

# BETHEL MATTERS

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## BUSYNESS

**BROCK YOUNGREN**

“I am just too busy.”

“I simply cannot do one more thing.”

“I feel like all I do is push harder and harder until the moment I go to bed (and even then I’m staying up far later than I’d like).”

Does this sound familiar? I’ve heard these types of things from people all of my pastoral life.

I was with a group of people and one of them said that they wished they had been able to spend more time with a family member who was not doing well. The family member was sick and likely

going to die soon. The problem was that there was work to be done and just not enough time.

Another person told me that they felt totally alone, isolated from the people they knew. Their friends were all so busy with life, work, kids, and sports that they just never had time anymore. I don’t remember how this one ended.

Isn’t that just sad, though? A loved one was not well, a friend isolated, yet work took a priority over seeing this person and spending time together.

These are not isolated incidents, and it is certainly not the only times that I have had someone say these to me. It is actually a fairly common occurrence. The issue is not that there was work to be done or that this person had an obligation to fulfill that work. The issue was not that the friends were caught up in life. No, the issue is that, whether or not we want to admit it, we tend to prioritize things (work, money, etc) over people.

Frequently we say that there “isn’t time” to do the things that we say we want to do. However, there really is time, we just have to decide how to spend it. One time I asked a mentor how he could take time to do a certain thing and he told me, “Brock, I never take time for anything, I carve time for everything.” He went on to say that he didn’t have any more time than I had, so when there was something that he wanted to or needed to do, he took time from other things in order to make it happen.

This was a very content, happy man, and one of the things that he told me he always carved time for was his family (spouse, children, parents, siblings, etc). He carved that time from his leisure time. He carved that time from his “leave me alone” time. He carved that time from his work. He carved time from what the world calls success.

Not everyone works obsessively; maybe I’m the only one (though I know I’m not). Maybe you’re on salary trying to make sure that you don’t look bad. Maybe you’re trying to put in extra time to get promoted. I don’t know what it is for you, but, if you look at your life and say that you don’t have time for your family or close friends if and when they need you, then maybe you should look into what you’re using your time on and ask if you should carve some of that away.

As believers, we are called to carve time (and money) from our lives for the work of Christ. This, by the way, does not only happen when you lead a class or join a board; in fact, those can at times be less effective ministry than simply spending time with individuals. We are also called to carve time for our family. Regardless of your job, it cannot usurp all of your time from your spouse and kids. You need to pour time into those relationships on a consistent basis.

There will be periods of your life where you have to work extremely hard, long hours; just make sure that those seasons don’t somehow become your modus operandi. If you make people your priority, you’ll usually find that it gives you deeper purpose to life. For it is people, not work, that are created Imago Dei (in the Image of God).

# GOD AND A ROCK

CHRIS MAUSER

Recently someone brought up the age-old question: Can God create a rock so big He cannot lift (i.e. "move") it? There are two problems with this question: one is theological, the other is philosophical. Let's address the philosophical one first.

There are certain basic laws that apply both to our thoughts as well as to the real world. For example, the law of identity simply means that a "thing is what it is." That's it. If you're talking about apples, you're talking about apples. If oranges, then oranges. Simple as that. You could formulate this law into something that looks like  $A = A$ , and you can substitute whatever you want to for "A" (like apples, oranges, cats, dogs, etc.) and know that the thing you're talking about is equal to itself. Pretty straightforward, right?

Then there's the law of excluded middle. This essentially means that you're either talking about a thing (like apples) or you're not. If you were to formulate this law, it would look like: either A or non-A. Continuing our fruity example, it would say we're either talking about apples or non-apples. ("Non-apples" could be oranges, grapefruit, giraffes. In fact, it could mean anything except apples!) In other words, there is no middle ground—it is "excluded." You're either talking about a thing (whatever it is) or you're not. That's it.

