

THE PROBLEM WITH BUSYNESS

The wood siding on our house is in need of some work. The previous owner stained the wood siding about 15 years ago and it is now showing signs of peeling and wear. As well, some of the wood boards are starting to split. We have had several painting contractors and also siding companies come recently to give us quotes. It has been an interesting and eye-opening experience to say the least.

Contractors are very busy right now as many people have used the pandemic to spend money on fixing up their homes as opposed to going on trips. We have had four painting companies come to give us quotes. They were all very nice to talk with when they came, and very experienced and knowledgeable. They all said they would get back to us with a quote. The first two painters never got back to us with a firm quote. This was the same case with a third painter who came two weeks ago. We did get a quote eventually from the fourth painter, but it was only because we called him two weeks after he came, and he felt so guilty when we talked to him that he had not done anything since his visit. They all admitted how busy they were when they came to see our house and we know they are just overwhelmed at this point with all the work they have.

At least they came to the house to look at the job. We asked a contractor recently to come and give us a price on replacing any damaged wood siding before we get it painted. He promised to come some night last week. We never heard from him. The interesting thing is the two siding companies that came to give us quotes admitted they were just as busy, but still got back to us with their quotes. It has been interesting to see the responses on the part of some of these contractors during this time frame when they are extremely busy. Some have kept their promises to us, and others have not. Despite understanding it is because they are busy, the failure to keep their promises puts doubts in our mind about their reliability and dependability. It makes us wonder even if we went with them could we rely on the promises they make to us.

One of the painters we had come was recommended to us by a neighbour about five doors down from us. He had his house painted last year, and this

painter told him he would be back this year to finish the garage. When I told him recently that his painter never got back to us with a price, he began to have doubts if his garage would get done as promised. Unfortunately for some of these contractors, how they are dealing with their busyness right now may affect their reputations and their business in the long term if they get negative recommendations.

As my recent experience with contractors reveals people respond differently when life gets busy. The pandemic may have made life busier for many contractors, but for most of us it slowed down our once busy lives. Maybe you have already noticed your life slowly returning to being busy. Or perhaps, you are anticipating that it will get busy once summer is over. One of the things you may need to keep in mind as life eventually becomes busier for you is whether you will let it change you in negative rather than positive ways. For instance, when your life starts to become busy again:

- will you still keep the promises you make to others?
- will you still come across as being a person of your word to others?
- will you still come across as being reliable, dependable, genuine?
- will people begin to have doubts about you that they did not when life was slower for you?

One of the things we do not want to happen once our lives get busy again is to let it change our behaviours in ways that begin to raise doubts or frustrations in others about our character. In order for this not to happen it will be important for us to keep our focus on God. As we focus on God, we will be reminded that despite our busy lives, He has far more on His plate than we ever do. Think for a moment how busy God is listening to prayers, answering them, creating order out of the chaos of this world, walking with us, comforting us, and so on. Yet, despite all of God's busyness, He still makes every effort to show us His constant love and faithfulness.

One of my favourite stories in the Bible involves a busy day that Jesus had. He just arrived on shore and was met by a large crowd of people who all had expectations of Him. While He was busy dealing with the crowd, Jesus was approached by Jairus who asked Him to come to his house to heal his 12-year-old daughter. Despite being already busy dealing with the crowd, Jesus agreed. As He was making His way toward Jairus' house,

Jesus was touched by a woman in the crowd and at once felt the healing power leave Him. Even though He was busy helping Jairus, Jesus stopped to find out who touched Him, and took the time to listen carefully to her life story of suffering. He then shared with this woman that it was her faith that made her well. One of the many things I love about this story in the Bible is that it shows how, despite being extremely busy, Jesus still took time to show care, compassion, love, and faithfulness toward others. May this story be our reminder that no matter how busy life eventually becomes for us again coming out of this pandemic, that we do not let it prevent us from **showing Christ-like care, love, and dependability** to those around us. If God the Father, and Jesus the Son can maintain these blessed character traits despite their busyness, with their help and focus on them we will be able to do the same.

We still have not made a decision about whether to have our wood siding re-stained or put on new siding. It all depends on how much it will cost to replace the wood that is split. As I write this, I am still waiting for that contractor to come. I know he is busy, and because I know God is patient with me, I am being patient with him.

God Bless and Keep Safe

Pastor Dean