

Are You a Busy-Body?

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the importance of avoiding the trap of being a busybody, which can lead to suffering, heartache, and a lack of subordination to Christ.

Duration: 48:27

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:12

Topics: "Gossip", "Church Unity", "Busybody"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. addresses the issue of being a busybody within the church, emphasizing that many problems among believers stem from meddling in others' affairs rather than focusing on one's own life. He encourages self-reflection, urging attendees to consider if they exhibit busybody tendencies and to seek God's help in overcoming them. The sermon highlights the distinction between suffering for Christ and suffering due to being a busybody, warning against the traps of disorderliness, gossip, divisiveness, and offense that can arise from such behavior. Ultimately, Beach calls for a return to focusing on Jesus and supporting one another in love, rather than getting entangled in others' matters.

Transcript

and dissension that is presently prevailing among those who call upon the name of the Lord. And I want to particularly ask tonight, before we go into this subject, for the Lord's special presence and blessing. And most importantly, I do not want anyone here tonight to say, boy, I wish brother so-and-so was here.

Or, I wish sister so-and-so was here, because boy, they sure need to hear this. But I want to encourage you to single out the one next to you. And I want you to sit in the presence of God, and I want you to let God's Word minister to you.

And I want the Lord to be able to establish this in your heart, so that you know that you are pleasing Him in this area. You're going to be shocked when you discover this as the very root cause of many of our problems. Many people in the body of Christ have problems.

They have problems with people. They have problems with themselves. They have problems with employers.

They have problems with their family. They have problems with their husband. They have problems with their wife.

They have problems with their children. They have problems with all kinds of people. And when a close look is made on the situation, this specific teaching in the Bible is normally the root cause to the problem.

So I want to invite you to turn your Bibles, if you would please, to 1 Peter chapter number 4. We've certainly been in 1 Peter quite a bit the past couple of weeks, haven't we? Actually, we just can't seem to get out of it, huh Roger? Amen. 1 Peter chapter 4. 1 Peter chapter 4. I want to begin reading with verse number 12. Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you.

But to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing. Notice we're talking about the sufferings of Christ tonight. So that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.

If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. By no means let any of you suffer as a murderer or thief or evildoer or a troublesome meddler. Now I want to read verse number 14 and 15 again.

If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed. Because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

But by no means let any of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer or a troublesome meddler. Tonight's teaching is going to revolve around a question, a rhetorical question that I like to ask you. And that question is this, Are you a busybody? I say that again.

Are you a busybody? And our text tonight will be found in verse number 15. By no means let any of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or a troublesome meddler. Now the New American Standard says troublesome meddler.

The King James Version says in that latter part of verse number 15 that you shouldn't suffer as a busybody in other men's matters. Now I want to ask you to ask yourself this question. Am I a busybody? Am I a busybody? Hopefully at the end of the teaching tonight you will have a perspective on that question.

And if you find that there are busybody tendencies in you, then I trust that you'll ask the Lord to help you. Because like I said, most problems that are plaguing Christians today are not the sufferings that are being placed upon them as a result of their stand for Jesus Christ. But rather they are suffering because they are busybodies.

You see there's two kinds of suffering that Peter is talking about tonight, Roger. There's the suffering in verse number 14 that is the result of your testimony for Jesus Christ. And the Bible commends those who suffer for the sake of Jesus.

The Bible says you are blessed because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. Then there's a contrast made. Peter is comparing those who suffer because of Christ and they are blessed versus those who suffer because they are busybodies.

Heartache, mental anguish, spiritual anguish, emotional anguish which often times is caused because you are meddling in others' business. Now, I'd like to show you tonight what busybody actually means. What is a busybody? The word busybody comes from two words and I'm going to write them down.

The word busybody comes from these two words. Allotrus and Episcopus. That's the two words that are combined that equal the English rendering of busybody.

Now, this is very intriguing because when you understand what this word means then you understand what this word means. I guarantee you're going to get a new insight into what busybody means. This word, allotrius, belonging to another person.

And this word here, an overseer. So, you put those two words together and a busybody is one who is overseeing the belongings of another person or one who oversees others' affairs. One who oversees others' affairs.

A busybody suggests one who is working. Listen, one who is working around and about other people's business instead at one's own business. One who is working and busy in another person's business rather than their own's business.

To take, listen now, to take pain and more pain about another affair. To take pain and more pain about another person's affair. To meddle, to bustle about other people's business.

Friends, if there's anything that can get you into trouble and cause grief and sorrow and confusion in your life, that is to be a busybody. If there's anything that can prevent you from walking in the fullness of God's Spirit and possessing the sweetness of Christ's presence, that is to be a busybody. If there's anything that can cause you to fall short of everything that God wants you to have and walk in as a Christian, it most certainly is being a busybody.

