**Mike Hipes – Facebook Lesson, August 27, 2020**

Good afternoon!

Ever feel like your life is in a panic? The other day out of nowhere the fire alarms in our house started going off! Margie and I were running from room to room looking and smelling for smoke, or something! Then they stopped! All seemed OK. Nothing burning. We sat back down and about 30 minutes later the same thing happened! I finally discovered that one of the alarms was faulty and replaced it! Panic to peace! How are things by you these days? Is your child attending school from home and you still have a job? Did you just start back to college? Have your days started to run together? Do you go from one phone call to another? Have you lost your drive to move forward or just feeling stuck with the ongoing virus? It’s hurricane season, what about all those folks on the gulf coast getting hit by hurricane Laura last night? Are you tired, not sleeping well, frustrated and tending to eat more lately?

There is a term for people that have no stress in their lives..... DEAD! If you have a pulse you have a level of stress in your world. And when a crisis comes it can be overwhelming! Here are some characteristics of folks on the edge of being overstressed. They tend to finish their meal first. When driving they usually hit the gas when the traffic light turns yellow. When they do stop at a light, they want to blow the horn if the person in front of them takes more than 1.5 seconds to move? They often finish other people’s sentences for them. They are irritated when others are more than I min late? Am I describing you?

How did Jesus accomplish so much in such a short period of time without the stress?

1. He kept His priorities in order. In Mark 10:45 we read “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” This was the Lord’s overall vision, goal and priority! Nothing would take first place over that! Folks listen, don’t think that Jesus wasn’t pressed with many other things in life to change His focus, to shift His priorities. But Jesus maintained perspective! He kept the big picture in mind all the time! When the crowds were pressing the people demanding, and His body weary, He would take a step back and regroup His priorities and what was really important! The pressing would not take the place of the spiritually important! One of the biggest traps for wrong priorities is shifting the big picture vision to just getting by from day to day. Now, these other things in life are not necessarily bad things but things that will rob you of the important. Remember what Jesus said in Luke 10:41-42 when Mary chose to be with Jesus while Martha was busy in the kitchen. “Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

2. He limited His distractions. In Mark 12:13-14 we read that “someone in the crowd said to Him, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me. But He said to him, man, who appointed Me a judge or arbiter over you?” In other words, My dog is not in that fight! Certainly, Jesus took the time to help, heal, feed and teach many over His three years on earth! He even would take the time to spend it with children (Matt. 19:13-14). The disciples tried to keep the children from coming to Him thinking it was a distraction. Jesus responded, “let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” There should always be time for our children! We need to be wise when it comes to the distractions in our lives. There are some things that we should allow and other things we should not. Take the time to think it over and do not just react. Keep your distractions to the important!

3. He spent much time with the Father. In Luke 6:12 we read that Jesus, “went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.” Now listen, I am not saying that we need to spend a whole night in prayer, but we do sing a song called sweet hour of prayer! The point is, when was the last time that you spent a few minutes in focused prayer? I don’t mean before a meal or when we a getting ready to go to sleep, but when you just decide to stop during the day to simply spent some time with the Father! Listen my friends, I know what you may be thinking. If I don’t go to work, I won’t get paid, however, no one will cut my paycheck if I miss praying! True financially speaking! However, when we miss our time with God we pay the unseen price spiritually. The cost of a deeper relationship with God!

Blessings,

Mike