Stop Interrupting Me!
Love Your Neighbor(hood) series
by Pastor Chris Famisaran

Love that hymn. Thank you, Eric, for joining us today. Appreciate it.

Let's pray. Father in heaven, thank you, Lord for the opportunity to come together as we start a new series of loving your neighbor who would be with us now in Jesus name. Amen.

How many of you like vacations? Half of you do more than half? How many of you have you ever done a stay-cation before? Know what a stay-cation is when you take time off, but you stay home. So about a year into the pandemic around, April, May I should think of 2021. You know, I really couldn't go anywhere. So I thought, well, I need to take some time off. So I took I think I took like five days off. And it was nice, you know, didn't have to worry about work, relax. But then I realized, Oh, I see my computer. I see my tablet, see my car. I'm home. And when I do a lot of work from home, it still felt like I was at work. And I thought Yeah, I could relax, but it wasn't the same. Now fast forward a couple of months. One of my super close friends. He and his wife asked me to officiate their wedding. And it took place near Solvang, which is a couple of hours from here. And so Leisa and I, we went up Friday, and we were there until Sunday morning. And it was amazing just to be able to be in a different place from your normal area, even though it's just a couple of hours away. Spending time getting to know his family better. And finally meeting her mom and her friends was just it was really awesome. It was really fun. And just to be in a different headspace was awesome.

Now, when it comes to missions when it comes to sharing Jesus, because where did God say to go to share the message throughout the world? Right? Go teach, preach, baptize, make disciples, reminding them of what I have taught you. And though I'm with you, always. And when we talk about missions, we often think that, oh, I need to go somewhere. I need to go to a different state. I need to go across the country. I need to go to a different continent, I need to go to Europe, I

need to go to Africa. I need to go to South America, Asia. But then if we focus on that, what happens when the mission field is literally just right out front? Amen. It's on Lakewood. It's on Firestone. It's in Pico Rivera. It's Downey it's all of these places. It's where we live. It's where we work. And so this month, I want to spend some time on reminding us of hey, our mission, yes is to go into the world and we're doing that as a church. But before we even do that, hey, let's focus on where we actually live in. Are we becoming an effective disciple? The sharing Jesus with even our neighbors? Question mark. Today's sermon is entitled, Stop Interrupting Me.

So, let's go to let's go to the book of Matthew. Okay. Matthew, chapter 8. And in this context, Jesus, the first couple of chapters as we studied before, you know, it was promised that he would come, you have the genealogy, they have the whole story of how he was born, returned to Nazareth, John the Baptist prepares the way. Then you have the baptism of Jesus. And then in chapters five through seven, Jesus goes up to a mountain, and he spends time with some people and he breaks down he shares the Sermon on the Mount. Okay, which we're going to come back soon to the Beatitudes. By the way our next series is going to be based on Matthew 5. All right, don't forget. So he launches into this big sermon he talks about prayer treasures in heaven. Don't worry. You know, building your faith on on a solid foundation and judging others loving others. And so he taught it with authority not as teachers of the law. And then when he comes down the mountain, what happens to him?

Well, in chapter eight verse one, he says, When Jesus came down the mountainside, large crowds followed Him. And a man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, Lord, if you are willing, you can make me what? You can make me clean, you can heal me, right? So Jesus reached out he touched the man and said, I'm willing be clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And then Jesus said, See that you don't tell anyone, but go show yourself to the priests and offer the gift of Moses that Moses commanded as a testimony to them. Okay, cool. He helped somebody, with leprosy. But then in verse five, it says, when he had Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him asking for help. And he said, Lord, My servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering greatly. And Jesus said, Shall I come and heal him? And a Centurion as a testament to faith to because a Centurion? Is he a faithful Jew? More than likely, he's when he's a Gentile. Oh,

Jews and Gentiles talk to each other? Not really. And we're supposed to, right? And so yet, this centurion, he hears about this man named Jesus and He loves his servant. He says, hey, please, can you do this? And he says, Lord, I don't deserve to have you come under my roof. He's recognizing who Jesus is that he is God. He's not worthy. There's a faith statement. He recognizes who Jesus says, but just say the word and my servant will be healed. He believes that Jesus has the power to be able to heal his servant from a distance. For I myself, am a man under authority with soldiers under me, I tell this they go, he goes and that one come and he comes. And I say to my servant, Do this, and he does it. And Jesus remarks, his has Hey, truly, I tell you haven't found anyone in Israel with such great what? Faith okay. And so Jesus, essentially, he affirms this man, his faith, and he heals the servant. Okay. Healing number two.

