

Devotional Blog

Sunday 24th May 2020

Our Government certainly likes a slogan. Before the current crisis we were bombarded with “Let’s get Brexit done”. Since the pandemic hit our shores we have been encouraged to; “Stay at Home, Protect the NHS, Save lives” and now we are being told to; “Stay alert, Control the virus, Save lives”.

There was a lot of discussion after the change from “Stay at Home” to “Stay alert” was announced. What did staying alert really mean? Two words from the dictionary that describe alert are; watchful and vigilant. The government are asking us to be watchful and vigilant all the time and not to lose concentration.

The cricket season should be well underway by now and for once the weather would have been in the players favour. A slip fielder or wicketkeeper must stay alert, sometimes all day, waiting for the batsman to edge the ball in their direction. A lack of concentration or taking their eye off the ball can result in a potential catch being dropped. This can often result in the bowler getting rather upset with the culprit!!

Jesus told a story in Matthew 25 about ten virgins who were waiting for the bridegroom to appear, which he did around midnight. Five of these girls had been less than vigilant as they had not taken any spare oil for their lamps, which had gone out, while they were waiting. They ended up being shut out of the wedding banquet, which must have been a great disappointment to them. Verse 13 says “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or hour”. This is a reference to Jesus’ return, for which we do not have a clue when this will happen.

Peter was one of Jesus’ closest disciples and he was asked to keep watch while Jesus walked on a bit further to pray, just before His arrest. You can read that account in Matthew 26:36-46. Peter and his friends were unable to stay alert and fell asleep, which was quite understandable as it was late at night. Having fallen asleep Peter and his mates failed to alert Jesus to the approaching mob, which was headed by Judas.

I expect this, as well as other incidents, must have haunted Peter and would have been on his mind when he wrote his letters. In 1 Peter 5:8 he urges his readers to be self-controlled and to stay alert, because their enemy, the devil is waiting to devour them, not a pleasant thought!!

So, today we have our government urging us to stay alert, concerning the virus, to save lives. We also need to stay watchful, all day, like the fielders so we don't miss any opportunities to spread the "Good News".

Our slogan could be "Stay Alert, Defeat the Devil, Save lives"

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