Are you an overseer of other people's affairs? Or are you concentrating on your own affairs and your own life? Does your conversation, your thought life, your inner meditations, your conversations in private, do they involve the affairs of other people? Are you preoccupied with everyone else and what everyone else is doing or not doing? If so, you're a busybody. The Bible has some very, very sobering exhortations to busybodies. And that's what we're going to see tonight.

Friends, if there's one thing that must be nipped in the bud in a local church, and that's the busybody hobby. If there's one thing that's got to be dealt with by God among a body of believers, that's the busybody hobby. Everyone is busy overseeing the affairs of everyone else's life except their own.

We become the judge, the critic. We become the analyzer of everyone's affairs. And when we set ourselves up in such a state, we are out of God's will.

Uninspired by the Holy Spirit. That's right. We are uninspired by the Holy Spirit.

When we are so preoccupied being an overseer of another person's affairs. Did you know that there's one overseer and his name is Jesus? And that he is perfectly able to take care of the things that's happening in the lives of the people around about you? Did you know it was your chief responsibility to worry about yourself and not the other person? You see, the busybody hobby got the Corinthians in trouble. They couldn't keep their eyes off of each other.

Instead of getting together talking about Jesus, they got together and talked about everyone. Busybody. It's a very, very detrimental and destructive tendency that each one of us has to be careful of.

Now, remember the action of a busybody. See, the word busybody is a noun. And that is belonging to another person, overseeing the affairs of another person.

That's a noun. There's no action in that. That's just describing something.

But to know whether or not you are a busybody, here's how you tell. Are you working around about mentally, physically, spiritually? Are you spending undue energy working around about in other people's affairs? Rather than majoring on your life, your walk, your relationship, and determining in your heart not to set up a stumbling block for the other one. Instead of overseeing other people's lives, determine in yourself that you're going to, determined by God's grace, that you're not going to cause a stumbling block before anyone.

That's what you're going to do. So, the noun busybody becomes action to us. We become part of a troublesome meddler when we find ourselves preoccupied with the affairs of other people.

I don't care who they are or what they are. How do you deal with it when you're around that person? The thing is, you're talking about this, and I'm asking myself these questions. This whole week of what I talked about this morning was due to this very thing.

Everyone where I work is involved, and everyone's busy, and it doesn't work that way. Isn't this a neat subject? I mean, the Lord just dropped this into my spirit. Busybody.

Wow, that's it. That's the message for tonight. Oh, God, deliver us from being busybodies.

And let's be busy seeking Jesus. Amen? Six traps that you will fall into when you become a busybody. And I'm going to place on the board each one of these traps.

And I can pretty much guarantee that you're going to see, as you listen to the Word of God tonight, you're going to see either one of these traps that you've already fallen into, one of these traps that you're close to, and if you continue to proceed, you're going to fall right into it. And I believe that tonight the Holy Spirit is going to do a work in our hearts to establish us more firmly in where we should be and what we should be doing and keep us away from these traps of being a busybody. The first trap that you will fall into if you are a busybody, you will become what the Scriptures call disorderly.

Now, that's found in 1 Thessalonians 5, verse number 14. 1 Thessalonians 5, verse number 14. We urge you, brethren, to admonish the unruly.

Encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, be patient with all men. The word there, unruly, disorderly, means to walk out of one's rank, to be insubordinate, to walk out of one's rank, to become insubordinate. 2 Thessalonians chapter 3, verse number 6. Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep aloof.

Now, to keep aloof, what does that mean? Keep your distance. I believe with all of my heart that the Holy Spirit is going to begin to bring into full activity in this day that we're living in the scriptural principle of keeping aloof, keeping your distance from those who refuse to repent from being busybodies. I believe the Holy Spirit is going to move upon the hearts of all of God's people and they will refuse, they will refuse to be involved with and to be in close association with anyone who persists on being a busybody, who continues to oversee the affairs of other people's lives, who continues to be preoccupied with everybody else.

And the problem with a busybody is as they become preoccupied and they become so involved in other people's lives, they begin to sow their preoccupation among the other Christians. And you've got one busybody in the bunch and in six months you've got 20 busybodies in the bunch. All because one person, one person mingles in and majors on overseeing everyone else's life.

And that begins to sow the spirit of busybody in someone else. And then before you know it, the other one is preoccupied with the affairs of other people. And then another one, and then another one.

And before you know it, you've got a whole bunch of people who are overseeing everyone else's lives but their own. And it grieves the Holy Spirit. One of the characteristics, one of the traps that a busybody will fall into is they will become a disorderly Christian, which means they will walk out of their rank.