And then when Jesus in verse 14, when Jesus comes into Peter's house, he saw Peters mother in law lying in bed with a fever. He touched her hand and the fever laughter. She got up and began to wait on Him. Here we number three, has a busy day for Jesus, amen. And then, as it says, in Verse 16, when evening came, many who were demon possessed for brought to him and he drove out the spirits with the word healed all the sick, This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah, He took our infirmities and bore our disease. That's a busy day. You know that? That's one of my bucket list questions when I'm able to talk to Jesus's Jever get drained from doing all of that. Pretty sure he did. Because after the end of the day, he would go up onto a mountain, sometimes in community probably take a power nap, get some sleep, because nobody could bother him. But imagine being around people all day and people seeking you. People want them to go to you, because they have a need. Now, if you're an introvert like me, I love people, I really do. But sometimes it's like, okay, I got to decompress, right? And if we keep reading, a man, a teacher of the law came to him and said, Teacher, I'll follow you wherever you go. He and by the way, they got into, he got ordered, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake, they got into a boat to go across. And Jesus replies, hey, you know, if you follow me, what does that really mean? It means foxes have dens birds have their nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head, meaning the journey to follow Jesus is not going to be easy and it's not going to be comfortable. And then another disciple said, Lord, first let me go and bury my father. But Jesus said, Let me follow me and let the

dead bury the dead. This is already 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 conversations that we know of 6 actually, that doesn't talk about the crowd and how many people came to him.

And then when they're in the boat, they're going across in verse 23. He, his disciples followed Him and what happens? There's a storm that comes about suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake. So the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping, the disciples went and they woke them, saying, Lord, save us. We're going to drown. And you replied, You have little what? Faith? Why are you so afraid? He got up he rebuked the winds, the waves and it was completely covered. The men were amazed. What kind of man is this? Even the winds, and the waves obey him? Now keep in mind, too, he'd been healing people all day, and they were with them. And they're wondering, like, Who is this guy? Should they really been surprised? Maybe because it was such a gnarly storm, probably I'll give him that.

And then when they get to the other side, after they've traveled across. When he arrived at the other side, in the region of the guard gatherings, a two demon possessed man came from the tombs and met them. They were so violent, that no one could pass their way. What do you want to do with a son of God? They shouted, what have you come here to torture us before your appointed time. And then Jesus, he sees that there's a herd of pigs across the way and the demons possessed, if you drive us out, send us into the pigs. And he said, Go and so the demons went into the pigs, and the whole herd brush down the steeping into the lake and died in the water. And those who attended the pigs. went into town reported everything that they'd had that had happened. And then when they they saw him, what did they do? They pleaded with him to what? Please leave. That's a pretty busy day.

And you can see what happened to Jesus the whole day. He kept getting what? Interrupted. He started with healing a man with leprosy, the centurion, he healed many, including Peter's mother in law. He met with the people who asked about what it meant to follow Jesus, the teacher of law, then one asking, Hey, let me go bury my family. Jesus calms the storm, and then he restores to demon possessed man, he helps them. But oh, by the way, the people don't want him in that area. I'm not gonna lie, that sounds really busy, kept getting interrupted. But what's interesting about this passage is that everywhere Jesus goes, does he turn

anybody away? He doesn't. And what does he do? He met their needs. For the man who had leprosy, the demon possessed man, the faith of the century and health, healing is servant, the many other people that we don't even know because as John also says, Jesus performed a lot of miracles that we don't even really, there was too many to put in the Bible. Too many to count. Now, also, Jesus met the needs of everyone, at all hours of the day, Jesus made himself available to everyone at all hours of the day. What a guy all day.

You know, CS Lewis, he writes, the great thing, if one can is to stop regarding all the unpleasant things as interruptions of one's own or real life. The truth is, of course, that what one calls interruptions are precisely one's real life. The life God is God is sending one day by day, what one calls one real life is a fantasy of one's own imagination. How many of you have gone through life gone through a whole day without being interrupted? There can be days like that sometimes, but oftentimes, at some point, something happens, something goes wrong, something we have to fix whether it's at work or at home, there's always a curveball. That's just life. Can we agree on that? That's why they pay managers good money to manage all of the problems. And so, life can be full of interruptions. Our lives are filled with interruptions. Now, we're not being asked to heal leprosy. We're not asked to heal people who are demon possessed. We're not asked to heal our mother in law's of the flu or whatever. But yet, Jesus is calling us to share the good news. And sometimes that can interrupt our day. Because when you also think about it, I think I mentioned this last week or a week ago, two weeks ago. When God gives you an opportunity to share the gospel or how God has impacted your life, does it always come at a time when you plan to do that? It never does. Okay, as I've shared in the past, you know, some of the most interesting places that I've shared the gospel may cease in the cooking aisle, cookware, okay? The Oakly store, being on a plane, you can't necessarily decide like you can intently, go out and share Jesus with others. But oftentimes, it's the most organic natural times that have the most impact. Amen. Can't force something. And so, yeah, you never know, when God's gonna ask you, Hey, I want you to share how God has impacted your life or how you can find meaning, or simply, Hey, go and help somebody be a blessing to somebody, not because I want to be a blessing. But Lord, if you give me an opportunity, I want to be faithful. We don't do it for our own edification, we do it because number one, we

want to be humble, and we want to help people because that's what God has called us to do to make a difference in people's lives. Oftentimes, however, interruptions what do they do to our lives? What do they do to our physical well being? It frustrates us, if we're trying to meet a deadline at work. Or maybe you're a new mom or dad, or you have little ones that are like four or 5, 6, 7. They're starting to go to school and they don't want to go to school that day. It's interrupting your day when they decide I don't want to go to school or they're dragging, right? You ever get frustrated trying to get your kids in the car to go to school. Please don't raise your hands. But interruptions happen all times of the day. And it's one of those things that we just we have to build in to our time. Build in extra time in your day to be interrupted.

