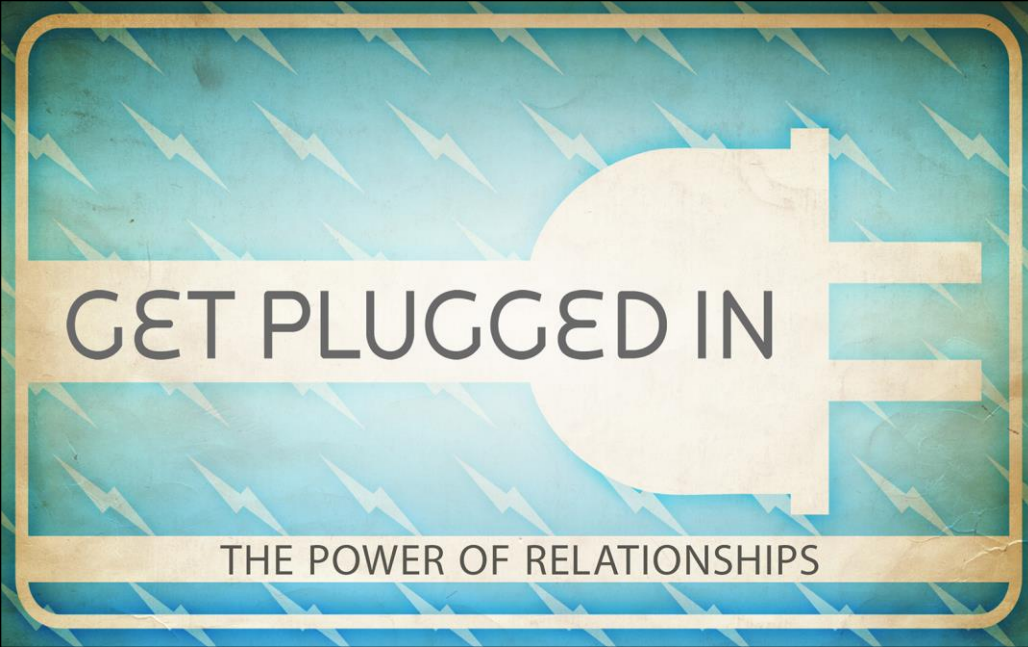


This morning we are in part 2 of our **PLUGGED IN** series which is focusing us on ***The Power of Relationships.***

We are taking time to emphasize this because the 21st century church needs to understand the true **POWER** that comes from **PLUGGING** into biblical community.

And whether you consider yourself plugged in or on the outskirts of community here my hope this morning is that you will be inspired to more deeply invest your life in the community God is growing here at Brandywine.



Last week Pastor Nate spoke to us about the 3 **Chords of Unity** that bind the church together. If you were not here last week go back and listen to that sermon; you will be encouraged by it.

But this morning we are going to talk about HOW TO PRACTICALLY PLUG INTO BIBLICAL COMMUNITY [THE CHURCH] SO WE CAN FULLY BENEFIT FROM THE POWER THAT RELATIONSHIPS BRING.

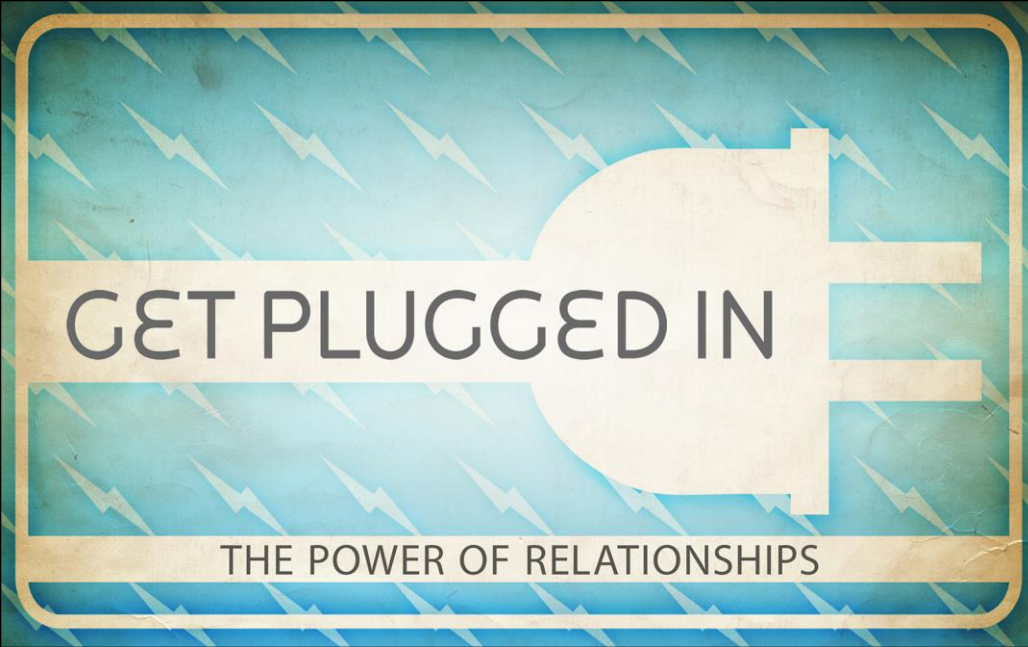
Illus: Speaking of the Power of Relationships... I have a quick story from my own life... when I was about 17 years old I was driving home and it was late and night. I had just dropped my buddy off at his house and I had about 5 minutes to get home before my curfew.



