

# **God, Please Interrupt Me**

## **Love Your Neighbor(hood) series**

### **by Chris Famisaran**

Good morning, everybody. You all sounded so great. That's great. Father in heaven. Thank you, Lord for the opportunity to now take some time to open the Word. Be with us as we study and conclude our loving our neighborhood series in Jesus name, Amen.

So I don't know when this story took place, but there's a story told of a medical missionary doctor by the name of Helen Roseveare. And she was a medical missionary in Africa. And she was the only doctor in this large hospital. And for her there were constant interruptions and shortages. Never enough staff always being bombarded. And then finally, one of the pastors insisted Helen, please come with me. And he drove Helen to a house and told her, you're going to have a retreat over the next two days. I want you to experience silence in solitude. And she was to pray until her attitude adjusted. Well, all night, and the next day, she struggled, she prayed and prayed and prayed. But it felt like her prayer prayers bounced off the ceiling. And then late on Sunday evening, she sat next to the pastor. And they were they were talking and humbly, almost desperately, she confessed that she was stuck. With his bear toe the pastor he drew a long, straight line. And he said, you know, this is the problem, Helen. There's too much "I" in your service. And he gave her a suggestion. I've noticed when you take a break when you wait for your your coffee to cool down. It's as if you hold this coffee just waiting for it to cool. And then he takes his toe makes another line. And he said Helen from now on, as the coffee cools, I want you to ask God, Lord, cross out the "I", and make me more like you. And in the dust of the ground were crossed and formed. Dr. Helen Roseveare learn a master principle of Jesus. That is to quote freedom comes through service. And service comes by releasing our ego. Another way of saying, when we come to the church, when we come inside the church, leave your ego outside at the door. In the book of Luke, let's jump to Luke chapter five. Awesome story is told of a man who needed help. Luke chapter five,

it's here that Jesus heals a man who had been paralyzed. It's a very interesting story. Luke chapter five, verse 17.

We all there? Okay. Still hear some pages flipping. All right now, one day, Jesus was teaching and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, and the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. And some men carrying a paralyzed man on a mat, tried to take him into the house to lay before Jesus, when they couldn't find a way to do this because of the crowd. They went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat, through the tiles into the crowd right in front of Jesus. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said, friend Your sins are forgiven. The Pharisees and the teachers with the law began to thinking to themselves who's this guy? Who's this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins, but God alone. But Jesus knew what they were thinking mass, why are you thinking these thought things in your head in your hearts, which is easier to say Your sins are forgiven or to say, Get up and walk. But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. And so he said to the paralyzed man, I tell you get up, take your mat, and go home. And immediately he stood up in front of them. And Jesus took what he had been laying on. Sorry, he mediately stood up from them took what he had been laying on, and went home, praising God. Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with and said, We have seen remarkable things today.

Now, it really stands out to me about this story is, how many of you have friends who are willing to carry you and make a hole in the roof to get you to Jesus? His friends were committed his neighbors, his friends, were there to help in a time of need. And not only that, we see this story where it was so crowded, they couldn't get inside them to think outside the box. Hopefully, they fixed that roof. Hopefully, that's the courteous thing to do. But we see friends intent on helping their friend who was paralyzed. We don't know exactly how long he was paralyzed, but they didn't care. They were going to do whatever it would take to be able to get their friend to see Jesus. And when Jesus in verse 20, he says, friend, your sins are forgiven. But he was paralyzed. What? What was the meaning of this? Well, you've been here long enough, you'll know that culturally, if this man was paralyzed, what was the common thinking? Oh, what did he do to deserve that? Or maybe, maybe it's just a byproduct of his his parents actions or

something. But now he needed to heal his heart spiritually. And then from there he was, and also take care of the need, and then to forgive him and heal.

