

but what are you living for? What are you running about so for? What are you preoccupied with so much? How many are busy building earthly kingdoms and unmindful of the eternal world to come. How many are busy going from pleasure to pleasure of this world, and not seeking hardly at all or, if at all, not above all, the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, and the world to come, which is forever compared to the short temporal world here and now. In our world of modern technology and so many toys and gadgets to play with, and always new and exciting games and toys and gadgets being invented, it is so easy to be busy with so much that really counts for so little, and to neglect what counts above all! You can be busy in a wrong way with wrong motives and wrong goals. There is a bad side to busyness if it keeps you from Christ and preoccupies you just in matters and things and pleasures of this world, and the life here and now.

Busy - someone has identified and described the word as **Burdened Under Satan's Yoke!** How many are busy in this way? Being busy always, having no time for the matters of the soul and eternity, busy all the time with no time for being still and into God's Word, for prayer and Bible study and for church even...so busy there is no time for knowing and realizing and relishing that the Lord is God, and that except the Lord build the house, we labour in vain. No time especially for trusting and enjoying the Lord above all and living for Him especially and primarily in all of life. No time for God except some formal outward worship, going through the motions - is that how it is perhaps with you maybe, if you are honest?

You are busy - busy, busy, busy! There is a good side to being busy, but there is a bad side to being busy. The devil loves to keep people too busy to think about the need to get right with God and to listen to His Word, and to prepare for the world to come. How many people plan eventually to get busy about these eternal matters, but they are always too busy to really take it seriously now. How about you and me in this regard? Next week we hope to continue speaking on this theme, 'Busy Jesus and busy you'. Till then ask yourself, what is the connection between the two in your life...and don't be too busy to consider this most important matter. Amen.

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BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

Radio Ministry of the FREE REFORMED CHURCHES of North America

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



BUSY JESUS...AND BUSY YOU [1]

Dear friends, this message and next week's are about 'busyness'. When you are busy, there is always something to do and it seems there is never time enough to do all you want to do or need to do or think you should do, or that you know others are expecting you would and should do. Busy, busy, busy - everyone is so busy! "Its crazy busy" is a strange combination of words, and it seems we all know something of what that phrase means.

This is a two part topical message on the subject of being busy and I will be referring to various Scriptures, but the main text I am building this sermon on is Mark 3:20-21. Here we read about Jesus and the disciples, "*And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when His friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.*"

What do these verses tell us about Jesus? Well, plainly they tell us, among other things that Jesus knew about being busy, always busy, and people thought Jesus was beside Himself for being so busy! The theme for these messages is "Busy Jesus and busy you" and there are four main thoughts I would draw your attention to, looking at two with this message and two next time.

The first point is that there is a good side to busyness. Being busy can be a fact of life that is not wrong. Indeed, being busy is something in many cases we should be very thankful for and we need to be careful not to complain and murmur about always being busy. The Bible warns in different places about being lazy in life and failing to be busy in a healthy way with the God-given responsibilities you have. In our text, we find Jesus so busy with the crowds around Him, always asking from Him for this and that, so much so that He and His disciples didn't have time to eat lunch or supper. Go, go, go, was what Jesus experienced. So busy was His schedule, that even when He would look to take a break, it sometimes just didn't happen. Isn't it, in a certain sense, very encouraging to read this about Jesus? He understands what it means to be very busy. When sometimes you feel overwhelmed in busyness in the daily course and duties of life, don't think you can't call upon the Lord, or that Jesus just wouldn't understand your busy schedule. Jesus lived among us as a true human being and He is personally acquainted with what being super busy means!

Presently the world in general is in a sort of economic boom time, which makes it, for many people, busy at work. In our various occupations, even with students at school, we can have extra busy times. But is this not something also to be thankful about? Who knows when it could turn around and everything slows down, and few can find enough work to be busy? When you are stressed at work being so busy, remember the positive side of it, and don't forget, as Paul says in I Thessalonians 5:18, "*In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*" Never once do you find Jesus complaining about being so very busy, though very busy He surely was! If you are busy at work in providing for your family and to help and serve others, is that not something good and to be thankful about?

