TRYING TO BE LIKE JESUS

A couple of years ago my wife and daughter bought me a t-shirt that said: **Jesus took naps. Be like Jesus. (Mark 4:38)** This message comes from the story where Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with His head on a cushion while an intense storm was causing much anguish and fear for the disciples. This shirt made its way to the bottom of a pile of t-shirts and as a result I have not worn it very often of late. On Friday morning, however, when I reached for one of my black t-shirts, it was this one my hand grabbed.

Nadine headed to London early Friday afternoon to spend time with our daughter, so with the house to myself and our dog Daisy, I decided to be like Jesus and take a nap. I had just nicely laid down on the coach and closed my eyes when my phone rang. It was Nadine calling me from the road to say the one on-ramp to the highway was closed. After I hung up, I decided to try and nap again. I do not think my eyes were closed for more than two minutes when I received a text on my phone. This time it was my daughter Coral interrupting my nap needing my guidance.

After two unsuccessful attempts to nap like Jesus, I decided to go outside and catch up on raking leaves. When I came back in, I thought I deserved the same experience that Jesus had and tried again to nap. I think I fell asleep for about ten minutes only to be awoken by my dog Daisy barking at a squirrel at our bird feeder. Having been unsuccessful all afternoon trying to nap, I decided to try again after I finished supper. As soon as I closed my eyes the phone rang and the number that appeared showed it was my mother calling. Naturally I had to answer it, but when I hung up, I realized despite four attempts to do so, I was not going to be like Jesus on Friday and take a nap.

When we become followers of Jesus, we are expected to be like Him. While we may wish at times that this expectation only applied to taking naps, we are expected to be like Him:

- **By prioritizing time for prayer each day,**
- **By experiencing worship on the Sabbath,**
- **By resisting temptation with the Holy Spirit's strength and help,**
- **By obeying the Father's will,**
- **By taking the approach of having a servant's heart and attitude.**

These are just some of the ways that we are to be like Jesus in how we live our lives following Him. Just like I experienced on Friday when it came to trying to follow His example of taking a nap, sometimes distractions can come along that prevent us from being like Him. Something Jesus taught His followers was to make sure that we do not allow life's distractions to prevent us from truly following Him. He made this known to one person who desired to follow Him:

Another person said, "Yes Lord, I will follow you but first let me say goodbye to my family." But Jesus told him, "Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God." (Luke 9:61-62)

At first glance, some people might view Jesus' response here as being very insensitive toward this person. It is important to understand that Jesus never taught people to forsake their responsibilities to their family. Jesus, being all-knowing, could see this person's real motive was to delay following Him wholeheartedly to a later date and time. When we make the decision to follow Jesus, He does not want a half-hearted commitment on our part, but rather that we be fully devoted to doing so. Jesus' response here also reveals how He does not want us to become distracted by taking our eyes off Him and looking back or in other directions. It is easy for us to allow some of life's distractions to prevent us from keeping our focus and attention on becoming more like Him. Satan could not be happier if we allow this to happen. We have maybe heard the saying that if Satan can't make us bad, he will make us busy. Let's make sure we don't allow life's distractions to prevent us from following Him wholeheartedly in order to become more like Him.

I know some of you reading this might feel sorry for me that I did not get my naps in on Friday. Not to worry, I still have work to do in other areas to be more like Jesus, but when it comes to napping, I have become very faithful in this discipline.

Take care and God bless,

Pastor Dean