**Mike Hipes – Facebook Lesson, November 18, 2020**

Good afternoon!

When the phone rang, I was told that a dear friend’s brother was tragically killed in a head-on collision in NY! We were living in Ohio at the time but I knew in that instant that we would be leaving shortly for Long Island to be supportive and hopefully a comfort to this loving family. Sadly, my friend’s brother was not the only one who was tragically killed in the wreck. The driver of a school bus that was also involved in the crash was killed as well. The family of the school bus driver felt that my friend’s brother was at fault and so they were very much upset and would not give my friend an opportunity to talk to them to share his heartfelt condolence even while he himself was suffering such a tragic loss. This was very difficult for him even as he was grieving his brother’s loss during this dark time. I told him that God would provide a way!

The morning before the funeral I was in line at the town's popular bagel shop waiting to pick up some breakfast and ponder the day ahead. The restaurant was packed with people and most of the tables inside were already taken. The volume of the morning chatter was hard to ignore. However, then something very interesting took place. As I listened to all the different talking going on, one specific conversation seemed to emerge to my ears. It was not like it was even a table close to where I was standing, but one near the far wall. The conversation was between family members of the deceased bus driver. I could easily sense their grief and heartbreak while talking. When it hit me what was happening, I left the line and walked over to the table. Apologizing first for interrupting their time of grief I said that I couldn’t help but overhear what they were talking about and felt that God had moved me to their table to deliver a message from a friend to them. Looking stunned, they agreed to listen for a moment. I passed on his deepest sorrow for their loss and also his hope that somehow God would bring them all through this tragedy by His grace. The family received it with tears along with a sense of understanding of the heartache of loss on both sides.

Have you ever been interrupted by God? Here I was thinking that I was only coming to NY to attend a funeral, but all the time God had other plans! Leaving Ohio for a number of days I was thinking, in a sense, that I was putting the work of the Lord where I was ministering on hold until I returned. Where did we ever get the idea that God is confined to our schedule, our plans for the day or week, or even our direction in life! God is on the move all the time, everywhere, and in every place during good times, hard times, and changing times! Things and opportunities are happening all around us but we are going to miss them unless we learn to be interrupted by God and notice Him working and respond to His prodding!

Remember Miriam, Moses' sister in Exodus 2? While Moses was floating down the river she was just standing by and watching and waiting, it seemed so insignificant until Pharaoh’s daughter realizes she needed someone to nurse him and Mariam said, hey I can help, and she got Moses’ mom! Amazing!

How about Paul’s nephew in Acts 23:12ff? There was a plot to kill Paul and the boy happened to overhear the plan. He told Paul! Saved his life! We don’t even know the boy’s name! While he was simply listening to some conversations, God was making big plans to use him! Amazing!

Who can forget the story of Joseph in Gen.? For 13 years he was in and out of jail, due to one interruption after another! But God was actively at work weaving His providential plan together, and at just the right time Joseph was released and became Pharaoh’s number 2. The result was that Israel was saved from the famine, the seed line continued, so Jesus could be born, that we might be saved! Amazing!

And, who can forget Elijah and the cave? In I Kings 19:1-3! “The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

Sometimes God is at work in places and ways that we don’t typically notice. Yes God is clearly at work when He opens the Red Sea, shakes mountains, in a burning bush, or calming the storms, but He is also at work in a gentle whisper, on a coffee break at work, a bus ride when someone needs a seat, or even in a bagel shop in the early morning. Big things happen with God in seemingly insignificant places. All we need to do is open our eyes and see by listening and learning to be interrupted by God and look to join Him where He is at work.

Keep alert by observing listening for His gentle whisper. He may ask you to step out of line and speak to someone on His behalf today!

In His service,

Mike