

Wednesday, July 8, 2020

Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...

"And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, and they found him and said to him, 'Everyone is looking for you.'"

Mark 1: 35-37

Remember the game, "Hide and Seek"? I remember playing it a lot when I was a kid. In fact, I used to like to hide even when nobody was looking for me! (What does that say about me?!) Adults don't play "hide and seek," at least not in the purest sense of the game. Maybe we should get back to that game, but just remove the "seek" part. We should also not think of it as a game, but as a matter of good health – good "spiritual health."

We can learn from the best! Even Jesus recognized the need to "hide out" for a little while. In our reading from Mark, we are told that Jesus got up very early, while it was still dark, and went to a place where there were no people and he prayed. How interesting that Simon (Peter) and others went looking for him, and when they found him they gave him a little bit of a scolding by saying, "Everyone is looking for you." In other words, "What are doing here? We all need you." But even Jesus recognized the need to find a private place to pray – a place where he could be alone with the Father.

There are a lot of things that are beyond our control right now. Actually, a lot of things are always beyond our control. We just don't usually notice it as much as we are noticing it right now. But there is one thing you and I can control. We can control the time and, to some degree, the place where we can meet with God. It doesn't have to be early in the morning. That wouldn't work for me! It doesn't need to be late at night. It can be any time that works for you, as well as any place where you won't be distracted or interrupted.

It won't happen accidentally. It takes intentionality. Everything else can wait. Maybe you are doing that right now as you read this devotion. However, nothing compares to the blessing it is to go right to the source – the Bible. Sometimes we need to "depart to a desolate place." Not literally. But we need to find a place and a time where our only focus is on God.

Without intentionality, life will come looking for you, and say, "What are you doing here?" Don't let that bother you. God will bless you and your life if you find a way to be alone with Him at least once a day.

God's peace!

Pastor Jim