This can be said also about being busy in the home with small children, and with growing and teenage children. Having one or more children under five can be very busy. "The plodding routine" said someone, "becomes almost numbing." Some of you can identify with that, no doubt. And being there for your children in the years after age five and then in the teenage years, bringing them here and there and everywhere, can be hectic, and always having a listening ear for yours sons and daughters especially as they grow older can be time consuming and emotionally draining, but is there not also very much to be thankful for with all this busyness in family life? The Lord has given you children, sons and daughters, to love and to hold, to guard and to guide, to nourish and to feed, to teach and to lead. As you are busy, so very busy with that, isn't there much to be so grateful about?

In and with church life too, it can be busy going to this meeting and that event, or bringing your sons and daughters to this and that, but isn't that such a privilege also? The religious freedoms we have, the education opportunities that are ours, and the extra events made available to us, are something not that common in many other parts of this world. Giving them also the opportunity to be involved in some extra activities and/or training, whether it is piano lessons or some other instrument, or in a sports team of basketball or hockey.....that we even can do these things, if you can and do, is something way more than others could even ever dream of!

What am I saying and stressing with this first point? That being busy doesn't have to be wrong, and it can be and is a fact of life we should appreciate even. What we need to notice too, still under this first point, is how Jesus was so very busy in the gospel cause and ministry. He was spending Himself in that, and being so very busy in this good work. Though it is true rest times are needed in that too, yet, still having His life as it were consumed in this work was only good, and His rest times were only to help Jesus be more diligent and zealous in His gospel work! When you and I in life, by God's grace, are busy living and seeking to live a God-honouring life and in serving the Lord and His church and in seeking more and more to

know Him and make Him known, that is something that is not bad but good. Oh, the world may not and does not understand why, for instance, after a busy week at work, instead of lazily relaxing at home on Sunday, you take your whole family to church and not even once that day but twice! They may think and say you are crazy to so make yourself busy and preoccupied on your off days...also when you go out those evenings to church for this meeting and that. But what does the world know truly?

See in our text how Jesus being so very busy in His Father's business, in gospel ministry, even not sometimes eating and sleeping as He might. His neighbors and relatives also for that reason were thinking Jesus was beside Himself, and they were trying to stop Him from His ongoing labors and ministry. But how wrong they were and how faithful and truly in God's way Jesus was! I will come back to this point later, but you see with me don't you, there is such a thing as a good side to being busy?

But now let us move to our next point about being busy and notice that there is a bad side to being busy, something you and I need very much to be aware of. In the Bible there are lots of warnings about people busy in this and that, but not rightly focused, and headed for destruction! In Isaiah 1 we read of the Lord complaining about the Israelites being busy in religious activities and rituals, one after the other, but their hearts were not right with God. In Hosea 8:14 God says, "*...Israel has forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples....*" How the devil loves to have us busy, even in religious things as long as he can keep us from having a heart for God and being still in quiet time before Him, and knowing the Lord and fellowshiping with Him in your inner being. Think here of Martha in Luke 10:40, "*cumbered about much serving*". She made herself so busy in serving that she lost focus in what it was about! Martha got caught up and obsessed with the business of the moment, and she forgot the Saviour, Whom she really was so dependent upon and out to serve. Then we have the parable of the wedding feast in Matthew 22, where the gospel invitation went out first to the covenant children of God to come to a special feast with their Saviour and Lord, but guess what? They all had no time just then, they were all too busy, one with this and another with that. You can be busy even in religious matters and church functions, but not be living in a heart relationship with God at all. Think here of Jesus' warning in Matthew 7:22, "*Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we no prophesied in thy Name? and in thy name cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?'*", only to have Jesus answer, "*I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*" My friend, if your and my busyness keeps us distracted from Christ and sweet communion and hearty love and devotion towards Him and for His church, then our busyness is something not good for us! It's a busyness not rightly focused!

There is a bad side to busyness in that it can make you go, go, go...