So, when it comes to friendship, how many of you have a close friend that would be willing to break a hole into someone's room? Dietrich Bonhoeffer noted theologian who was killed at the very end of World War Two, wrote, We must be ready to allow ourselves to be interrupted by God. Quite honestly, being interrupted that way probably caused many people to think Dude, what are they doing, making a hole in this roof? Quite the interruption, amen? But God will constantly crossing our paths, and canceling our plans by sending us people with claims and petitions, we may pass them by preoccupied with our more important tasks. It is a strange fact that Christians and even ministers frequently consider their work so important and urgent that they will allow nothing to disturb them. They think they're doing God a service in this but actually, they are disdainful of God's crooked get straight path. Who does that burning your heart a little bit. We think that sometimes our service to God is so important that we neglect the things, the areas of potential service that God actually wants us to go and serve. Now, one of the lessons that we can take from today is that before you can get to the point, you have to meet the need first. There's a story told of a professor I think his name was Nathan Alexander. And one of his students arrive to class with baby in tow, because the father... there just was no way that he could have childcare. Maybe he was a single dad. I don't know the exact story, but he brought his baby to class. And what did Alexander do? He offered to hold the baby while he lectured. So the father could take notes and listen and be able to pass this class. How many of you will be willing to help carry a child can still lecture. It was quite the interruption, that Alexander cared for his student and helped him quiet the interruption. But they carried on. You know, another way of looking at this and something that we mentioned and inspired writers said Christ's method alone will give true success. In reaching the people, the Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good, he showed his sympathy for them ministered to their needs, one their confidence, and then he bade them follow me. Before we can make a difference, we have to be able to sometimes meet the physical needs, the immediate needs, before we can ever think of sharing who Jesus is with that person. What's also important too, is your relationships are more important than your accomplishments.

Your relationships are more important than any of your accomplishments you can hope to attain for.

How many of you love music? Any Brad Paisley fans here? One, man I love Brad Paisley. He wrote a song. I think it was back around 2005, 2006 years. And it's a song called Time Well Wasted. And it relates to our theme here. And I'm just going to read the lyrics, okay, I'm not going to try to sing. But he says I could have been working overtime, or at home trying to make that truck run, right? Instead of waiting out in that stream all day long, barely catching anything, just me and Dad, I'm glad he talked me into it. How many of you have either right now or in the past have a father of that we know, we only have a finite amount of time to spend with them. Amen. And it's here he's saying, Look, I could have gone out, I could have done all this, I could have been working overtime, kind of fix the car. But what was also important spending time with your father, this has become only more true today, especially for me. You know, when you're young, you think your dad or your mom is a superhero, and you're gonna live forever. And be always be the Superman. But as we get older, we realize the roles, then reverse, you may get stronger and you get older, your parents get older. And eventually you also may have to also care for them. But more importantly, spend time with your loved one. Because we don't know when tomorrow could bring something different. It was time well wasted. And there's no way I trade a few dollars more in my pocket. I could have spent for a day I'll never forget, no, I didn't get anything done. But I sure soaked up every minute of the memory we were making. And I counted all as time well wasted. And then he goes on to say those leaves were a deep a foot deep in the yard and wash me was written all over the car. But watching movies all day with you wasn't on my list of things to do. But we laid on that couch. Girl, we never left the house. How many of you as a parent, as a father or as a mother? recognize the fact that yes, there are so many things we need to do. But it's also important that we spend time and make memories with our children.

Because your children as many of you probably know, it goes by in a flash of an eye, their babies you're holding them and next thing you know they're going up, they get a job they go to college, they join the military, they they move on and

grow and to let them go that's probably one of the hardest things ever to do. There's only so much time that you're able to develop relationships and influence them to help make good decisions. Spending time is important. Time Well wasted there's no way I trade a few more things that I've crossed off my list for a day I'll never forget no I didn't get anything done by sure soak up every minute of the memory we were making. I counted all his time well wasted. This world spins too fast. If you'll let it there's always one more thing to do. But looking back I've never regretted taking off early or calling in sick away, loving on a Sunday afternoon, our spouse How much time do we spend time making memories with our partner?

And this doesn't just apply to our families but it applies especially to our friends, our extended family and our community. See our neighbors in our neighborhood. God has called to make a difference to make memories to share and do life together. So who in your neighborhood is God calling you to go and make memories to build relationships to grow together and make a difference in your community? When interruptions come, they can be a God thing. Or it could be of our own choosing our own actions. How many of you can easily How many of you can easily binge a Netflix series or Amazon Prime? Okay, one of you is proud to admit it or not proud. You're great. You're ready to I'm I you know, there was there's this series called Oh, was it? Chef's Table on Netflix, and it talks about pizza. One series was dedicated to pizza and barbecue and pastries and six seasons long or seven. Oh, awesome. There's plenty of other series that you could binge on right? Easily. How many of you can easily spend a day or a morning waking up and never getting out of bed just scrolling through Instagram, Facebook or YouTube? Okay, let's not let's not point people out. Let's in love.... that may come back to hit you. Ah. But yet we get upset. We get upset. When one of your one one of your assistants says I'm sorry, but we're falling behind, can easily waste the whole day. binging on Netflix or Amazon, or lying in bed, scrolling through our social media. But when somebody comes up with the problem, we're so easily ready to dismiss it or That's your problem. Your emergency does not your your your lack of preparation is so that does not constitute an emergency on my part as what I sometimes have maybe said in the past. Or is it possible maybe let's be Be diligent with our time when the neighbor comes by and says, Hey, I need a hand. Can you help me fix my fence? Or we've we've had some hardship in the in our family. And you know that maybe, hey, let me bring over a casserole so