The problem was that I was 8 or 9 minutes away from home. But as a 17 year old that wasn't a big deal, I thought I'd just go a little bit faster to get home in time.

Well... [you probably have already figured out how that went]... for the first time in my life I'd been pulled over for speeding.

When I got my license my dad [who was a Captain in our County Sherriff's office] he had given me a card to put in my wallet...this card identified me as his son. And so when the officer who pulled me over saw that card he said, "Oh... you're the Captain's son, I'm going to personally tell him what you've done."



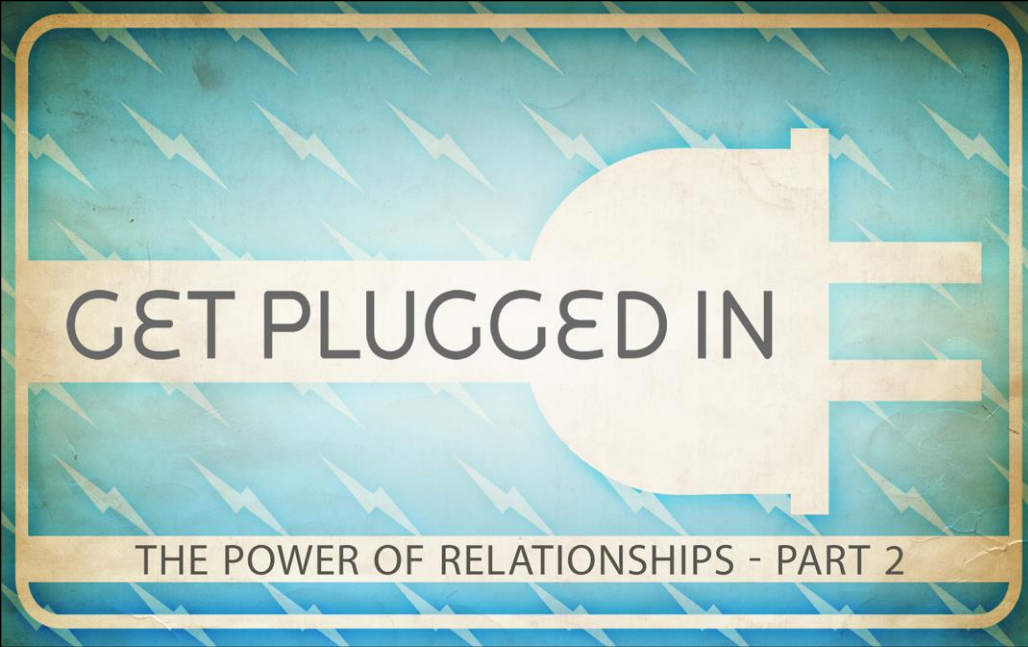
And then I was like, “Uh... can you just give me the ticket and NOT TELL MY DAD???”

I ended up NOT getting a ticket, but I can confidently say I have never been pulled over for speeding again.....that's the truth!

Church my point is that just like my **relationship** to my father saved my bacon on that night..... our **relationship** to Christ has saved us far more.

Our **relationship** to Christ gives us access to something far greater than beating a speeding ticket.....it grants us LIFE, ETERNAL LIFE.

But before we experience eternity there is much work to be done **HERE & NOW.**



Because you see our relationship with Christ doesn't just unite us with Him... it also unites us with everyone who bears the name Christian. We are all brothers and sisters joined together to honor our Savior and bless this world.

Our Church exists to be a part of that work... and those of us who consider ourselves disciples of Jesus are the community of Saints, the hands and feet of this movement... but any “movement” we see will require that we are **plugged in**, equipped, united & ready.

[Pause]

This morning we are going to be in the book of Galatians Chapter 6. In this passage the Apostle Paul gives the Galatian church an exhortation concerning **HOW REALTIONSIPS WITHIN THE CHURCH HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE LIVES.**

Galatians 6:1, 2 (ESV)

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. ² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

As we dive into our text this morning we are going to uncover 2 point concerning **HOW TO GET PLUGGED INTO BIBLICAL COMMUNITY.**

Read: 

What Paul is doing in this passage is giving [*the church*] a framework from which we can look at our relationships/responsibilities to one another.

- v. 1 - You see a brother or sister caught up in sin: gospel response = gentle restoration
- v. 2 - You see a brother or sister carrying a burden: gospel response = you bear up under that burden with them.

Galatians 6:1, 2 (ESV)

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. ² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Now, physically carrying a burden isn't something we think about in our modern context but in ancient times this would have been a very apt illustration.