They will go beyond what they're supposed to do. They'll say things they shouldn't say. They'll begin to think of themselves more highly than they ought to.

They go beyond their rank. And they walk in territory that is displeasing to God. A disorderly Christian is one who does not know their rank, does not know where they're supposed to walk.

I believe Jesus wants you and I to realize that our main responsibility as Christians is to concentrate on ourself. Walking in love. And letting Jesus take care of everything else.

Yes? I'm sorry, George, I didn't hear you. The fans. Okay.

Well, I think discipleship can become busybody. I think discipleship can become a cloak for being a busybody. But I think there's a place for discipleship.

I think there's a place for discipleship, but I think it can become being disorderly. I think it can become it. You just have to be careful.

I think the way to judge that is to determine what it is that we're involved in if we are involved in discipleship. And I think when we go beyond setting an example in our words and our deeds and in our action, I think then we trot into the territory of being a busybody using as a cloak discipleship. So I agree, I think that's very important.

Number two. 1 Timothy chapter 5, verse number 13. 1 Timothy chapter 5, verse number 13.

Now, Paul here is talking about women who are widows and do not spend their time seeking the Lord but get into trouble. Verse number 11. But refuse to put younger widows on the list, for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married, thus incurring condemnation because they have set aside their previous pledge.

And at the same time they also learn to be idle as they go around from house to house and not merely idle but also gossips and busybodies talking about things not proper to mention. Now the King James Version says they become tattlers. T-A-T-T-L-E-R.

So the second trap that you can fall into is you can become a tattler. Now a tattler is a person... Listen to this. A tattler is a person who babbles about things.

Now, to babble about things is to say things about the affairs and the business of other people that is absolutely useless. A babbler is one who speaks useless things. So the second trap that you can fall into

in being a busybody is you can become a tattler which is one who babbles about all kinds of things but makes no sense and doesn't really know what they're talking about and doesn't really accomplish too much of anything after everything is said and done.

Now these are traps. And I'm telling you these are traps that you can fall into and it's very difficult to get out of them and it wrecks your Christian testimony. It wrecks your light.

It wrecks everything about you as a Christian. Let's wait for the questions, alright? Let's get through this and then we can ask questions at the end so we don't lose our train of thought. So we've got a disorderly person.

We've got a tattler. And number three, a busybody can become divisive. Now a divisive person and this is found in Romans chapter 16 verse number 7. Romans chapter 16 verse number 7. We want to read the scripture because in it Paul speaks about two traps that you can fall into.

Verse number 17 chapter 16. Now I urge you brethren, keep your eye now the King James says, mark those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you have learned listen, and turn away from them. Now the two words here that the King James uses is division and offenses.

So here we find two traps. We'll deal with them one after another. The first one is a division.

Now the word there division actually means to put asunder. To divide. So the idea here is a busybody not only can become disorderly, not only can become a tattler, but can become divisive.

They become divisive because they create division and put people asunder. They separate people because they're always involved in everyone else's affairs and that's when hard feelings and gossips and envy and jealousy and bitterness and contention and harsh words are being said about people behind their backs you know all that kind of good stuff and that creates a division and it actually puts people asunder. And Paul said that when people are in the body of Christ and they have a reputation for causing division or they have a reputation of dividing people by saying malicious things about them Paul said mark them in other words keep your eyes on them and stay away from them.

Stay away from them. Now see we're answering your question already. You said what do you do when you find yourself with people who are busybodies? Listen.

If you have to work with them, work with them. If you have to have a professional working relationship with them, do so. But don't get involved in the little private talks and in the little private gossip sessions that they have.

Refuse to be a part of it. Do your job. Work with them if you have to.

Be responsible but refuse to be a part of the little private sessions that they have when they begin to destroy and bring division by their words and by their malicious talk. Now, number three. Number four.

Paul said those who cause division and those who cause offense. This is a very very interesting word. The word offense originally came from a word which meant the part of a trap.

Listen to this. Where the bait is. The part of a trap where the bait is.

So, what the scripture is suggesting is when a person is a busybody they can become offensive which metaphorically would represent the part of a trap where the bait is. In other words, they become so divisive that their very way of life and their very lifestyle is like the part of a mousetrap that catches you. Their mannerism and their lifestyle is so offensive it's like it's as deadly as the arm on a mousetrap.

Do you get the picture? That's powerful, isn't it? See, that's a word that Paul used that suggested these people are so devious that they're like a mousetrap. And people come near them and they get so close to them and they snap them with their busybody spirit. And they damage them.

