

Time for Discipleship

It really doesn't matter a whole lot what you say about your values. What matters much more is what you do. The values you really possess show up in the way you spend your time.

Everyone is busy. Everyone faces competing demands. The demands that win out get your time. Whenever you say, "I'd really like to do this or that but I just don't have the time," what you actually are saying is, "I can't do that; it's not worth my time."

Of course how we spend our time often goes against what we claim to have as our truest values. We allow ourselves to be distracted by matters of little consequence. Whether it is endless hours at work, cruising the internet, being overly meticulous about the care of our homes or just "hanging out," the things we claim are of higher importance often get sidelined.

Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, former Catholic Archbishop of Chicago, was diagnosed with terminal cancer. This brought about profound changes in the way he viewed life. He wrote, "I came to realize how much of what consumes our daily life is trivial and insignificant." When we don't act on what is truly important, time has a way of getting away from us.

I have to confess that as a minister I get frustrated at hearing people who claim to love Jesus say, "Sunday morning is the only time I get to sleep in" or "It's just too hard for me to rush in from work to help at the food pantry or come to a study or go to the choir or..." you name it.

"For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven," wrote the author of Ecclesiastes (3:1). But sometimes we squeeze out of our calendars things that shouldn't be displaced. When Jesus said, "Come, follow me", he didn't add, "when you get around to it."

It takes time to follow Jesus. It takes time to serve in his name. It takes time to learn his ways. It takes time to worship in his name. It takes time to be with people who can support and encourage you in following him. What are you doing with your time that is more important than these things? Think about it.