Finally there's the law of non-contradiction. This law states a

thing cannot both be and not-be at the same time and in the same sense. What in the world does that mean? (It's easier than you think.) Take me as an example. Right now I'm sitting at a desk. What the law of non-contradiction says is that I cannot both be "sitting" and "not-sitting" at the same time and in the same sense. In fact, it's impossible that I'm both "sitting" and "not-sitting" simultaneously. So, if I'm sitting then I'm sitting (law of identity), I'm either sitting or not-sitting (law of excluded middle), but under no circumstances am I both sitting and not-sitting simultaneously and in the same sense because that would be a contradiction. Clear as mud so far?

What does all this have to do with God and a rock? Well,...

Rocks are things that, by definition, have surfaces. The surface of a rock is what sets its boundaries. Insofar as a rock has boundaries, it's finite. That means, it has a limit. And God, who is infinite (unlimited) can, by definition, move a finite rock. (That much we generally agree on.)

But what about an "infinite rock"? Here's where people get themselves confused. We said above that a rock has a surface, and because it has a surface it's finite. Now a thing is either finite or it's not (law of excluded middle). But under no circumstances can it be both finite and not-finite (in other words, infinite). So what this question is asking is "Can God make a rock that's not a rock?" And that's a meaningless question. It's impossible—not just "impossible for man" but "impossible in itself." It cannot be a real thing. As such, Omnipotence itself couldn't create it.

That brings me to my second point: the theological problem. Many of us have understood "omnipotence" to imply that God can do literally anything. Didn't Jesus himself say, "with God all things are possible?" (Mt. 19:26). Historically, however, the divine attribute of "omnipotence," which means all-powerful, has only been understood to mean that God can do anything that does not involve a contradiction. The reason for this is because contradictions (like "square-circles") aren't things. Not only are they not things, but they cannot be things. And the fact that God cannot "create contradictions" is not a repudiation to his omnipotence, but rather a deficiency in the concept. As the medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas pointed out, "Whatever implies a contradiction cannot be (exist)...because no intellect [including God's] can possibly conceive such a thing." Again, this fact owes itself not to a limit in God, but a limit in the thing conceived. It's an impossible idea.

So, next time someone asks you if God can create a rock so big that He cannot lift it, make sure you ask them how big the rock is. Is it a finite rock? Sure, God can lift it. There is no finite rock that God cannot lift. He can lift all finite rocks. What about an "infinite rock?" In other words, "what about a rock that's not a rock." No, He cannot lift it. He cannot even make it. Because there is no "it." There's no rock that's not a rock (law of non-contradiction). It's either a rock or not a rock (law of excluded middle). And if it's a rock, then it's a rock (law of identity). And make sure to let them know that any more questions headed this way are therefore rock-headed.

Thinking along with you,  
Chris Mauser



# VISITATION & EVANGELISM

VE stands for Visitation and Evangelism. The class is designed to help you become a faithful witness of the Gospel. It will teach you how to begin a conversation, present the Gospel, follow-up, and handle some objections. If you are not witnessing or feel you don't know how, or just need some encouragement, this is for you.

Dates: Feb 19th, 26th, Mar 12th, 19th, & 26th

2:30-4:30pm

Room #3 FLC

Register online or talk to Eleanor or Brock



## NEW MEMBERS

In January, we welcomed 2 new members into our church family! They are John Bolm and Rachel Hauch. Take a moment to welcome them! If you are interested in Membership or learning more about Bethel, contact Lynn Miller.

## WOMEN'S RETREAT

Ladies of Bethel, mark your calendars! This year's Women's Retreat will be held May 19th-21st at UPBC. We are excited to add a 2nd night to the event! The cost will be \$160 for the weekend and \$100 for Saturday only. Registration will begin on April 1st. Our theme this year is Seeking the Light.



## CHILDREN'S VOLUNTEER TRAINING

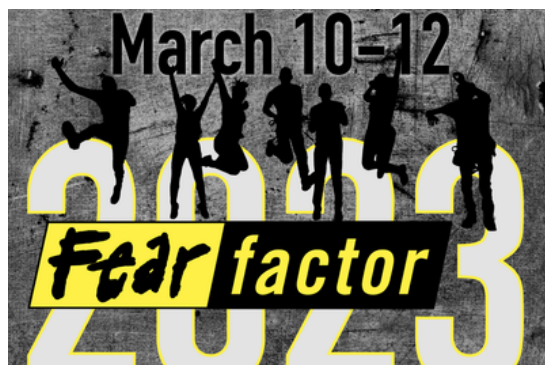
Nursery Workers Feb 5 at 9am & 11:30am  
Preschool & Toddler Feb 19 at 10:15am Feb  
Youth Volunteers 19 at 12:30am Mar 4 at  
Sunday School teams 5pm