Ancient people were known to carry up to 70% of their own body weight long distances on their back/shoulders. Next time you complain about your desk job... ***imagine the desk resting on your back all day 😊.***

This was quite literally back-breaking work...and so the Apostle Paul uses the example of back-breaking work to illustrate the type of environment where we lovingly bear alongside our brothers & sisters.

Galatians 6:1, 2 (ESV)

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. ² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Now, in our modern/western context most people no longer carry 70% of their body weight for a living but WE ALL STILL KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO CARRY A BURDEN.

We carry the burdens of our failures, our temptations, we carry the burdens of trials, set backs, and testing that life often produces.

Now, largely our cultural response [*here in America*] when we see someone else carrying a burden is to AVOID THEM.

Many of us find this out when we ask our friends to help us MOVE. All of a sudden everyone has a root canal or a colonoscopy they just can't reschedule.



Illus:

You know, back when we lived in Colorado we were moving from one side of our town Castle Rock to the other. And because I was the Pastor of our church nearly everyone felt obliged to come and help. So we had a legion of people from ChristLife swarming our house it... was... awesome.

When we finished moving in one of our new neighbors asked me who I was... and I was like “I’m Todd.” They thought I was someone important because of the number of people who turned out to help us move.

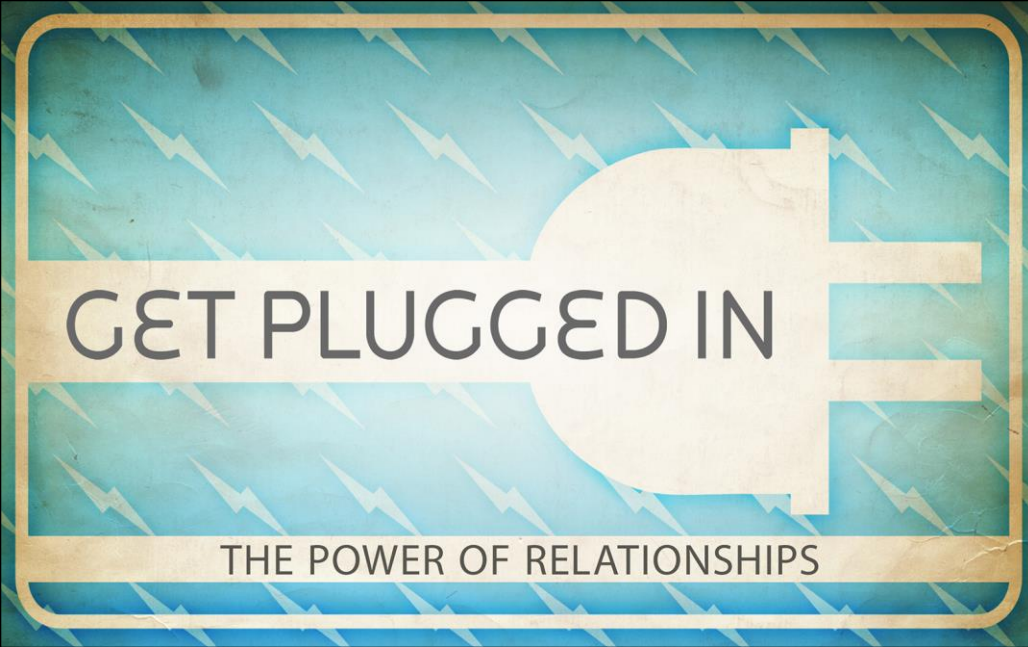
That became a moment where I was able to share about the POWER of RELATIONSHIPS within our church...that we bear one another’s burdens willingly.



You see even something like ‘moving house’ can be a bridge to the Gospel when we plug into community and allow the power of our relationships to shine brightly.

But helping a friend move is clearly on the easier side of carrying a burden, how about bearing with someone who is grieving a loss, or helping someone who has experienced abuse, how about coming along side someone who wants to harm themselves.

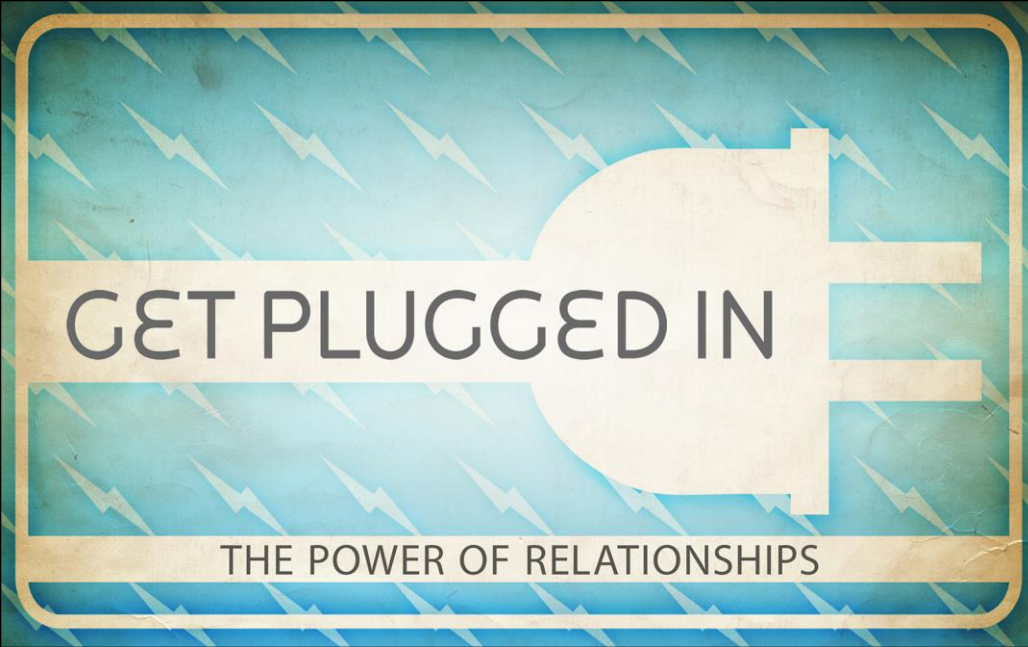
You see there are hurting people all around us, but much of it goes unnoticed because we have not gained eyes to see and ears to hear.