Tony Dungy coach of the Indianapolis Colts at the time when they won the Super Bowl, shares a story when he was a child, I think was Stanford wrote it where how he learned patience from his father, he and his father and his brother Linden, went fishing one day. And his dad, he was usually a more quiet, thoughtful guy, a scientist at heart, actually, and by training, and Wilbert Dungy is the name of his dad, he loved being outdoors, he loved being able to enjoy the outdoors. And one of the things that they did as a family was to go with fish. And he would go out and they would be on the lake or the pond, the river and he would remark how God was amazing, and how he created all of this beautiful nature. And then one day, I think Tony was about nine and his brother was five. They were out fishing. He was teaching his brother Linden how to cast while both working on it and silence. Suddenly, his dad breaks the silence by saying Linden don't move for a minute, please. And if you fish you probably know where I'm going with this. Tony looks over. He looks at his dad. And he watches and he sees his hand move to his face. Very common deliberate as he continues to speak and he says now Linden, always make sure that you know where your pole is when you're starting to cast. And then he realizes that his brother's hook was in his dad's year. Anybody ever caught a hook? Yeah, my experience was very, very minimal, right. But his book caught his dad's ear. And he also says, but also make certain that you are aware of where everyone else is around you. So he learned the importance of casting a proper fishing rod. But he also learned about patience. Now let's put the story around where when and cast it. And his dad feels the hook in his ear. And he could have started screaming and yelling at his kid. And what would Linden have

done? He would have freaked out he probably would have moved the fishing pull away, thus causing even more trauma to his ear. Right? But he took it in stride. So be careful. At some point you fish long enough you'll probably get hooked at some point. And when you get hooked, it hurts.

But it's important that when life throws you a curveball when life interrupts you, it's important to also just as Jesus did Stay calm, and be able to communicate clearly. So, build in extra time. So you have that extra time to prepare for your day for your work for the meeting, the interview, whatever you're going to do when it comes to missions now, okay, we talk about, Well, God has called us to go into this world. The truth is, there's plenty of missions that we can mission work that we can do here, whether in the park, on on Telegraph on liquid when you when you look around your neighborhood, okay? In fact, what are the needs in your own neighborhood? Maybe you have a park. And there's a few things on the ground. And you can say, well, that's just not my job. But yet you live there. Right? Do you want a park that has a bunch of potato chip bags all over the place? No, yes, it was very rude of whoever left them there to do that. But do you want to leave it like that? Go and pick it up? Is there a widow down the street who is lonely? And all they need is just a simple hello. Or maybe a tray of cookies. Maybe there's a yard that you see. And the person who lives there can't either afford to have somebody cut it? Or they're not able to physically able to do it themselves? Is it possible that you get a team to go and help maintain and cut that person's lawn? There's plenty of needs within our own neighborhoods, our own backyard, that we probably don't even realize that can be opportunities and ministries to do work for the Lord. Amen.

So what are three needs in your neighborhood? What are three needs in your neighborhood. And your challenge this week, pick one need, create a plan and address it and execute it. Don't just plan it, but follow through. And you don't have to do it by yourself. Have a friend help out? Ask your family. When we said I went on vacation, a couple of months back, we came back and we realized hmm, maybe a couple of weeks after like, I haven't seen one of my neighbors for a while. And I kept noticing I didn't see his car. And then when Christmas came by, I saw his wife and she was really flustered and frustrated that day. And I felt bad. You know, she normally is very happy. But she, she waited and I thought well, maybe I can go give some cookies. And by the time I went out though she closed

the door, I think she left and it was too late. And come to find out. She and her husband had decided to split and she was very angry that day. Now, cookies make things a lot better, too. I thought this was an opportunity. And I missed it. You know, and it's a simple, simple thing, but maybe wouldn't have meant anything. Maybe she didn't like cookies, I don't know. But there's little things that we can do that can make a big difference in people's lives, far more than you could ever know. So I want to encourage you go forth. Make a difference in your neighborhood this week.

And as you also see in your challenge, what is this week's challenge? To love to family members this week. reach out, connect with them. Say you love them and hug them if they're not physically there. Call them makes a world of a difference.

Let's pray. Father in heaven, Lord, we thank you for the opportunity to be your servants. You've called us to go forth give us courage. Give us wisdom to know how to move forward leading guidance and all that we do. Help us to be faithful to you and give us opportunities to share you with others. Let's the words Lord especially. Or maybe we don't even have to say anything just to be a blessing to others. In Jesus name, everybody said amen.