

Christa Reinhardt:

Welcome to the Vanderbloemen leadership podcast. I'm your host, Christa Reinhardt, Senior Marketing Coordinator here at Vanderbloemen. This week, William talks with Jordan Raynor, entrepreneur and author of Redeeming Your Time. In this conversation, Jordan shares his heart behind writing his latest book, Redeeming Your Time: Seven Biblical Principles for Being Purposeful, Present, and Wildly Productive. He offers a scriptural based antidote to swamped to-do list and hurried schedules through seven points drawn from the example of how Jesus lived. With these principles, readers, get to see how Jesus managed his time on Earth and responded to human constraints. Here is William's conversation with Jordan Raynor.

William Vanderbloemen:

Hey everybody. So glad you're here today and I am super glad, I'm always glad to meet a new friend and then get to introduce him to current friends. And that's exactly what I'm getting to do today with Jordan Raynor. Jordan, thanks for joining us.

Jordan Raynor:

Yeah. It's a joy to be with you, William. Thanks for having me.

William Vanderbloemen:

Yeah, Jordan. Jordan has a chronic condition and you probably need to pray for him because I have it too. And it's starting stuff.

Jordan Raynor:

Yes. Yes.

William Vanderbloemen:

I think serial entrepreneur, that sounds a little chilling. That sounds like a documentary or something, but I know the condition and it doesn't go away. It's incurable. And I just, I was reading your bio before we first connected before this and I got to tell you, I want to talk about the church. I want to talk about managing time. You got a great book out right now that we're going to talk about. But before that I want to, I read somewhere that you started a company and it's the biggest one in the Milky Way or whatever for 360 degree virtual tours of businesses or hotels or something?

Jordan Raynor:

Yeah. So, 360 photography's been around forever. In the real estate world, this has been around for around 30 years. Nobody had really cracked the nut though on how to do it at scale for public locations, hotels, restaurants, shops, attractions. And by the grace of God, we at Threshold 360, this venture that I'm the Executive Chairman of, we figured it out. So we built the world's largest database of this content. We own the asset, unlike a traditional photographer model. And we license out that asset to a bunch of different parties, destination marketing organizations like Visit Houston, right? Visit San Francisco, hotels, Google trip advisor, all these players.

William Vanderbloemen:

Really?

Jordan Raynor:

Yeah, it's been a great business. I ran it for two and a half years as its CEO. And for the last two and a half years, I've served as Executive Chairman of the Board. I stepped down, really so that I could focus full time on creating content like this book, Redeeming Your Time. Content that helps Christians connect the gospel to why they work to what work they do in the world and then how they do good works that bring God glory.

William Vanderbloemen:

That's awesome. Probably pretty good you stepped down before the, maybe you saw the pandemic coming. I didn't. But I can't imagine, I mean, you probably had a lot of people that weren't able to tour things so they did a 360.

Jordan Raynor:

Yeah, exactly. I mean, it was brutal for us for a little while, as it was for a lot of businesses. But in the long run we've been able to serve a lot of people really well, allowing people to virtually step inside of locations they can't visit in the real world. So it's been a blessing.

William Vanderbloemen:

Well, enough about that and sorry for those of you who just tuned out because of a super boring conversation, but it's just fascinating what people do. It's the coolest thing about knowing entrepreneurs is they've always got some crazy story about something they're doing that you didn't even know had a business behind it. So yeah. But what's so interesting to me, I interview people all the time, it's what we do for a living. And I would say since the pandemic settled in a year and a half ago, or whenever it was, you would think I don't have to go to the office anymore. I don't have to commute anymore. I've got all this extra time and everything's going to be better now. And the reality is the guys and gals that I interview feel like they have less time.

William Vanderbloemen:

They feel more crunched. It's almost like when the boundary of going to the office went away, it just cluttered schedules and didn't clean them up. So I want to hear how to redeem my time. I want to hear, but before we go to the content of the book itself, what made you want to write this? Writing, to me, I've never had, I've got seven children, but I didn't give birth to any of them. But man, when I get a book in my head and it's here and I know it's got to get out there and it's going to be really painful getting it, it better be a big thing that's making me want to write.

