses
- Dave Ramsey: **[SLIDE]** "There is no contentment in the American family anymore. We want to make more money so we can buy things we don't need to impress people we don't even like."
- I want to take that a step further: not only do we want to buy things we don't need, we have become slaves to this supposed standard that we're all trying to reach!
- **[SLIDE]** Jesus explains this very clearly in Matthew 6
- Even 2000 years ago Jesus understood the vital relationship, as one author puts it, "between gold and godliness."
- Materialism and living up to some impossible standard is the opposite of spirituality
- Jesus is telling us that the treasures that we have on this earth are temporary, the treasures of spirituality are forever.
- In that time, money wasn't kept in banks. It was kept in homes. And where we have iPads and nice cars, back then it was nice clothes and jewelry (not much has changed) Thieves could easily break in and steal these things.
- Jesus did not speak out against wealth, or against being secure. He only wanted to teach men how to convert their temporary possessions into imperishable ones

- So how does this relate to making more time for family?
- Because we seem to live up to this standard, more parents work longer hours.
- And kids, I'm talking to you too - I've seen many kids get consumed with part-time jobs because they have to pay car insurance, car payments, cell phone payments, etc.
- A good work ethic is wonderful, earning and paying for things is responsible, having it get in the way of God and family is **not**
- We need to stop and take a hard look at what we're doing with our money - are we worshipping it or God?
- Jesus goes on to say this - Matthew 6.24
- We cannot serve God and money!
- We cannot let our accumulation of wealth become what we worship
- We cannot let our standard of living become what is most important to us
- Perhaps the most relevant verse in this whole lesson is verse **[SLIDE]** 21 of Matthew 6
- "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."
- Plainly spoken: **[SLIDE]** "Whatever is most important to you, that's where your heart is."
- What's most important to you? Making money? Being with your family?
- Is it seeing your children grow up to what Lonnie Jones calls 'spiritually self-reliant young people', or having a little nicer car to drive, or a little nicer house to live in?
- Our true treasure lies at the dinner table, in the backyard, on vacations with the ones we most love.
- Our true treasure isn't in STUFF. It isn't in living up to someone else's man-made standard, it's living up to God's standard.

[SLIDE]

CONCLUSION

- As we close, I want to offer a couple of practical, what I sometimes call "Duh"

suggestions

[SLIDE] 1. Plan to make one day a week to spend with family, even if it's Sunday. 2. Make sure you emphasize, enforce, and encourage a connection with God and church above all other activities 3. Pray with your family. 4. Listen and talk with your kids. 5. When you're home, be at home. 6. Make sure, above all, that you as parents place God and serving Him above all other things. Be the example that you want your kids to be. They WILL grow up to be like you.

Tonight, if you've struggled to give your life and your time to God, you can rededicate yourself tonight. You can come forward and we can pray with you. You can rededicate yourself and your family to God. If you haven't yet decided to put on Christ in baptism, to be washed of your sins and become a Christian, you can do that tonight, the water is ready. Won't you come right now while we stand and sing.