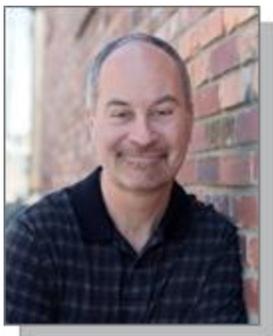


Interruptions; God's Classroom of Life



"My whole life I have been complaining that my work was constantly interrupted, until I discovered the interruptions were my work." Author Henri Nouwen

I find interruptions to my work and daily schedule internally can still frustrate me. I grew up in a high performance family, where doing things efficiently, productively, and with good time management was the uncontested standard of success. Being in ministry at Genesis, there is a lot of stuff to do and needs my full attention! Sadly it leaves one exhausted, anxious, and easily misses the daily moments to connect with others. But even as those old stubborn thoughts still cross my mind, I find that interruptions are beginning to take on a newfound opportunity for growth and rest of the soul.

God has a bigger classroom, the one called life. Our lives are not compartmentalized like class periods in high school. Christian author, Mark Buchanan, says: "God's school is not like most. It's not regimented, age-adjusted, fixed in its curriculum. The classroom is life itself, the curriculum all life's demands and interruptions and tedium, its surprises and disappointments. Meaning, work out where time and eternity meet. Pay attention to how God is afoot in the mystery of each moment. He is present in all of that. But too often we are so time obsessed we take no time to really notice." Solomon compels us to consider what our time given us by God is actually for: "There is a time for everything...He has made everything beautiful in its time. He [God] has also *set eternity in the hearts of men*" (Ecclesiastes 3:1; 11). Time and eternity actually do meet us, but we must be open to work out where they intersect our hearts.

"I find that interruptions are beginning to take on a newfound opportunity for growth and rest of the soul"

The other day I waited in line at a coffee shop for a good friend from overseas to meet me. I was anxious to see him, and wanted a good table for us. As I was getting set to pay for coffee, an old woman slipped in line in back of me for a coffee refill. Her empty cup was shaking in her hand, perhaps a hand tremor. I debated as I wanted to find a seat in a room quickly filling up. This time I listened for the small, insistent voice, "Let her go ahead of you, you can wait." I asked her to step in front of me. She beamed, and thanked me profusely. It was an almost negligible act on my part, yet I was deeply touched by her kindness.

Serendipitously interruptions may hold the divine key to God's big classroom of life. Pay attention. Slow down. Stop obsessing over time management. Take time to notice where God is working in each moment of your lives. Get present to what God is doing in the day we are living. Perhaps the time we invest with the everyday, ordinary moments will take on new meaning of eternal significance. Like Henri Nouwen above, we too can discover that interruptions are part of our life work God uses that leads us into His beauty, in His time.

Warmly in Christ,

Dave

Executive Director