

Monday, May 18, 2020

Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...

**"Yet another said, 'I will follow you, Lord,
but let me first say farewell to those at my home.'
Jesus said to him, 'No one who puts his hand to the plow
and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.'"**

(Luke 9: 61-62)

I have never been more aware of people's noses than I have been during this coronavirus pandemic. I can't figure out if it's a law that people need to wear face coverings at the stores, or just a strong suggestion. What makes me unclear on this is when I see some people in the grocery store who are wearing their mask below their nose. Doesn't that defeat the purpose? I'm just asking.

Some people wear them down at their chin. I'm guessing they had their mask higher up on their face when they entered the store, just so they could get in, but then lowered it once they were in. Does my face covering do any good if my nose is sticking out? Seems to me that you're either ALL IN or you're ALL OUT.

The purpose of these little devotionals is not to provide political or social commentaries, but rather to draw us closer to God. But life during this pandemic has given me so many ideas of how this "new normal" relates to our relationship with God. I think Jesus is saying in the passage above that a person is either ALL IN or ALL OUT when it comes to following Him. Think of the wearing of our face coverings as a metaphor for being a Jesus-follower. If my nose is out, is my face really covered? If my mask is down around my chin, does it count as a face covering? If I only follow Jesus when it is not challenging to do so, am I really following Him?

Why does Jesus want us to be either ALL IN or ALL OUT? Isn't it to keep us as safe as possible? Isn't it to give us the best life? Am I staying as safe as I can be through my relationship with Jesus if I am still breathing in the air of worldly behavior? Wearing a face covering around my chin is kind of like going to church on Sunday, but living the rest of the week as though I don't know Jesus. I have the look of Christianity, but I'm still dabbling in worldliness.

Just know that Jesus has called us to follow Him because His way is the best way and He wants what is best for us. Our journey with Jesus begins at the foot of the cross, where we see what He has done to make us God's children. Our sins have been forgiven. Our first step as followers of Jesus happens at the cross. We are declared righteous (that is, right in the sight of God) because of the sacrificial death and victorious resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He wants us to be ALL IN as we follow Him. After all, He was ALL IN when it came to being our Savior.

God's peace!

Pastor Jim