

Those among you who are alert listeners will have already realized that this Covenant weekly is arriving a day later than normal. I have a general commitment to getting this out at some point each Tuesday. Sometimes, though, choices are made to prioritize other things and it gets delayed. What should we do when we, or others, can't maintain expectations we have of ourselves, can't get to things we want to prioritize, or are facing limitations that prevent us from doing important things? Let's talk about that today on the Covenant Weekly Podcast - A Day Late and a Dollar Short.

Theme Music

The expression *A Day Late and a Dollar Short* was first used in print in 1939 and has come to identify an opportunity missed because of time constraints, financial restraints, or both. We all have limited resources and so there will always be things we are a day late and a dollar short for. Accepting the reality that we will miss out on things is a challenge for many of us though. In 2004 the expression FOMO was coined. It's an acronym for the Fear of Missing Out and it continues to be a genuine thing that drives people. Complicating matters is our world in which we're told that *everything* is important and *everything* demands our attention and energy. On top of that, we have the instant communication expectations that come with cell phones and texting and the disappearing messages of Snapchat. We don't want to disappoint people. We don't want to miss out on something important. We don't want to be the only ones left in the dark. We can't afford to be a day late or a dollar short!

But still, we have limited resources. No matter how hard we chase. No matter how much we read or scroll or study or listen, we won't know all the information, we won't watch all the "must-see" shows and movies, we won't be able to invest in all of the urgent and important projects, we won't be able to care deeply about every emerging crisis. We have limits and we will miss out.

The question we all need to ask ourselves is, "What will I miss out on?" That can be a big question that shapes what we will invest in, what we will be informed about, and what we will work to change long term. But more often than not, that is a weekly, daily, and even hourly question.

The truth is that I could have written and recorded this podcast by yesterday. But to do so would have required me to choose the podcast over family stuff on the weekend, over getting some much-needed rest when I had the opportunity, or over preparing for a board meeting that was held last night. I had *time* in which I could have done the podcast. But there were other things that were more important for me. That was a conscious choice I made. Often the choices we make about priorities are more subconscious or are strongly influenced by others, but they are choices nonetheless.

I'm just naming a reality that no matter how much FOMO we have, no matter how hard we try, no matter how constantly we are "on" to take in, follow, or respond...we will always find ourselves a day late and a dollar short on some things.

But as I reflected on this, I was reminded of a few Jesus stories.

Do you remember that time when Jesus was summoned by Jairus, the important local synagogue leader, to come and heal his only daughter? Jesus was on his way when he was interrupted by an unclean woman who had been bleeding for years. Jesus stopped and interacted with her. As a result, he was late to get to Jairus' daughter and she died. The messenger came from Jairus' house with the news saying, "There's no use troubling the Teacher now." Jesus was, due to an interruption, a proverbial day late. But still, Jesus went to the house and ended up raising the girl back to life.

Or do you remember that time when Jesus got word that Lazarus, his good friend, was deathly ill? He was a long way away from Lazarus' home in Bethany, but Jesus' first response was to *stay where he was* for two more days. By the time he arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had been dead for four days. The first thing Jesus heard from Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha, was "If you had only been here!" In other words, "You're a day late (or four days late) for this one, Jesus!" And yet when Jesus did show up, after weeping with the mourners, he raised Lazarus from the dead!

I thought about the time that a temple tax collector showed up and questioned Jesus' disciples about whether or not Jesus paid the temple tax. It seems he was a dollar short that day. But he sent Peter out to catch a fish and in its

mouth, he would find a coin to pay the temple tax on behalf of both Peter and Jesus.

In each situation, those not named Jesus saw things as being a day late and a dollar short, and yet it was *when* things were a day late and a dollar short that it opened the doors for something really special to happen that could only happen through Jesus.

A couple of weeks ago on a Sunday, I talked about the fact that God works with us in the world. He doesn't want us abdicating responsibility for the world or for our lives. We live our lives and engage the world in partnership with him. And he engages it in partnership with us. I am convinced that this is God's *modus operandi* and we need to take our role in the world seriously.

But we also need to take our limits seriously. We have responsibility for all the things going on in the world. But *I* do not have the capacity to take responsibility for it all *right now*. Decisions need to be made by individuals and by communities for what we can and will and should do and take responsibility for right now, today, this week, this year. And for some of those other things, our choices will leave us a day late and a dollar short. I will miss out. We will miss out.

But as I think about the Jesus stories, I take hope in the fact that *my* missing out may be exactly what is needed for Jesus to show up and do something unexpected in a different way or time than I could have ever imagined. I'm reminded of Paul's words to the church in Corinth. Paul talks about his limitations and says that he regularly hears this affirmation from Jesus, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." He concludes, "When I am weak, then I am strong." Because it is in his weakness that Christ's strength is able to shine through.

My hope is that this may be an encouragement to you that limitations and embracing limitations and weakness are *not* bad things. It is a necessary and human thing that we often just don't want to acknowledge. And I pray that those who today are struggling to choose where to give your time, attention and energy; those among us who are feeling the pressure, either internally or externally, to push past our limitations into places we know where we may harm

ourselves or others; those who are struggling deeply with the pressure to pay attention to and respond to every important thing in the world; those of us who have been a day late and a dollar short on something that was important; may we find hope that Jesus will show up in our weakness. And may we see Jesus show up in our weakness to do what we cannot.

While thinking through this, I was reminded of a song that we've sung a few times at Covenant. I invite you to close your eyes, take a deep breath, and listen while I sing it now.

Mountain to Valley

Transition Music

Over the coming weeks on Sunday mornings, we will be sitting in some parts of scripture that often get pushed through rather quickly...the days between Easter and Pentecost. Our goal is to get to the Pentecost story *on* Pentecost Sunday. This coming week, we will actually be considering Mark's telling of the announcement of Jesus' resurrection in Mark 16. If you want to read ahead for extra credit, read through Mark 16 and consider the various endings to it!

In terms of church life, I would like to ask you to be praying for three ministry areas:

1. First, please pray for those serving meals at the Anglican church hall each month. They are going to be going back to serving in person and this will create some new challenges for them. It would be a *huge* help if they had a couple more people helping with each of the breakfast and the lunch once per month. You can reach out to me at jon@covenantchurch.ca if you'd be open to finding out more about what that entails.
2. Second, please pray for the small team that is connected with the Water Street residence. They have built some great relationships with the residents of this adult care home and two of those residents, brothers who live there, are going through some palliative health challenges. Pray for the team as they support and show care for those in the home.
3. Finally, please pray for our youth and youth leaders. We are getting close to thirty people to our youth group each week. Most of the kids are not

from any kind of church background, but they are learning about Jesus, getting excited, and inviting others to join them, too. About 10 Bibles have been given out to students who wanted one to read and study. The group we have is both amazing and, like any group of youth that large, challenging. Pray for them as they finish the study they are currently working through and for the 20 students and leaders who will be going on the retreat on the May long weekend!

With those requests for prayer, I pray that you will go out today excited to engage with God in working out his good and righteousness in the world. And I pray that you will be aware of and accept your limitations and weaknesses with an open and eager heart to see what Jesus might accomplish when you do so! God may surprise us by what you do when we are at the end of our rope and trust what is beyond it to you.

God bless, everyone!

Go in Peace.