Back in our text, as the Apostle is addressing our need to Bear One Another's Burdens..... Paul doesn't just stop there, he says as we do this, as we bear with one another we ***fulfill the law of Christ!***

That sounds like a big deal... but what exactly does that mean?

The ***Law of Christ*** is far different from the Law of Moses we see in the OT. Moses' law promised LIFE for OBEDIENCE..... the Law of Christ on the other hand promises LIFE for RELATIONSHIP.



You see Church, as we take the RELATIONSHIP we have with Christ and we mirror the same LOVE, that same KINDNESS... PEACE... PATIENCE we receive from Him [as we mirror that] to those whom God places on our path... we fulfill the Law of Christ.

You see the OT Law would say something like ***Bear One Another's Burdens or You Will Surely DIE.....*** the Law of Christ tells us to ***Bear One Another's Burdens As A Means to Truly Live.***



GET PLUGGED IN

**Bear one another's burdens as
a means to truly live.**

THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS

And that brings us to our first point. ***Bear One Another's Burdens As A Means To Truly Live.***

Think about this statement: There has never been anyone more alive than Jesus.

Why is this true? I'll tell you.

Jesus lived a life of authenticity. Yes he was sinless, but he was more than that. In each interaction, in every trial and temptation, He displayed for us the capacity of the human soul.

He was fully ALIVE.



GET PLUGGED IN

**Bear one another's burdens as
a means to truly live.**

THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS

Jesus said in John 10:10 that ***He came that we might have LIFE and have it abundantly.*** This statement by Christ assumes that it's possible to have less than abundant life.....and many in our world are apathetic and depressed in life because they lack a vision for more. They know nothing of the abundance Christ offers.

You see church, as we connect to the power that is found in Jesus we expand the capacity of our soul. As we get ***plugged into meaningful relationships*** we also expand the capacity of our soul, and in so doing ***we become even more alive.***

There is no wonder why on many a death bed men and women have laid there full of regret concerning the virtues in life they left unexplored.



GET PLUGGED IN

**Bear one another's burdens as
a means to truly live.**

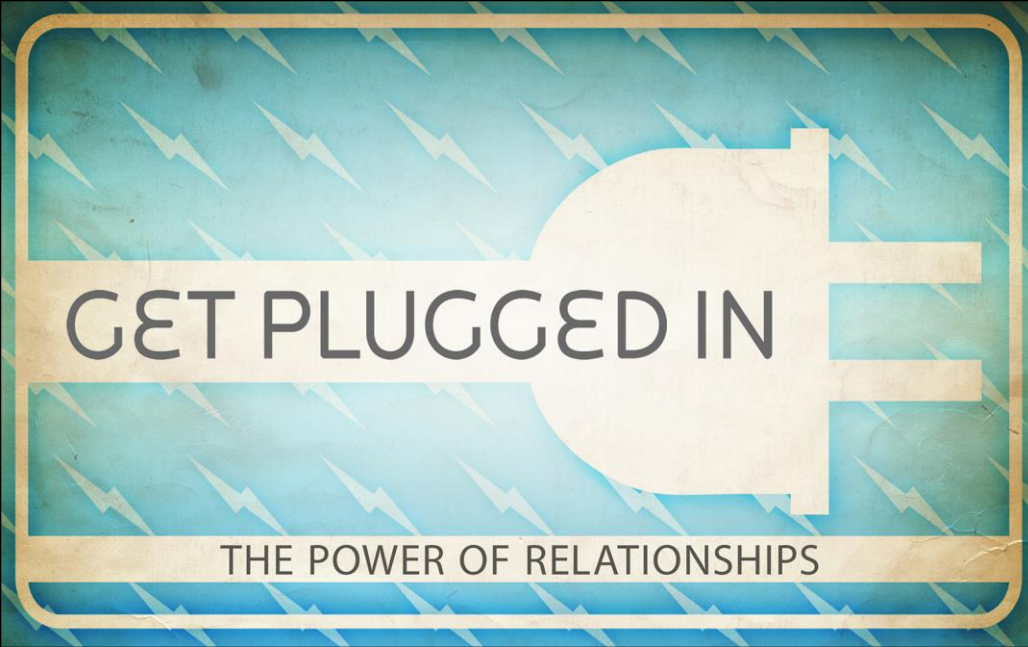
THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS

Many have wished they had been more patient, more kind... it's interesting how impending death can give us a crystal clear perspective on how to TRULY LIVE.

