

Sermon: April 27, 2008

**“The telephone”**

How many times has it happened? You miss someone ... you are thinking about someone ... maybe you are waiting for them to return your call. So ----- you end up calling ... and the response? ----

*“I’ve been meaning to call you ... I’ve just been soooooo busy!!”*

Now --- exactly how “bizzzeeee” do you have to be ...

--not to have time to call a friend ... or to find out how your brother is doing?

--not to have time to check on your mom ... or to return a phone message at work??

So many of our phone call are made “on the run” ----- in the car, between appointments, on the way to “somewhere else” ... these are not the phone calls I’m talkin’ about today.

I’m talking about God’s kind-of phone call.

It’s a call with one purpose ----- to tell someone else “I love you.”

It’s a phone call where you “put your feet up” ... pour your favorite beverage ... and this phone call is the only thing on your immediate agenda.

It’s a call where the person on the other end ... at least, for the moment ... is the most important person in your world.

It’s a call where you are often silent ... because you are listening to what someone else has to say.

I mentioned Thursday night how “disconnected” I’ve been feeling lately. Life seems to be “out of control.”

What is it??? ----- the price of gas? ... all the kids being shot? ... the number of fights in supposedly “safe places” like the school next door??

What is the answer? ... what’s the key? ... What can anyone do??

How about this????????? ----- each day ... carve-out a few minutes ... where everything else in your life is “blocked-out” ... think of someone you love ... who maybe could use a little boost ...

think of someone who loves you ...

*Don’t text – message.*

*Don’t e-mail.*

*Don’t communicate through a web-site.*

**JUST CALL!!**

**IF HE/SHE IS NOT HOME ... CALL BACK.**

**If they aren’t home again ... call back again!!**

Jesus had no phone ... but he had time.

He called. He cared. He believed. He had to walk ... he had no money ... he had no credentials.

All he had was a message-and-spirit deep inside his soul.

Today ---- we have so much more ... but we act like we have less.

We have less time ... less patience ... less tolerance ... even less hope.

We have more money ... but we’re afraid to share. We have more opportunities ... but we’re afraid to make the turn. We move faster ... but we cover less ground.

**AND WHAT HAPPENES IN THE MIDDLE OF ALL THIS? ----- we become disconnected.**

Disconnected from each other ... from the moment ... from our world ... from our families & church.

Maybe most of all ----- we become disconnected from the very essence of who we’re supposed to be.

**WE DON’T HAVE TO BE!!**

We just need to take time ... we need to give.

We know more than ever ... but, in reality .... we live like we know less.

Life is about the soul.

Life is about the spirit.

Life is about friendship and family ... about caring and loving.

LIFE IS NOT A PERFORMANCE.

Life is more like an *artist's canvas*. Painted with love ... space for mistakes ... moments of forgiveness ... and your signature in the lower-right-hand-corner ..... saying you take ownership of what it means to live this way!!

Unlike me (who babbles-on for a living) ... my dad was a man of few words.

Every Sunday ... 7:37 PM ... sitting on the front porch, glass of brandy in hand ---- I called him.

“Hi, Dad ... how are you?”

“Good, Reverend ... and you, Jude, the kids?”

“Well, Dad ... just wanted to call ... and say I LOVE YOU.”

(Ever listen to a Swedish guy try to say “I love you”?? ... they try ---- but the words????)

So, what happens ... I say “Dad, I love you ...” And he responds --- “Uh, YOU, TOO.”

(which means ... “I love you” in Swedish)

My dad's letter to me is a classic:

*“Dear Donnie ... I had nothing to do, so I thought I'd write ...*

*I have nothing to say ... so I think I'll close. Love, Dad.”*

It's not the words ... it's the time.

Phone calls ... time ... caring ----- they connect us. When we are connected ... well, we don't have to attack. Arabs, blacks, whites, Muslims, and anyone else ... no more “fighting over turf” ... we share it, we enjoy it, we help each other through it!!

By the way ... I, like many of you ... well, I know the secret to world peace ----- it's a word, it's a spirit, it's “in our hearts.” The word is ---- thank-you.

Remember a time when you did something quietly-nice for another person. You did it --- well, just because you wanted to. Then you wait ... all you want is a “thank-you.” But --- it never comes.

The word “thank-you” ... well, it fills the soul. It completes the circle. It CONNECTS US!

The other day ... I get a phone call ... “out of the blue.”

He says ---- “Rev ... I'm calling to say THANKS.”

“For what?” ... I ask.

“Just for being you.” Whoa!@! ---- I about jumped out of my seat.

Afterwards, I thought to myself ---- when was the last time I did that for someone? ... one of my kids? ... my beautiful wife? ... a friend?

I close with a few words from a poem, written by a renegade Catholic priest ... “When I Grey”

by Father James Kavanaugh.

*When I grey, I want the young to ask questions ... I want the deer to nibble grass by the lake at twilight.*

*When I grey ... I want to gaze at all the mountains I've climbed ... I want to remember every love like a friendly landscape. When I grey --- I want to write the stories I had forgotten in life's haste ... I want to sit with you in silence & share a thousand dreams without saying a word ...*

*I want to be friends with the whole world ... and the gentle guest of all the universe ...*

*Most of all ... when I grey ... I want to be thankful for everyone who took the time to love me ...*

I'm getting grey ... let's not wait 'til tomorrow to say “thanks.”

