

I learn lessons well. When I was growing up, one of my dad's favorite sayings was, "Scott, don't just sit there, do something."

I have learned so well how to "do something." That sometimes I do too much. Has that ever happened to you?

Unfortunately when I do too much, I often end up in trouble. On Tuesday morning of this past week, I was getting ready to leave town for an overnight gathering. I was really looking forward to getting away for a short time. However, that also meant that since I was leaving town, I had a ton of things to get done, before I left.

So, I came into the office to get a couple of things done before scooting off. My goal was to leave by 10:00 AM. But one thing led to another (you know how that goes?). And before I knew it, it was 11:00 AM before I was finally heading out the door.

Because I tried to get too much done, I got behind. That put the pressure on. It was about an hour into my drive, I realized that nothing looked familiar to me. When I pulled out the map of Wisconsin in my car, I realized that I was on a road, but not the one that would take me to my destination.

Agh, I couldn't believe it. In all my rushing around, in all my trying to get things done, I didn't cover the one base that I really needed to, to double check how to get where I was going. Now, to be fair, I had been there before, quite a bit in fact. But because I didn't double check, I found myself on the wrong road. I couldn't believe it. Do you ever try and do too much? Do you ever find yourself on the wrong road? Do you know what I am talking about?

Prayer is a way in which we can learn to slow down our life every-once-in-a-while and check the road (or path) that we are on, to make sure it is the one we need to be on. That is why we are doing a sermon series called "O Lord Help! Learning How to Pray."

This sermon series is really a "how-to" series about prayer. We have talked about helpful attitudes for prayer, and now we are in the midst of introducing you to several methods that we can build into our life, so we can

learn how to pray. Thank God, we are not the first to want to learn how to pray.

In our scripture for today, the disciples come to Jesus to ask, "Can you teach us to pray?" This is a passage that reminds us that we want to learn. We want to connect with God and draw close to God. But we don't always know how.

Jesus offered his disciples a method for prayer that invites us to realize that our whole life is dependent upon God. And he offers us a prayer that allows us to honor God, and ask God to help us with our basic needs of food, forgiveness and for facing the challenges of life.

So how can we begin to build prayer into our life, so that we can remember our need for God? **One thing we can do is link praying to something we do each day.** So for example, one week, every time you brush your teeth, you can pray. Then the next week, you link your prayers to something else you do each day, so for the second week, you might choose to pray when you get in your car.

What you discover is that you will continue to pray when you brush your teeth, but now you will pray also when you are in your car. The third week, you link your prayers to something else you do each day. That way, we slowly learn how to let prayer become more and more a part of what we do.

**A second method we can look at for today is the insert in our bulletin.** This method, called the ACTS method, once again gives us a process and some questions we can follow that help us intentionally listen to God and talk with God. It is a simple method based on the Adoring God, Confessing our sins to God, Offering Thanksgiving to God, and giving our prayers of supplication to God. At different times in life, this has been a helpful way for me to connect with God.

Building prayer into my life, in an intentional way, helps me in two areas of discovery. First, I find that I am more likely to stay on the right path more often. Send it helps me walk with a God, who will not let me go.

Let me tell you about Bob. Bob likes to go to rummage sales. Bob is a tinkerer. He likes to get things at rummage sales, fix them up, use them or

resell them. It is safe to say that Bob's life was filled with stuff, because of his habit of rummaging.

At one sale, he came across an old, rusted out, dilapidated Harley Davidson Motorcycle. The owner was willing to part with the bike for \$35. It didn't run and needed extensive repair. Bob saw this as a bargain and bought it. His wife wasn't thrilled to say the least, when he brought it home. But into the garage it went.

After a couple of weeks Bob finally called a local Harley dealer to find out how much parts would be to fix up the machine. He made the call, explained his situation. That he picked up this run down bike at a rummage sale for \$35 and he wanted to see how much it was to fix up. He didn't know what year the motorcycle was. The dealer asked for the serial number. Bob gave it. The dealer looked through his computer records and said, "Could you please wait a moment?"

When he came back to the phone he told Bob that someone would be in touch with him in the next couple of days. Could he please have Bob's name, telephone number and address? Bob gave it; the dealer took it and hung up.

At first Bob didn't think much of this. But as time passed and one day turned into two and then three, he started to worry. "Oh no," he thought, "What if this motorcycle is stolen? What if it was involved in some kind of problem and now I am going to be in trouble? Why did I give him all that information about myself?"

After many days, Bob finally received a call. It wasn't from the dealer. It was from one of the vice-presidents of Harley Davidson. The representative from Harley Davidson said, "Bob, I understand you bought a motorcycle in a rummage sale. I am calling today, prepared to offer you \$300,000 for that motorcycle. But first you have to do one thing for me. You have to look under the seat. Do you know how to take it off?"

Bob said, "No."

The representative explained how and he told Bob that he would wait. Bob went and took off the seat and that is when he saw the two words that had been engraved on the bottom. They had been there all along. He

went back to the phone and confirmed what was engraved on the bottom of the seat of the motorcycle. The representative said, "Great, do we have a deal?" Bob said, "I don't know. I will have to think about it for a few days."

The very next day, Bob received a phone call from Jay Leno. Jay said, "Bob, I am a collector of Harley Davidson's. I love motorcycles and I am willing to pay you \$500,000 for your bike."

The motorcycle that Bob bought for \$35 as a worthless bike ended up being worth over a half a million dollars, all because of two words that were engraved under the seat. The two words simple said, "*The King*". This motorcycle had value, because it had been owned by Elvis Presley.

You and I have value today. You and I are priceless today. Because we have been claimed by a different king. The king of the universe who loved us so much that he was willing to let Jesus live and die for us.

When I get so busy, that I start driving down the wrong roads that is when I need to stop and look at a map and get straightened out. Prayer helps us connect with God and get straightened out.

May God help us live lives of faith.

Amen