**Mike Hipes – Facebook Lesson, July 22, 2020**

Good afternoon!

Just before the virus hit, I was out doing some grocery shopping late one night. To be honest I enjoy it especially later in the evening. I look for sales and special new items I would like to try. It is usually kind of quiet in the store as well and so for me, it is relaxing! Close to midnight one evening, I was roaming the isles. Those in the store were mainly packers restocking the shelves. While I was at the dairy case looking for some milk a woman approached me. She said, excuse me can I use you for a minute? I said, sure how can I help? She said, I need something off the top shelf and I can’t reach it. As we walked down the aisle, I was thinking, maybe it’s a box of tissues or a can of beans, or a bag of chips or something like that. However, what she needed was one of those two and a half-gallon containers of spring water that I could hardly reach myself. In fact, because it was heavy and where it was located on the top shelf, when I pulled it off it moved me off balance a bit. Of course, being the I man that I am, I easily brought it back under control and muscled it into her basket! ϑ LOL. She said thank you kindly, I could have never reached that myself! I thought, now that’s what I call being used in a good way.

Being used for the Lord can happen at any time and by anyone and in many ways big and small! Some of the most unlikely situations and some of the most unlikely people are used by God to do great things! This includes you!

In Acts 19 a large disturbance was brought about by a silversmith named Demetrius that made shrines of Artemis an Ephesian god, whose business was being threatened due to the apostle Paul saying that “gods made with hands are no gods at all.” As the situation grew the people were “filled with rage, they began crying out, saying, Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.” As the assembly continued to get bigger and more out of control “the assembly was in confusion and the majority did not know for what cause they had come together.” Sound familiar? They continued to shout “for about two hours, Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.”

But then seemingly out of nowhere God uses a most unlikely person at the most unlikely time to quiet down the out of control crowd. The town clerk! He tells them “to keep calm and to do nothing rash.” He tells them to settle things in a “lawful assembly. For indeed we are in danger of being accused of a riot in connection with today's affair.” And then get this, “after saying this he dismissed the assembly.” Amazing! Never underestimate how God can use you and your voice in any situation to do the extraordinary! You never know when an opportunity will come up. Always be ready to be used!

About an hour ago my phone rang. On the other end was a man with an accent who said that he was from Germany and looking for some help. My mind raced around as to what this was all about and if it was on the level. He was worried about his aunt who lived in Mount Pleasant who was up in years. He had been calling but was not able to get in touch with her after multiple tries. I was a bit skeptical at first, as I do get calls from time to time from scammers. I was at first ready to hang up, but as I listened, I heard the sincerity in his voice and genuine concern. I asked for the address and said that I would check into it for him and call him back. I called the Mt. Pleasant Police Dept. They promptly went to the house and discovered that the older woman, in her 90’s, was in Roper Hospital downtown due to the fact that her caretaker had passed away and she was alone. She was getting checked out and getting ready to be placed in a nursing facility. When I called back the man in Germany and gave him the good news and phone number to call and speak to his aunt, it seemed as if he was about to explode with relief. It’s funny how something as simple as a phone call and a listening ear can make such a powerful difference. Being used by God is not always in a grand or public way. It is not always by the popular and visible people of this day. It may come from a town clerk or an attentive ear to a random phone call or simply helping someone lift something off a high shelf late at night. God uses the ordinary to do the extraordinary! Will we be ready and willing when God calls you to be used for His cause! “Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.” Colossians 4:5-6

In His service,

Mike