they don't have to worry about dinner. Maybe there's a neighbor who just broke their leg and they can't mow their lawn? What would it take to spend an extra hour out of your day or maybe getting a group of you to go and make sure their lawn is taken care of. So they don't have to get worried or even sited by the city or the county.

Jesus made people a priority. And as busy as we are, okay, how many of you are busy? We need to make people, our neighborhood, our families and our friends a priority. So, where in your life? Can you be more proactive with your time to allow freedom to be interrupted? Where in your time in your life? Can you be more proactive with your time to allow freedom to be interrupted build time in the interrupted because you never know when God's gonna show up to have a god mobile. Amen. This week when you are interrupted this week, use it as an opportunity to be a witness or to serve someone. Now, it's easy to just go through this series and say yes, we need to love our neighbors. I want to be proactive about that. I want to take a minute or two. I was inspired this earlier this week to conversation of somebody that you know when we talked and I want to start this idea of if not just saying stuff, but I want to be proactive and really seek God's calling. So I just want to take a moment or a little bit to pray.

Let's pray together as a church. Father in heaven, Lord, we're concluding our five week series on loving our neighborhoods. Lord, there are plenty of people in our neighborhood that we pass by every day. Some maybe we've learned their names or we still have yet to learn their names. God I want to be a people that is proactive. So Lord, grant us wisdom and courage to know who to reach out to as we walked by as people drive by, Lord impress upon our hearts, who you You'd call this the Minister to, and it may not even be spoken word, it might just be action and might be willing to lend a hand or just visiting somebody. And Lord, where there are opportunities to share you, Lord, grant that and give us words of wisdom. But Lord, I want to be bold here now. And I want to take a moment for everybody just to pause and think and pray, who is that person? I can go and lend a hand to. And I want everybody in their hearts now just to take a moment and think and reflect. And just as a matter of prayer, Lord, let's pray for that individual. But also, seek your wisdom. I'm just gonna give a little bit of time now for you all to reflect.

As we reflect, think, what are their needs God that we can help meet? If it's something as simple as a friendship, or needing a casserole taken over because mom or dad is sick, and life is just so busy and hectic. Lord, open our hearts and our minds. May we not be as Dietrich Bonhoeffer says, May we not be so callous to think that our agenda when it comes to serving you is what we need to accomplish, but may your agenda beyond our hearts? Lord, we prayed for our community, we prayed for our neighbors, and God even to there may need to be some prayer done, not just for our neighbors, but in our own house in our own families, Lord, maybe reaching our husband, our wife, our daughter, our parents, our neighbor, our cousin, or aunt or uncle, and God even to let's let's be real, maybe there's also we need to reach out because there is hardship there. There's some reconciliation, and some tough conversations, to be honest with one another. There may be we need to ask for forgiveness. And we may need to also extend forgiveness God, we pray that God as a neighbor, let us love one another, and be there for one another. Help one another. To me, help us to build up our relationships. Lord, we pray for those that we've prayed for. And God above all, help us to be the ambassadors that you call this. Thank you, Lord, for the work that you're doing in our lives. May we be faithful representatives, not only in Delhi, but wherever we live, where we work wherever we go to school, wherever we do. Thank you, Jesus, everybody said amen.

Thank you, everybody. Next week, we're going to kick off a new cert series. Upside down. Jesus says some very head scratching things. I'm not gonna give it away. But if you want to read ahead, just quickly go through Matthew five. We're starting a new series called upside down based on the Beatitudes. And if you have not signed up for small groups, please we got plenty of options during the week some of them in person also online, so there's no excuse, okay. God bless you all. Have a great, wonderful week.