Jordan Raynor:

Totally. And especially to write a book in the most cluttered category of books in the world, the time management, productivity, work life balance category. Yeah. So listen, I've read all the perennial bestsellers in this category, about 50 of them throughout my career. And the reason why I wrote Redeeming Your Time is because I have two really big fundamental problems with books in this category. First, they tend to, in my experience, be based on workspace productivity, right? The message is, hey, you're feeling overwhelmed. You're feeling stressed. Follow the authors system, do exercises X, Y, and Z. And then you will find peace. As a Christ follower, I believe I already have peace, right? Romans 5:1 assures me, I have ultimate peace with God. So I don't do time management exercises to get peace. I do it in response to the eternal peace that I've already been given.

Jordan Raynor:

I just think that's a radically different foundation for a book. The second reason why I wrote it is I have never in my life, in those 50 time management books I've read, not one of them accounts for how the author of time managed his time when he came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ. And Christian or not, I think it's pretty hard to dispute that Jesus of Nazareth was the most productive person to ever walk the earth.

Jordan Raynor:

So why haven't we studied the gospels for clues as to how he managed his time? Because we read the gospels almost exclusively for their theology and their ethics. And we forget that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are biographies of the life of Christ. And no, they don't show him with a to do list, or a calendar, Google calendar. But they do show him fighting distractions while he was preaching and doing his work. They show him fighting for solitude. They show him seeking to be busy without being hurried. And because he was infallible God, we can assume he did all of that perfectly. And so that's why I wrote this book. These are seven timeless time management principles from the life of Christ, mapped to more than 30 hyper practical practices to help us redeem our time in the model of our Redeemer.

William Vanderbloemen:

So let me ask you this. If Jesus is the most productive guy ever, what in the world does it say that he spent arguably 90% of his life getting ready for the three years that he actually did stuff?

Jordan Raynor:

It says a heck of a lot, right? It says a ton.

William Vanderbloemen:

Do you talk about that in the book.

Jordan Raynor:

You know, I don't. I've talked about it in previous books, but let's go there. So there's a couple of things we could draw-

William Vanderbloemen:

Bonus content, right here.

Jordan Raynor:

There you go. Bonus content. This is only here on the Vanderbloemen podcast. Now listen, number one, a lot of times, whatever we're doing today is preparation for something else that the Lord might do for us in the future. But here's what I take away from the fact that Jesus spent, most scholars estimate at least 70% of his adult life making tables instead of preaching sermons, work in the eyes of the God of the Bible could not have more dignity, right? Go back to Genesis one. The very beginning of the story, before God tells us that he is holy or loving or omnipotent, he tells us that he is a God who creates, who is productive, who works.

Jordan Raynor:

He makes things. Genesis two tells us that he rolled up his sleeves and built a garden, planted a garden in the east. And by the way, this is unique in the history of world religions. Every other religion says that the Gods created human beings to work and serve the gods. Only Christianity says that God himself worked to serve us. That's radical. No other religion gives this much dignity to the work that you and I do every day. So that's what I take away from Jesus spending 70% of his adult life working as carpenter. It's radical.

William Vanderbloemen:

Wow. That's good. So if I buy the book, if I'm reading the book, what's something I can, give us one of those seven key lessons.

Jordan Raynor:

Yeah, here we go. All right. So listen, look at the gospel biographies. One thing that jumps off the page is Jesus was really, really good at dissenting from the kingdom of noise. We have such chronological snobbery. We think, ah, Jesus' noise, Jesus' world, wasn't that noisy in the first century. Then why in the world is it that all the time in the gospels, you see him withdrawing to a lonely place or a solitary place? He needed time to be still, to be alone, to listen to the Father's voice. If that was true of him, the son of God in the first century, how much more true is that of us today? And to cite the cliché of all clichés, we're living at a crazy, noisy time. I don't have to tell anybody that.

William Vanderbloemen:

Unprecedented.

Jordan Raynor:

Unprecedented, unprecedented, asterisk, exclamation point. But listen, if we want to think clearly, if we want to be creative, if we want to be able to effectively discern the essential from the noise on our to-do list, we've got to dissent from the kingdom of noise. And listen, I have nine practices in the book just from this chapter on how we do this. Because we've got to have a lot of habits to practically integrate this into our life. Because we just have no silence. We have no solitude today and it's killing our productivity.

William Vanderbloemen:

Wow. Yeah. I've had five texts come in while you were giving that example. And I'm like, how am I going to get back to them? What am I going to do?

Jordan Raynor:

Exactly. It's a noisy time.

William Vanderbloemen:

It's a noisy time. Hey, when you're thinking about your time, serial entrepreneurs, a lot of pastors are like this, we suffer from, I call it shiny object syndrome. How do you decide what's worth your time and what's not? Because a lot of us that are chronic entrepreneurs or ministry oriented people, you've met the guy, it's the guy who, what's your favorite book you've ever read? Oh, the one I just finished.

