

Sunday, Oct. 1, 2017

Series: Legos: Building a Unique Life with God

Series Bible Verse: 1 Peter 2:5 "You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

World Communion Sunday: Breads from around the world.

Message: The Creator Created You to Connect!

Scripture: Acts 2:42-47

Text: 1 Corinthians 12:7 "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good."

Memory Verse: "Don't stop meeting together, as some have started to do, but encourage one another." Hebrews 10:25

Blurb: You are not alone! God is always with you, but God also connects you with his people around you. God made you to connect! This Sunday, learn how the connections we have with other people are a way that God is with you, and that you are part of God's Church in this world.

Gathering Song: *Fill My Heart - Sanctify*

Welcome: -David

- Good morning! I'm David, the pastor here, and
- Welcome to Forest Hills, where together we Love. Grow. and Serve. Jesus.
- First time guests invited to the welcome center
- Kids will stay in worship
 - The whole service will be worship for all ages
 - Kids bags, and kids table in the back.
- Insert: Church at home: use it this sometime this week.

PP: Memory verse: "Don't stop meeting together, as some have started to do, but encourage one another." Hebrews 10:25

- You know, you can do church at home, on your own.
- Many people tell me they don't need church.
- After all, people there can be messed up, mess things up, and mess with you!
- But even so, Christians have always found that it is still *crucial* to meet together.
- When we do, we are pushed away from our selfishness and towards Godly love.
- And we can make a bigger difference in the world!
- This week, our Takeaway Verse reminds us of this. Let's say it together.

Video: Financial Peace University.

Worship Music Set: -Sanctify

Andrew intro.

He Reigns -Kids come up and play noisemakers.

Oh for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

Sitting at the Feet of Jesus

Worship prayer - Andrew

Making Connections:

Bill the Builder - Kids, water, and pvc piping.

Message Bumper

PP#1/1: Legos: Building a Unique Life with God

The Creator Created You to Connect!

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” -1 Corinthians 12:7

Legos: Building a Unique Life with God. The Creator created you to connect! 1 Corinthians 12:7 “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”

PP#1/2: *Image of Legos connecting, or somehow communicating that “Legos connect!”*

[*Show toddler blocks.*] I’ve got some blocks here. [*Begin stacking.*] Kids love these, because they can play with them, stack them, build things. Here’s a pretty cool pyramid!

Blocks stack.

And we do that with our lives. We add things. Education, careers, hobbies, sports, trips, experiences, toys, homes, savings, relationships, friends, family, church, exercise, yard work. We add to our lives, in a desire to build a meaningful and fulfilling life.

But, when we try to add all these meaningful parts to our lives, stacking them up, we begin to realize how fragile it all is, and how insecure we really are. And although things may look good when things go well, when things go wrong [*shake the table, causing the blocks to fall*] all that we have piled up can come tumbling down. Do you know what this feels like? I think you might!

Blocks stack.

But here in our message series, we’re looking at Legos to help us see the biblical truths of God’s plan for our lives. And the key biblical teaching that you must not miss today, is that God created us for connection. Blocks stack, but Legos connect!

PP#1/3: *Image for connecting to God.*

[*Begin to create same pyramid with Duplos, adding about a third of the blocks.*]

God didn’t create us to simply keep piling up different parts of our lives. This leaves us empty and fragile. God created us to make meaningful connections. First and most importantly, God created us to connect with Him. When we make that connection, other connections click.

PP#1/4: *Image for connecting with other Christians...an image for the Church.*

[*Add another third of the blocks.*]

We make connections with *others*, with other people of faith, who love and care for us, who encourage us, correct us, who help us stay true, who call us into accountability, who lift us when we struggle, who point to God when we can’t see Him well, who call us to growth and improvement.

Yes, you can be a Christian on an island, or off by yourself on the lake or in the woods. But God wants a deeper life for you, a plan where others help call you out of the selfishness and self-centeredness that we can let consume us. You need the Church! Yes, it’s full of broken people who

make mistakes, who mess up, who fall into selfishness. But people also love on you in a way that pushes you to become who God intended you to be. You can't get that anywhere else!

And besides, together we can do far more than we can do on our own.

Together, we've collected \$2,700 for hurricane relief, and 1,200 pounds of supplies. You can't do that on your own! To get ready to celebrate our church's 50th anniversary in December, we're making a crazy goal to collect 2,500 dry food items before then to give to the emergency shelter at Community Helping Hand. Individually, this cannot happen. But together, we can!