But you and I are here, and as long as air floods our lungs we can engage in a path that will lead to LIFE.

A LIFE where bearing one another's burdens no longer seems like a hardship we are taking on... but rather an opportunity to TRULY LIVE.

[Pause]

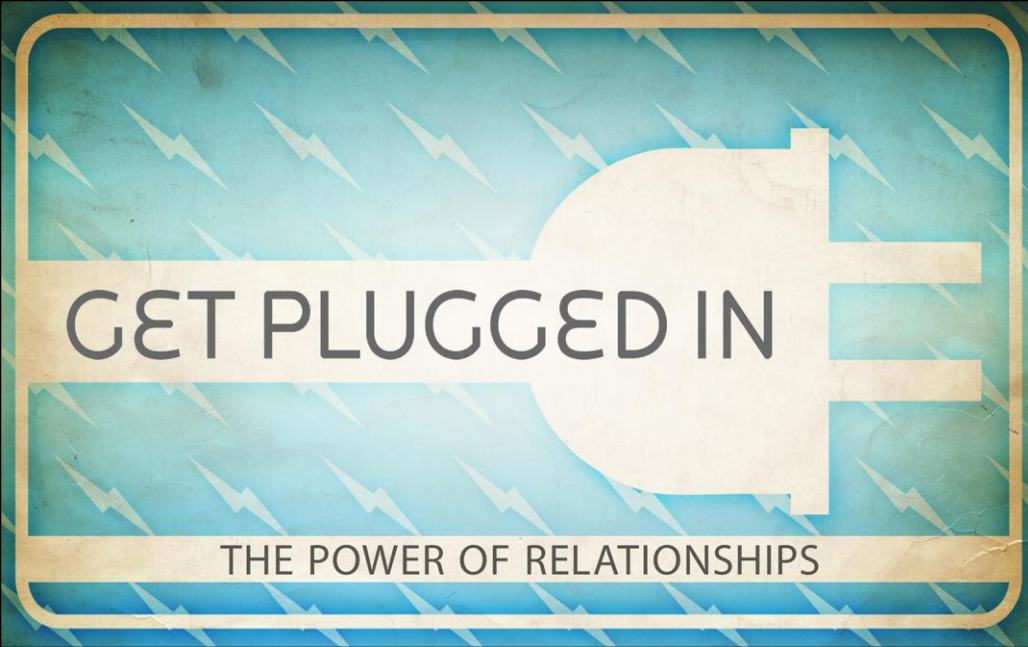


Alright let's get really practical.

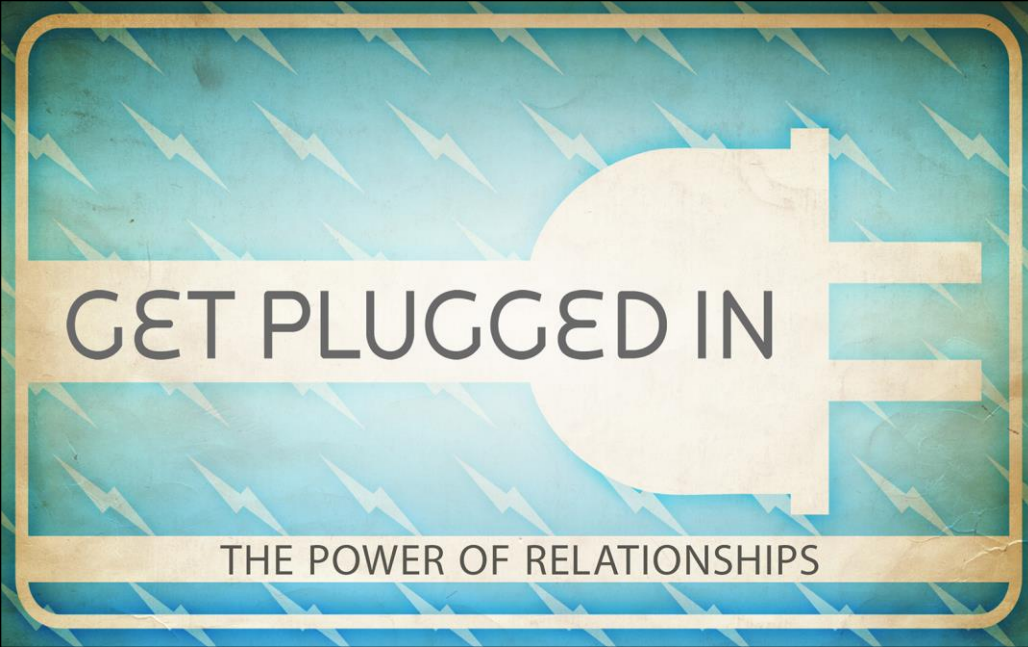
Because some of you might be thinking. *“OK Pastor Todd I hear you but how can I practically apply this to my already busy life?”* We'll I'm really glad you asked.

