

# RHYTHM OF LIFE

## "The Value of Friendship"

Pastor Rick Shelton

Sunday, October 25, 2009

- Recap: In present culture many things are antithetical to the way the Bible says we should live.
- We are so 'connected' like never before through modern technology.
- We need to move forward with the times, but there are some things that should never change.
- One thing we should never change is the pace we live life.
- The Bible teaches us the law or the principal of the Sabbath: take one day a week for the Lord, to rest and recuperate. If you are not doing this, it is impossible for your life to be in balance.
- It is important to come to church EVERY SUNDAY. In our casual culture, many just come occasionally, once a month or so. That is not healthy for your life spiritually. Connecting with God is also connecting with His people.
- **Hebrews 10:25 (NKJV)** not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.
- We must treat church with reverence and respect, and go every week. This is not legalism. We go to work every day and don't think our boss is legalistic; but who is our real boss? God!
- Show up on time! Treat God and His presence with great respect.
- We must learn how to police and manage our gadgets: phone, news, radio . . . disconnect!
- Our life needs to be built on the principle of 'stress and release' - just like building muscles; it's the same with life. You can't just work, work, work, kids, kids, kids, spouse, spouse, spouse, church, church, church, play, play, play!
- **Ecclesiastes 4:7-8 (NKJV)** Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun: <sup>8</sup> There is one alone, without companion: he has neither son nor brother. Yet *there is* no end to all his labors, nor is his eye satisfied with riches. *But he never asks*, "For whom do I toil and deprive myself of good?" This also *is* vanity and a grave misfortune.
- Vanity means emptiness, frustration, and futility.
- **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (NKJV)** Two *are* better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. <sup>10</sup> For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him *who is* alone when he falls, for *he has* no one to help him up. <sup>11</sup> Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; but how can one be warm *alone*? <sup>12</sup> Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.
- Today, we're talking about the people in our life (remember the chart Pastor drew, showing God as the center of the pie, and the circle around God representing the people in our lives.)
- Everything revolves around people. They are not a 'part' of our life . . . they ARE our life. They are not a piece of the pie - they are THE PIE!
- **Matthew 22:36-40 (NKJV)** "Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?" <sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, " *You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*" <sup>38</sup> This is the first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: *You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*" <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."
- Don't put work, hobbies, projects, etc. before people in your life.
- Disconnected: not open or emotionally connected in our heart, not sharing lives.
- Law: everything God wants me to do.
- Prophets: everything God has to say to me.
- Girls know when guys are not emotionally connected.
- We are not designed to live alone. We can live alone, but not BE ALONE because of connections with and the fulfillment of the relationships with the people in our lives.
- You can live with people and not be connected.
- There is a couple who are incredibly busy, but they have put such high value on their relationship, and are more connected than less busy couples.
- A good barometer is not how much time you spend together, but how emotionally connected you are.

- Are you 'connected' to your family and friends?
- You can lose a house, and go get another one. But if you lose a person that is important to you, you just can't go get another one.
- A tragedy is letting financial pressure and stress cause you to lose relationships. Losing your house is not the most important thing in your life . . . people are!
- In other countries many live in shanty towns, but are happy with family and community.
- Our problem is not what we have or don't have, but what other people have that we don't have.
- Paul said in **Philippians 4:12 (NKJV)** I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound.
- In all the chaotic situations we face today, don't miss the whole point. As long as you have God and people, you have all we need for life.
- Some think it's our God-given right to have all these 'things' and get bent out of shape when we don't.
- In our culture/society, since 1985 the quality of close relationships has plummeted. Twenty-five percent of us have no close confidants. Went from four to two since 1985. (In the 1950's it was five or six.) Many people have no close friends. Dependence on family has increased from 57% to 80% for support. Dependence on spouse has almost doubled since 1985.
- The less close friends we have, the unhealthier we have become.
- We were designed to live in a community, and it has become more and more scarce.
- What we used to get from community, we try to get from family and spouse. It is impossible to get what you need that way. We must have community!
- Family or your marriage was not designed to give you everything you need emotionally.
- The reason we re-developed 'connect groups' was to connect and re-establish community and make friends.
- What are true friends? Facebook friends aren't really friends. How many will show up and stay with you through a crisis, at the hospital, will mourn with you through a loss, will stay friends when they find out what you are really like?
- **Job 6:14 (NKJV)** "To him who is afflicted, kindness *should be shown* by his friend, even though he forsakes the fear of the Almighty.
- A true friend does not judge, and gossip, but show kindness, even though he forsakes the fear of the almighty. An example: Someone freaks out, flakes out, becomes dysfunctional, gets into sin, rebellious . . . what do you do then? Do you still stay with them and show kindness to them?
- Christians hang with you until you give them reason to accuse you! Then they leave and get so self-righteous. That is why Christians are called bigoted, mean-spirited, and hateful.
- Friends don't love you only when you are lovable, but also love you when you are unlovable.
- If it is not your fault, they may stay. If you are wrong, they leave.
- **Proverbs 17:17 (NKJV)** A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.
- Don't change or run from a person when it all 'goes south'.
- **Proverbs 18:24 (NKJV)** A man *who has* friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend *who* sticks closer than a brother.
- You can love people, but they may not be who you build your life with.
- You can't build life with people who are not going the same direction you are. You can speak into their life and they can speak into yours. You need a community of Christian friends.
- **Proverbs 27:6 (NKJV)** Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful.
- Pastor Rick and Jack Harris are friends who speak the truth to each other and stay friends.
- **Proverbs 27:10 (NKJV)** Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend, nor go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity; better *is* a neighbor nearby than a brother far away.
- Let's be true friends here in church, non-judgmental, not gossiping, not leaving.
- Example: Ted Haggard. He pastored a great church. He had a homosexual relationship. After it 'came out', friends forsook him and he was ostracized. A pastor asked another pastor, "What would have happened if he had come out a couple of years earlier voluntarily?" The other pastor responded, "Exactly the same thing!"
- God has not called us to judge, but to love and walk people through, speaking truth in love.
- True friends love without forsaking.
- Ask God for five true friends.
- Make friends out of acquaintances.