Jordan Raynor:

Yep. Yep. Totally.

William Vanderbloemen:

What do you use to discern this is worth investing my time, this is not.

Jordan Raynor:

Yeah. I limit the number of times I have to make those decisions. So, give a great example. Once a quarter, take a whole day off, go on a retreat and I set objectives and key results, very well defined quarterly goals for the next 90 days for my work and for my family. And once those things are well defined and really inspiring, it's a very big yes I've given in the quarter. Yeah, it makes it a heck of a lot easier to say no to requests for my time. Because I just look at those [OKRs 00:11:49] and say, is this in line with the goals that I said I was going to go after this quarter? Yes. Great, let's do it.

Jordan Raynor:

No, I'm going to say no temporarily, put it on ice and I'll reconsider it the next time I do that retreat, the next 90 days. So a lot of people I talk to who have trouble saying no, my first question to them is what are you saying yes to? What's the big hairy audacious goal you're chasing after this quarter, this year, this decade? And almost always those people are like, I don't have one. That's a problem. Until you have a burning yes that you're just so inspired by, that it's going to be really, really hard to say no to request for your time.

William Vanderbloemen:

That is gold right there folks. That is just gold. So if you were giving advice to your younger self about managing time or redeeming your time, by the way, I love the title. It so fits with the message. What do you wish a younger Jordan would've known?

Jordan Raynor:

All right, this isn't going to sound practical, but I've come to learn it's the most practical thing in the world. It's what I tell my kids every single night before I put them to bed. I have a seven year old, five year old and a two year old.

William Vanderbloemen:

Oh man.

Jordan Raynor:

I know, I know. Pray for me please. Every night before they go to bed, I say, hey girls, look me in the eyes. You know I love you no matter how many bad things you do. And they say, yeah. I say, you know I also love you no matter how many good things you do. And they say, yeah. I say, who else loves you like that? And they say, Jesus. We've got to hear those words spoken over our lives and our work. If you can believe that the God of the universe died for you when you were his enemy, you could certainly believe that he loves you regardless of how productive or unproductive you are.

Jordan Raynor:

That's how the gospel allows us to rest. But here's a beautiful thing. In my experience, the more I understand that at a deep soul level, ironically, the more ambitious I become for my work. Not because,

I'm not ambitious for my work and productive because I need to get something from God. I am ambitious and productive because I just want to bring him pleasure. Working to earn somebody's favor, whether it's God or your spouse or your parents, is exhausting. It's a never ending rat race. But working in response to unconditional, unmarried favor, that is intoxicating. It is just this idea that the key for Christians is realizing we don't need to be productive. And when we get that, it makes us wildly productive. It's this beautiful paradox.

William Vanderbloemen:

Well, it's a motivation out of thankfulness rather than fear, right?

Jordan Raynor:

Totally. Totally.

William Vanderbloemen:

Yeah.

Jordan Raynor:

That's exactly right.

William Vanderbloemen:

Yeah. Well, so where can people go to access the book, to access more content from you? Tell us how to find you.

Jordan Raynor:

Yeah, sure. So I tell everybody about the book, I'm the most biased source in the world. Please just go read the reviews. I've never read better reviews for one of my books or frankly, anyone else's books. Just go read the reviews of Redeeming Your Time on Amazon or wherever you buy your books. And yeah, listen, got tons of free content to help you connect the gospel to your work. You can find it all at jordanraynor.com. That's J-O-R-D-A-N, like Michael, R-A-Y-N-O-R.com.

William Vanderbloemen:

That's awesome. Well, Jordan, this has been super helpful and a good investment of time. Never know how long a podcast is going to go. It's interesting that a really productive one is actually a shorter one. But thank you so much for what you've done for people, what you're doing to help people feel good about their work, even making tables. I mean, somebody somewhere said, yeah, this was my granddad's table. Jesus made it. Amazing.

Jordan Raynor:

That's awesome.

William Vanderbloemen:

Yeah. I mean, you're doing a good thing, man. Thank you for taking time to be with us. And I hope everybody will get out there and go read the reviews. Go read the reviews. So if you missed any of those links, just go to Vandercast.com, give us your email address. We won't beat you up with other emails

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and we'll send you show notes and a preview of what's coming up next. So thanks for joining us and thank you again, Jordan. Appreciate you.

Jordan Raynor:

Yeah. Thanks for having me.

Christa Reinhardt:

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