We have a large number of ways here at Brandywine to **get plugged** into ministry and develop relationships.

There is a blue card titled **“Serving Opportunities”** in the pew rack in front of you that gives a list of opportunities to **get plugged in** here at Brandywine. If you are not plugged in --- take that card fill it out -- and become a part of what God is doing here.



- Perhaps you are gifted at hospitality, why not plug into our **Welcome Team**.
- Maybe you love spending time nurturing/pouring into young lives, get plugged into our **Children's Ministry or Student Ministry**.
- Maybe you have a musical gift, or are savvy with tech and media... plug into our **Worship and Music Team**.
- Perhaps God has given you a heart for Missions, join our **ESL** program or take a **Short-Term Trip**.
- Maybe you feel like you need more Christian fellowship/relationships...plug into a **Small Group** or even consider leading/hosting one. Join up with our CAS ministry, Greif Share, Broken Beginnings... the list goes on.



Fill this card out and place it in the offering plate as the ushers come by later in the service.

*Do not fill this out and check the boxes of ministries you are already serving in... this card is mainly for people who aren't plugged and would like to be.

We need all hands on deck here at Brandywine. If you ask each ministry leader here if they need volunteers ALL OF THEM WILL SAY YES PLEASE.

Alright so, prayerfully fill this card out and our ministry leaders will connect with you.

[Pause]

Galatians 6:8-10 (ESV)

⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.⁹ And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. ¹⁰ So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Now I'd like to jump back into Galatians 6 because here we find our 2nd point concerning **HOW TO GET PLUGGED INTO BIBLICAL COMMUNITY**.

We are going to dive back in starting in verse 8.

Read: ↑

To put Paul's words into context, part of the reason why the Book of Galatians was written was because, false teachers [*Judaizers as they were called*] had taught that you needed to combine Christianity with Judaism in order to know TRUTH.

This false teaching caused some of the believers in the Galatian church to begin pulling away from giving/serving... they were unplugging from the church [*so to speak*] and this put financial strain on the ministry.

Galatians 6:8-10 (ESV)

⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.⁹ And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. ¹⁰ So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

And so here Paul uses the agricultural principles of **reaping** and **sowing** to illustrate **HOW OUR INVESTMENT WITHIN THE CHURCH HAS ETERNAL RAMIFICATIONS.**

He says in verse 8, “***if you sow to your own flesh***”... meaning if you look to invest in your church based on what your sinful nature wants you to do, you will reap a harvest that will fade into oblivion.

On the other hand Paul says, “**but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.**” Meaning that if you look to invest in your church being led BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD you will reap eternal blessings for your investment.

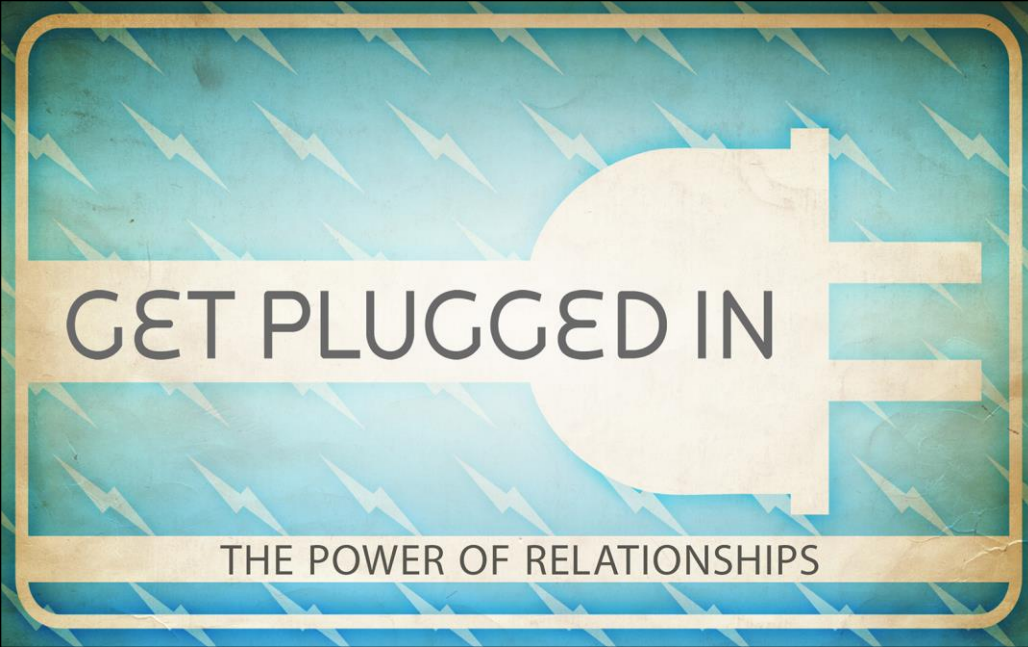


Church all of our lives are deeply invested in something.

