

Life Walking: Why we need each other

Life is complicated. Even if this wasn't an election year and the economy wasn't struggling, life is complicated. We all face challenges in life. There are big ones: illness, death, divorce, or losing a job, and small ones: fighting with your kids or spouse, struggling to pay the bills, starting a new job, moving, the loss of a relationship, and many more. The point is that life is challenging and often times when we face life's many challenges, we feel as though we are alone. It doesn't matter if you are "Joe the plumber" or "Joe millionaire" life is going to throw you some curve balls and you are going to have to find a way to muster through somehow.

Our society developed around people living in small close-knit communities. People and families worked, played and worshiped together. They made an effort to process life together. In these communities, there was the doctor who made house calls, spent more than a few minutes with each patient and was willing to talk to patients about problems involving kids and marriage as well as health. There was the local pastor who knew all of his parishioners personally and spent time with them. He would come over for dinner or coffee and was willing to share life's journey with them. There was a network of women in the community who shared coffee, recipes, marriage advice, and childrearing techniques. Communities still care about these experiences and in many places still have them. God designed us to connect with each other and we still have that desire.

Mobile Society

Our mobile society has allowed many of us to reach beyond these smaller communities and reach our dreams and aspirations. Unfortunately this mobile lifestyle has prevented us many times from knowing our neighbors, living close to relatives or staying at jobs for extended careers. It has required of us to be intentional about developing relationships. Technology has helped. We can communicate to people through phones, text messaging, email, Skype, web-casting, or good old snail mail. We should be more connected than people have ever been in history, but it seems we're not. Many of us seem to have most of our relationships with machines. We have our computers, televisions, and ipods. These can seem to fill the gap in relationships but the feedback they give us is sterile.

There is a solution, Life-Walking. We can get plugged back into relationships and back into people; it is even possible to use the power of our immense communication systems to do it. We can make a choice to start Life-Walking with a few close friends.

Life-Walking

Life-Walking can take many forms: Accountability groups, an Opportunity Season, Mentoring relationships, Forums of Four, or church small groups. Using these tools, we can choose to process life together. Life-Walking goes beyond just sharing the prayer request. It involves working life's challenges through with the other people. You don't

just learn about the problem you become part of the solution. It is possible to really walk with other members of our church instead of simply sitting next to them in pews.

We can get to know our neighbors again beyond the yearly homeowner's association meeting. Those who choose to Life-Walk can go on a journey with a mission and grow their hearts, minds, and relationships in ways they never thought feasible. We can allow others to get involved in our messy lives and it is possible to get involved in theirs. We can help each other; we learn and grow together.

Life-Walking may seem like a foreign concept or it may be vaguely familiar; but chances are you have Life-Walked before, even if you were not aware that you were doing it. College roommates are often Life-Walking with one another as they process the trials of their first year in college. Members of a sports team are frequently Life-Walking as they journey through the victories and defeats of a season. You may have even Life-Walked with your family by simply sitting down to dinner each night seeming to talk about small things but really processing the stuff of life together.

“Accidental” Life-Walking

While you may have experienced some of these “accidental” Life-Walking experiences, you cannot imagine the power that can come from intentionally Life-Walking with someone. It's a simple choice, do you want to get in the game or do you want to stay on the sidelines? Are you ready to change your life today? Life-Walking will change your life; all you have to do is start. Jesus in Matthew 22:36-40 talked about the fact that Christianity was not just about loving and knowing God. It also involved serving and loving others. We as Christians are to be known for the love we have for one another.

Intentional Life-Walking

With the mobility of today's society we need to be intentional about moving into Life-Walking relationships. We need to share our lives with one another not just our prayer requests. For more information on Life-Walking or Opportunity Season visit www.life-walking.com or www.opportunityseason.com

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