## YOUTH RETREAT AT UPBC

FEBRUARY 10-12

UPBC is hosting B.A.S.H (Bible Application & Savior's Hope), a youth retreat for grades 6-12, and our own Chris Mauser is the speaker! Register at [upbiblecamp.org](http://upbiblecamp.org).



## PRIMETIMERS' VALENTINE'S DAY DINNER

FEBRUARY 9 AT 5 P

The Primetimers are invited to a Valentine's Day Dinner at Big boy on Feb 9th at 5 pm. RSVP to Sandy Thomsen, and tell her something you think nobody knows about you!



## LIFT WOMEN'S MOVIE NIGHT

FEBRUARY 18 AT 6 P

Join the ladies for a movie night at Diane Kytta's home! We will be watching the 1950s movie How to Marry a Millionaire. Popcorn and beverages will be provided. We ask you to bring your favorite movie-watching finger foods to share. Please feel free to wear your pajamas!



## TRUTH BUILDERS' ITALIAN SUPPER

FEBRUARY 25 AT 5:30 P

The Truthbuilders are invited to an Italian Dinner at Bob & Natalie Martin's house on Feb 25th. Class members are welcome to come out as early as 4pm and dinner is at 5:30.

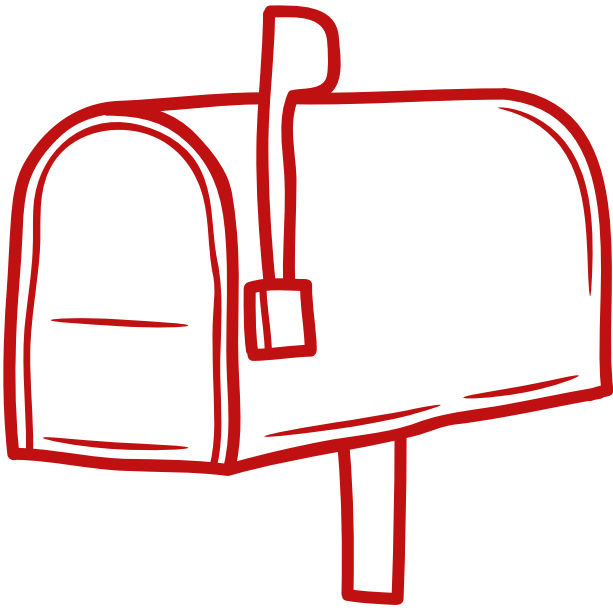


## UPBC MEN'S DINNER

FEBRUARY 25 AT 5:30 P

The men are invited to a dinner at Upper Peninsula Bible Camp. Doors open at 5:30 P, and dinner starts at 6. Stay tuned for a sign-up sheet.





*Thank you Bethel Family for the beautiful Peace Lily that was delivered to the church in memory of Jeff's mom. We appreciate the love and caring that you have shown our family.*

*With love,*

*Jeff and Kathy Millin, Miranda, Kaitlyn, & Olivia*

*Thank you to church for the beautiful plant that was sent to me while I was in the hospital. I am home now - much improved - Thanks so much for your concern and prayer. Our God is good!!*

*Love in Christ, Barbara D. Johnson*

## **IN SYMPATHY TO:**

The Millin family in the recent passing of Jeff's mom,  
Meri Millin.