For some of us its work. We couldn't be more plugged into work.

For others of us its our team or a hobby, and when we are plugged into that “thing” [*whatever it is*] we feel more ALIVE.

Paul's words here are stark and strong because he knows that many souls lie in danger of SOWING IN THE WRONG FIELD. Paul sees the Galatians slipping, and so he cautions them.....and for us today the caution remains the same. Where are you sowing?



Friends if you feel more **ALIVE** and joyous at **Work** than you do when you come to **Church**..... your sowing in the wrong field.

If you feel more **ALIVE** when you watch the **Eagles** than you do when you see a **Baptism**..... your sowing in the wrong field.

If you feel more **ALIVE** when you get a “**like**” on social media than you do when your able to bless another life through prayer..... your sowing in the wrong field.

[Pause]

Galatians 6:8-10 (ESV)

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In verse 9 Paul tells us how to sow in the proper field he says, ***“let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”***

Make no mistake, sowing to the flesh is so much easier than sowing to the Spirit. And because of this Paul’s exhortation to NOT GIVE UP IS A MESSAGE OF ENDURANCE.

Many times when we first encounter saving faith... we want to serve everywhere/do everything, plug into every opportunity... and we have loads of endurance.

But then over time we grow **weary**, and we don’t strive as hard... and because we grow **weary** little by little our life’s investment goes creeping from **WHAT JESUS WANTS FOR OUR LIVES...** to **WHAT WE WANT FOR OUR LIVES.**



[Pause]

Everyone knows what this stuff is right?
WD-40... or as some have called it “the greatest
mechanic on the face of the earth!”

But your probably wondering what WD-40 has to
do with any of this. I’ll tell you.

Does anyone know what the WD stands for?
Water Displacement

How about the 40?
***Norm Larsen achieved Water Displacement on his
40th attempt.***

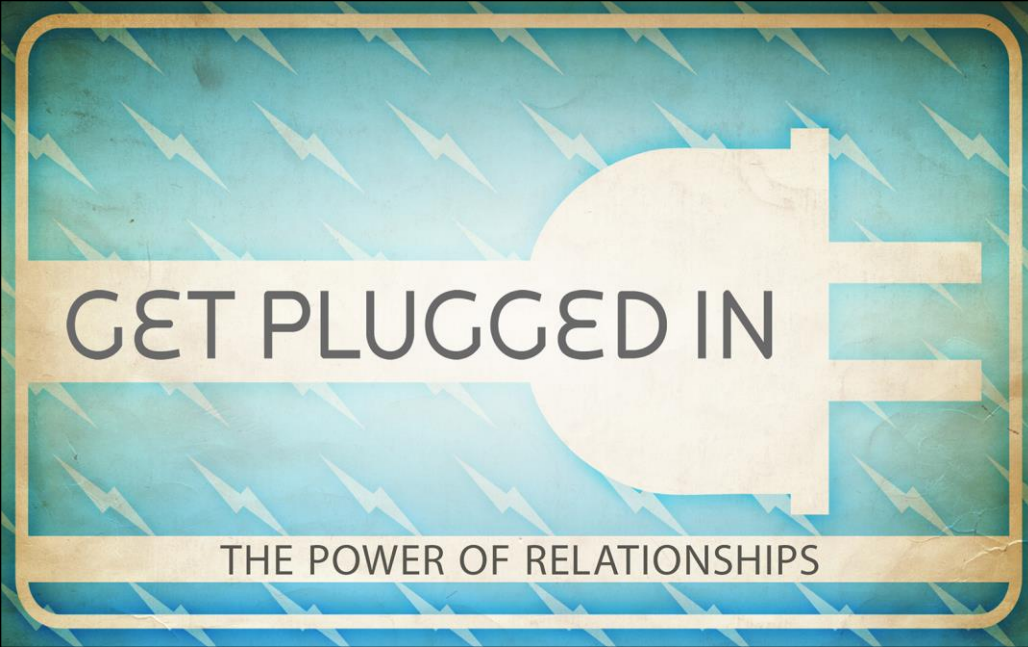
So WD-40 literally means Water Displacement on
the 40th try.



The next time you hold a can of WD-40 you're going to remember that the can itself is literally a message to **NOT GROW WEARY** and to **NEVER GIVE UP**...and it's the exact same in our Christian walk.

The Bible often uses agricultural examples.....and in this morning's text we have the example of **SOWING AND REAPING**...now what every farmer knows is that you sow in the spring to reap in the fall...every farmer knows that growth takes time.

The mistake we often make in our Christian lives is that we sow and expect immediate results, and then when immediate results don't occur we can grow weary.



While it is true that our biggest harvest as Christian's won't come until eternity.

There is a ripe harvest available TODAY for those who are willing.

There are real people living on the margins who need the investment of your time, your talents and your treasure.

What would it look like for you to put Galatians 6:9 into practice in your own life and to NOT GROW WEARY OF DOING GOOD?