PP#1/5: *Image for connecting with other non-Christians...for reaching out.*

[*Finish the Duplo pyramid.*]

And, we are called to make connections with others, outside our church family, outside of those we already know. God calls us to build relationships with others, because as we do, we create opportunities to share from our hearts about how God is touching our lives. We don't just hang out with our friends, with people we know and like. This is actually a way we stay selfish. We establish connections with new people, as a blessing to them, and as a blessing to ourselves.

And then, when difficulties come...

[*Shake the Duplo pyramid.*]

...we are able to stand strong.

People may try stacking up more in life, but Christians make connections. This is part of how we join with God in building the unique you that God created you to be.

PP#1/6: *Another image for building relationships with others.*

The Creator created you to connect. We are built this way! We all are. All people strive in various ways to make meaningful connections. But too often we simply stack.

The wildly successfully *Lego Movie* captured this basic human characteristic of needing relationships. Emmet, the main character, is going through life trying to follow the rules in order to have a meaningful life. Lord Business, the bad guy, wants everyone doing things his way. So, he plays on the human need for connections to dupe people into conforming. The main song, which I'm sure you've heard some kid singing, is *Everything Is Awesome!* Now, as Emmet joins in the song, what he doesn't realize yet is that he is being brainwashed into obedience. But the current is so strong! The words are, "Everything is awesome! Everything is cool when you're part of the team. Everything is awesome, we're living our dream. Take a look at this clip.

Video Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPumfHxLOsg> (1:50 minutes)

Did you hear Emmet? "Man I feel so good right now! When you're part of a team!" He so desperately wants to be part of the whole. It's that human need to connect, that inner desire made into us.

Now, the movie also shows through Emmet how we are willing to go along with ridiculous rules and social norms just to fit in and be a part of the group...\$37 coffee! We need meaningful connections. Some of the ways we try to be relational does not work!

PP#2/1: Acts 2:42-47

42 The believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the community, to their

shared meals, and to their prayers. 43 A sense of awe came over everyone. God performed many wonders and signs through the apostles. 44 All the believers were united and shared everything. 45 They would sell pieces of property and possessions and distribute the proceeds to everyone who needed them. 46 Every day, they met together in the temple and ate in their homes. They shared food with gladness and simplicity. 47 They praised God and demonstrated God's goodness to everyone. The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved.

Let's take a look at our Bible passage for today. It's Acts, chapter 2. The resurrected Jesus has gone back to glory, and the Holy Spirit just came down and filled all the believers. It then describes how the first believers lived. What did they do? How did they grow spiritually, and into the unique plan that God had for each of them?

Acts 2, starting with verse 42. "The believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the community, to their shared meals, and to their prayers. [Do you see the central importance of the community?] 43 A sense of awe came over everyone. God performed many wonders and signs through the apostles. 44 All the believers were united and shared everything. [They were connected. They shared from their lives with each other. Verse 45] They would sell pieces of property and possessions and distribute the proceeds to everyone who needed them. Every day, they met together in the temple and ate in their homes [they met together in homes, sharing meals]. They shared food with gladness and simplicity. They praised God and demonstrated God's goodness to everyone. [They made connections with others *not* part of their community.] The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved."

PP#2/2: The Creator created you to connect!

1. Sunday worship - "If you're in town, you're in worship."
2. Wednesday fellowship - Share a Meal & More together!
3. Nurturing small groups - Starting January.

We've begun a new way of doing church together here at Forest Hills. And it is based on this God-created need to connect. It's a church plan based not on Christian education or individual relationship with God. It's based on people growing in their relationship with Jesus, and making disciples of Jesus. That comes in connections. That comes in building relationships. That comes when we commit to live for others.

Sunday worship: come if you're in town. You need it. And others need you! Wednesday: come for Meal and More. This is the time we build community. Don't just come for your own sake. Come because others need you to connect with them. Tell yourself, "There may be someone there that needs my encouragement. There may be a kid I need to talk with tonight. I may be the one person that connects with that person who is sitting by themselves. I'm needed there!" And participate! Don't just sit with people you know. Don't get too busy in the kitchen! Make connection!

Learning about Jesus, and the Bible: that's going to come primarily in small groups. In January we'll ask everyone to be in a group. We learn, do you notice, not just on our own individual tracks. We learn together, in relationships, making connections.

PP#2/3: The Creator created you to connect!