And they wound them. Boy, I tell you, that's one thing you don't want to be. And that's like a mousetrap to God.

I mean, I want to be a fisher of men. Not a catcher of men by being an offense. So when a person is an offense it means that they're such busybodies that their very lifestyle instead of attracting men and bringing them to Jesus they attract men and ensnare them into being critical.

Ensnare them into being busybodies. Catch them into being critical. And anytime you come across an offensive person and you get snapped with that it hurts.

It hurts. How many have ever been guilty of being snapped and then finding that you weren't able to recover as quickly as you wanted to. In other words, you got a wound and you almost started becoming like that.

It's like a tractor. You got to pull yourself from it. You got to shake yourself and really ask the Lord to bring deliverance.

So we've got disorderly, a tattler, a division, divisive person, one who causes offense and remember all of these are the traps of being a busybody. And lastly we have the word which is found in Titus chapter 1 verse number 6. Titus 1 verse number 6. Does anyone have a King James version? Would you read that nice and loud? Lucy, nice and loud. Now these are the requirements or the qualifications for someone who wants to be an overseer which means any kind of leadership in the church.

Titus chapter 1 verse number 6. Read that nice and loud Lucy. Okay, not accused of riot or what? Being unruly. Now this word unruly is similar to the word we used up here disorderly but it has a difference.

The word unruly here suggests refusal to be in subjection and it comes from a military word. So the idea is as Christians we are called into Christ's army and we are to be subordinate to Him. He is to be our head.

We are to follow orders from Him. An unruly person refuses to be in subjection to Christ. Refuses to allow His lordship and His rule and refuses to allow the word of God to be that which they submit to.

And as a result they become, basically they become, they walk out of rank. So when you are unruly you become disorderly. And all of these traps are the result of a busy body spirit and remember what busy body meant.

One who oversees the affairs of another person's life. Friends, God has called us to pray for one another. God has called us to encourage one another.

God has called us to bear each other's burdens. God has called us to instruct one another in love through the word of God. But none of those callings suggests that we should become a busy body and begin to

oversee and direct and mingle in the affairs of other people's lives.

None of those things suggest that. A meddler is someone who creates trouble and division and offense and becomes unruly and becomes a tattler which is one who babbles. As a result of getting involved in other people's lives and instead of helping where they can help and praying about what they can't help they create trouble, they sow discord, they say things they ought not to say and they create a great schism in the body of Christ.

Do you know what a schism is? When the Scripture speaks of there are schisms among you it comes from a word that means division but a schism is like a cleft in the rock which means things are going smoothly and all of a sudden there's a cleft. That's what a schism is. It's that which prevents the unity and the flow of God's Spirit.

So we find... Then you can ask questions, Roger, if you have any more questions. Okay. We find the problem is being a busybody and when we fall into it we become disorderly which is we walk out of our rank, we become insubordinate.

We become a tattler which is a person who babbles about things, says things that don't edify, don't build up, don't encourage but rather say things to stir up trouble and division. Divisive which is to put asunder, you tear apart, you defile people, you defile their character by saying things about them that you ought not to say. That's another trap that you can fall into that creates division.

That's the same word or the derivative of that word is the same word that we get divorce from. Divide, divorce, to put asunder, to tear apart what God wants to bring together. That's a devious, devious trap.

Next we have one who causes offense or one who is an offense and when a person becomes an offense their life becomes like a trap and everyone they come in contact with they snare that person into being critical, into being a busybody, into being judgmental, into always getting into everyone else's life. And that's a bad place to be too. And then lastly, we find another trap is the unruly which is the refusal to be in subjection to Christ and the Word of God.

Remember friends, when God's Spirit moves among us, as God's Spirit moves among us, the spirit of the busybody will be cast out and we will find disorderly, toddler, divisive, offensive and unruly things dissipating and God will knit our hearts together in love and we will bring that to our homes and to our jobs. That's what God wants to do in our midst. So now, the question that I asked you to ask yourself before the service began, are you a busybody? Has your understanding of being a busybody been enlarged? Can you see how easy it is if you have a busybody tendency to fall into one of these categories? I've seen myself fall into one of these categories.

How about you? But thank God that Jesus only shows us our sin to heal us, never condemn us. I'm determined more tonight now than I've ever been to not be a busybody but to be a Jesus person. And as a Jesus person, I'm going to concentrate on Him.

I'm going to concentrate on making sure that I'm walking the way He wants me to and then when it comes to the affairs of other people, I'm not going to talk about things I don't know about. I'm not going to talk about things that I'm not called to talk about. I'm going to help and encourage where I can and where I can't, I'm just going to pray and ask God to deal with it.

Yes?

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