[Pause]

Galatians 6:8-10 (ESV)

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In our final verse for this morning, verse 10, Paul exhorts us, ***“as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”***

Again, Paul is addressing this to the church and he states that we [*the church*] should ***“do good”*** especially to other Christians [*that’s what household of faith means*]. This in particular wasn’t happening in the Galatian church.

But in a broader context Paul’s general call to ***“do good to everyone”*** emphasizes that our presence in our ***community*** should be a blessing to our ***community***.

Galatians 6:8-10 (ESV)

⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.⁹ And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. ¹⁰ So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Paul says, “*as you have opportunity, do good to everyone.*” Guess what church, there are ***opportunities*** all over the Brandywine Valley for us to impact lives for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

But you know it’s not only up to us Pastors and Staff to DO THIS WORK... because we are not the church... the church is all of us working together to accomplish what we could never do on our own through the Power of Christ at work in & through our lives.

This is why it’s critical that we get ***plugged in.***



**Seek out opportunities to
do good to everyone.**

THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS

And that brings us to that 2nd point from this passage. ***Seek out opportunities to do good to everyone.***

Friends, is your life structured in such a way where you are seeking opportunities to do good to everyone?

Meaning, have you created enough margin in your life where GOD'S PRIORITIES FOR YOUR LIFE ARE ALIGNED WITH YOUR OWN? The answer to that question largely depends on whether or not we have ***fully surrendered to Christ.***

The process of surrendering to Jesus is initial at salvation... but surrendering continues as we are continually sanctified over the course of our Christian lives.

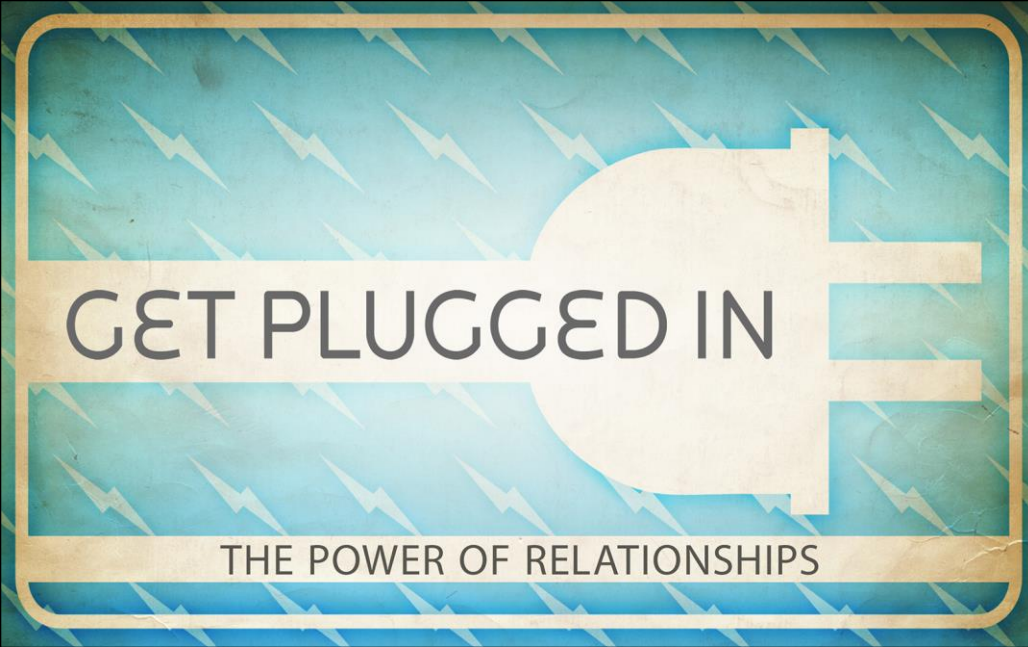
“Too many of us think too lightly of sin, and that is why we think too lightly of the Savior. The one who weeps for joy at hearing the Gospel, the one who extravagantly pours out his possessions in response is the one who believes he has stood before his God with the noose of condemnation rightfully around his neck, and before he is condemned hears a voice that says, I will take that noose and I will wear it in your place.”

Charles H. Spurgeon

THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS - PART 2

One of my favorite quotes of all time captures the essence of what it means to surrender one's life to Christ...and the beautiful harvest that comes when we live for the one who died for us.

Charles Spurgeon said this, *[quote] “Too many of us think too lightly of sin, and that is why we think too lightly of the Savior. The one who weeps for joy at hearing the Gospel, the one who extravagantly pours out his possessions in response is the one who believes he has stood before his God with the noose of condemnation rightfully around his neck, and before he is condemned hears a voice that says, I will take that noose and I will wear it in your place.”*



Spurgeon goes on to say that this is the one who will joyfully offer his life in response to the good news of redemption in Jesus' name.

[Pause]

2000 years ago God sent His Son to do that for us. It is unbelievable! **IT IS GOOD NEWS!**

The way we respond to that good news is by getting **plugged in**... allowing our most important relationship [Christ] to impact all the others, for our benefit and His great glory.

Pray: Offering