# NEW TO THE LIBRARY

## BIBLICAL RESOURCES

*Every Prayer and Petition in the Bible* by Larry Richards

## BIOGRAPHY

*Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission: The Growth of a Work of God* by Dr. & Mrs. Howard Taylor

*Jonathan Edwards: A Life* by George M. Marsden

*Never Alone: From Ethiopian Villager to Global Leader* by Bekele Shanko

## BOOKS ON CD

*Chronicles of Narnia Radio Theatre* by C. S. Lewis  
*Prince Caspian*

*The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*

*The Magician's Nephew*

## CHRISTIAN LIVING

*Not Forsaken: Finding Freedom as Sons & Daughters of a Perfect Father* by Louie Giglio

*Saturdays With Stella: How My Dog Taught Me to Sit, Stay, and Come When God Calls* by Allison K. Pittman

*Radical* by David Platt

*Kneeling in Bethlehem* by Ann Weems

*The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life* by Bruce H. Wilkinson

## CLASSICS

*The Prayers of Peter Marshall* edited and with prefaces by Catherine Marshall

## HOPE & SUFFERING

*Therefore, I Have Hope: 12 Truths that Comfort, Sustain, and Redeem in Tragedy* by Cameron Cole

*Through the Eyes of a Lion: Facing Impossible Pain; Finding Incredible Power* by Levi Lusko

## FAMILY DVD

*All Saints: Faith United Them and Together They Saved Their Community*

## FICTION

*Word of Honor* by Terri Blackstock

*The Seer Series* by Rachelle Dekker

- *The Choosing: Not to be Chosen Would Yield a Cruel Fate of My Own Making*
- *The Calling: Fear is a Powerful Sedative for Rebellion*
- *The Returning: She Will Risk Everything to Lead Them Out of Darkness*

*The Prince: Jonathan...One of Five Men Who Quietly Changed Eternity* by Francine Rivers

*Publish and Perish* by Sally S. Wright

## MARRIAGE

*The Five Love Languages: How to Express Heartfelt Commitment to Your Mate* by Gary D. Chapman

## MISSIONS

*Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility* by Duane Elmer

## MAX LUCADO

*Praying the Promises: Anchor Your Life to Unshakable Hope*

## PERSONAL GROWTH

*Experiencing God: How to Live the Full Adventure of Knowing and Doing the Will of God* by Henry T. Blackaby & Claude V. King

*Waking the Dead: The Glory of a Heart Fully Alive* by John Eldredge

*Humility: True Greatness* by C. J. Mahaney

*Worldliness: Resisting the Seduction of a Fallen World* by C. J. Mahaney

*Listening to Love: Responding to the Startling Voice of God* by Jan Meyers

*One Month to Live: Thirty Days to a No-Regrets Life* by Kerry & Chris Shook

## PARENTING

*Challenges for the College Bound: Advice and Encouragement from a College President* by Jay Kesler

## SOCIAL ISSUES

*Whiteman's Gospel* by Craig Stephen Smith

## WOMEN

*The Power of a Praying Wife* by Stormie Omartian



## EVENTS

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Nursery Workers Meeting  
Feb 5  
9 & 11:30 A

Primetimers' Valentine's  
Day Dinner  
Feb 9  
5 P

UPBC Youth Retreat  
Feb 10-12

Preschool & Toddler  
Workers Meeting  
Feb 19  
10:15 A

Youth Workers Meeting  
Feb 19  
12:30 P

LiFT Women's Movie Night  
Feb 18  
6 P

Visitation Evangelism  
Begins  
Feb 19  
2:30 P

Truthbuilders Italian Dinner  
Feb 25  
5:30 P

UPBC Men's Dinner  
Feb 25  
5:30 P

## BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

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2 Evelyn Giroux, Effie Smaby  
3 Heath Mauser, Heather Pell, Sandy Petrovich  
4 Bill Kosa  
5 Stan & Judy Taylor A  
7 Anna Busscher  
8 Michelle Baumgartner  
9 Marilyn Morrison  
10 Ryan Salo  
11 Ireland O'Connor  
12 Adalyn Dale, John Janofski, Olivia Miller  
13 Rachel Nye  
14 Nick & Effie Smaby A  
15 Ed Deyo  
18 Kevin & Sharon Busscher A, Miles Jentoft, Haislee Miron  
20 Dave Petrovich  
21 Miranda Millin, Emily Downs  
24 Jenny Hamel, Joe & Leanne Mackey A  
25 Dan Freeborn, Pete & Julie Glover A, Karen Helmila  
28 Dave Michels, Samuel Saberniak  
29 Mila Freeborn

February