

Devotion: Thursday, May 7, 2020

1 Timothy 2:1-7 The Message (MSG)

2¹⁻³ The first thing I want you to do is pray. Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know. Pray especially for rulers and their governments to rule well so we can be quietly about our business of living simply, in humble contemplation. This is the way our Savior God wants us to live.

4-7 He wants not only us but everyone saved, you know, everyone to get to know the truth we've learned: that there's one God and only one, and one Priest-Mediator between God and us— Jesus, who offered himself in exchange for everyone held captive by sin, to set them all free. Eventually the news is going to get out. This and this only has been my appointed work: getting this news to those who have never heard of God, and explaining how it works by simple faith and plain truth.

Praying is no easy matter. It demands a relationship in which you allow someone other than yourself to enter into the very center of your person, to see there what you would rather leave in darkness, and to touch there what you would rather leave untouched.--Henri J.M. Nouwen

Today is national prayer day. And, if we've ever needed prayers, it's now!

So today I offer a little story that I found a few years ago that seems to fit. It concerns our attitude toward prayer.

A man was sleeping one night in his cabin when suddenly his room filled with light, and God appeared. The Lord told the man he had work for him to do, and showed him a large rock in front of his cabin. The Lord explained that the man was to push against the rock with all his might. So, this the man did, day after day.

For many years he toiled from sun up to sun down, his shoulders set squarely against the cold, massive surface of the unmoving rock, pushing with all of his might. Each night the man returned to his cabin sore and worn out, feeling that his whole day had been spent in vain.

But slowly doubts came. He thinks to himself: "You have been pushing against that rock for a long time, and it hasn't moved." He begins to believe that the task is impossible and that he is a failure. These thoughts discourage and dishearten him.

Then he thinks, "Hey, why kill yourself over this? I'll just put in my time, giving just the minimum effort; and that will be good enough." So that's what the weary man planned to do, but first he decided to make it a Matter of Prayer and to take his troubled thoughts to the Lord.

"Lord," he prayed, "I have labored long and hard in your service, putting all my strength to do that which you have asked. Yet, after all this time, I have not even budged that rock by half a millimeter. What is wrong? Why am I failing?"

The Lord responded: "Wait a minute! When I asked you to serve me and you accepted, I told you that your task was to push against the rock with all of your strength, which you have done. Never once did I mention to you that I expected you to move it. Your task was to push. And now you come to me with your strength spent, thinking that you have failed. Really? Look at yourself. Your arms are strong and muscled, your back sinewy and brown; your hands are callused from constant pressure, your legs have become massive and hard. Through opposition you have grown much, and your abilities now surpass that which you used to have. Yes, you haven't moved the rock. But your calling was to be obedient and to push and to have faith, to trust in my wisdom. That you have done. Now I, my friend, will move the rock."

- When everything seems to go wrong ... just P.U.S.H.!
- When the job gets you down ... just P.U.S.H.!
- When people don't react the way you think they should ... just P.U.S.H.!
- When your money is "gone" and the bills are due ... just P.U.S.H.!
- When people just don't understand you just ... P.U.S.H.!
- When sickness is all around you....just...P.U.S.H.!

P=Pray ... U=Until ... S=Something ... H=Happens.

PUSH

Keep PUSHing folks, we will all get through this if we do.

Stay praying!

Pastor Jack