1. Choose to build a relationship with someone here at church

2. Seek to deepen a relationship with someone you know casually
3. Look this week to build a connection with someone new

And this core, biblical principle of making connections, is also something you need to be doing when not at church. It's a way of life—meaningful and rich—for the Christian.

Take out your bulletin insert with the room for notes. Write down these three connections. One. Before you leave today, choose someone here at church that you will seek to grow a relationship with over time. Make a point to go talk with that person regularly, to check in, ask about life details, finding out prayer concerns. At some point sit with them on Wednesday evenings, or go out for coffee. Build a new connection with someone here. Write down that person's name.

Two. Seek to deepen a relationship with someone you only know casually. Perhaps a family member, or casual friend. Work to build that relationship. Again, take the initiative. Slowly over time, grow that relationship. Give it time and attention. Think of someone right now, and write their name down before you leave worship today.

And three, ask God to raise up someone new in your life with whom you can begin to build a relationship. Draw a blank line after your number 3, so you can fill in that name later. You have to be on the lookout, and be willing to get out of your comfort zone. Be ready for God to put someone in your life's path that you need to begin to build a relationship with.

Three relationships to work on. Ask God for help. Listen to the Holy Spirit.

PP#2/4: Image for The Lego Batman Movie

One more video clip. The *Lego Movie* was so popular that they started to make others. Just this past summer, they released another full-length movie, *The Lego Batman Movie*. Lego has been partnering with the super hero world, and been releasing videos with both Marvel and DC heroes.

In this movie, Batman stubbornly tries to maintain his “lone knight,” “I work alone” identity. But along comes Dick Grayson, an annoying orphan, who tries to get Bruce Wayne to adopt him. Bruce Wayne maintains that he doesn’t have—or want—any family! Yet Dick won’t give up, and begins calling him “dad” anyway. Then, he meets Batman, and tries to be his sidekick as Robin. But Batman resists, saying he only works alone. But then Robin starts calling him “dad,” too. At the end of the movie—spoiler alert!—Bruce Wayne realizes that he needs to change, and allow Dick Grayson into his life, both as Bruce Wayne and as Batman, and to create a new family. He decides to change, and make a connection. Take a look.

Video Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAgO54LSwtI> (4:23 minutes)

Bruce Wayne and as Batman creates a new relationship with Dick Grayson. Not only does Dick grow, so does Bruce, and those Bruce is with.

Making connections, it’s God intention for God’s people. It’s God’s intention for God’s Church.

PP#3/1: 1 Corinthians 12:7 "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good."

1 Corinthians 12:7 "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given *for the common good.*" Did you hear that? We are each given unique giftings and graces. Take out the baggies with

the Legos in them. Hold the three Legos in your hand. These represent the gifts that you have in your life, the giftings that you are, giving to you by the Holy Spirit. What can you build with them? Go ahead and connect them. What do you get? Not much, right?

Look around to others near you. They have Lego bricks, too, don't they. What would be a smart thing to do? Yeah! Make a connection, combine bricks with others, and build something awesome together!

The Holy Spirit has given you special and unique gifts, but they are not given for your benefit. You are gifted to be a gift. Each gift is given by the Spirit "for the common good." That means for the blessing of others! Look at your Lego bricks again. What is one of your gifts, resources, something you're good at. What is a gift of the Holy Spirit you have? Now consider, how can you use that to bless someone...make a connection?

Keep hanging on to your bricks. You'll need them for Holy Communion. But right now, ask your Creator how He created you to create!

Amen.

Holy Communion

Introduction of World Communion Sunday

Prayers

Instruction with Legos

Words of Institution

Receiving the Elements

Song: *O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus*

Lego building activity

Closing Song: *The Same Love*

Memory verse: "Don't stop meeting together, as some have started to do, but encourage one another." Hebrews 10:25

Check in with Lego Builder: How does it look? We built the House of God!

Benediction

Church@Home

Here are some ways for you to take worship home with you this week!

Memory Verse (review at least once a day):

“Don’t stop meeting together, as some have started to do, but encourage one another.” Hebrews 10:25

Digging Deeper

Read: Acts 2:44-47

Reflect: What gifts (resources) is God asking you to share for the good of others? What giftings can you share as a blessing?

Discuss: In what ways is your experience of Christian community the same and different than described in the passage?

Pray: Pray for the person at church you identified that you will engage more intentionally.

 Pray for the person you know casually that you will connect with more.

 Pray for God to identify to you a new person that you should reach out to.