



S E R M O N G U I D E

No Limits with Pastor Delman

Stay Woke

Acts 20:7-12

NOTES INTRODUCTION In today's key passage of Scripture, we read about a young man who takes the time to come to church, to try and do the right thing, and to hear the Word, and ends up losing his consciousness and falling to his death. He came to church looking for a lifechanging, life-giving, and life-affirming word, but can't stay woke in the process, and consequently loses his life. What a tragic story that Luke tells us, but sadly it is one that is all too familiar, for there are people today just like this young man who come to see what the church is about, people who give the church a chance, only to find themselves so turned off that they fall asleep and end up dead. Maybe not physically dead, but spiritually dead, mentally dead, and socially dead. Eutychus died because the church was not able to minister a message that would help him stay woke. So today, we're going to learn how we can stay woke so that we do not meet our spiritual death. **KEY POINTS** 1. Preach a message that is theologically relevant. When I read this text, the first person I notice is asleep is not Eutychus, but Paul. Three times Luke draws our attention to the length of Paul's message. He doesn't tell us what Paul talked about. He tells us about how long he talked, and I don't think that's by accident. Some scholars suggest that by midnight in verse 7, it has been six hours since Paul started preaching. Can you imagine speaking to an audience for 6 hours non-stop? No wonder Eutychus struggled to stay awake. The preacher violated one of the main rules of public speaking; don't talk too long. My dean from Morehouse used to say, "Your message doesn't have to be everlasting in order to be eternal." Eutychus fell asleep because the preacher's message just wasn't relevant enough to keep the brother interested, motivated, and inspired. He lost consciousness because the preacher wasn't saying anything that was relevant or spoke to his life or worthy of his attention. It is this problem of theological irrelevance that plagues the church today. We talk about things that don't connect to where people are or what they are going through, and this is something that needs to change.

DelmanCoates.org Stay Woke

No Limits with Pastor Delman

Stay Woke

Acts 20:7-12

2. Create a politically conscious and engaged church. I don't know exactly what Paul preached for 12 hours in Troas, but if his message in Ephesus in verses 17-24 is any indication, it's clear to me that the reason Paul's message was irrelevant is because Paul only talked about himself. He goes on and on, saying nothing about the very real social and political challenges that were facing the Christian community in Asia Minor at that time. There are very real threats of persecution and oppression that the community had to confront. There were very real economic consequences that came with claiming Christ, but you wouldn't know it because Paul takes up all the airtime at the pulpit focused on himself, and I think it's Paul's failure to connect the Gospel to the social and political realities facing the community, this failure to use the cross to raise the political consciousness of the people

3. Stay emotionally attuned to what people are going through.

that caused Eutychus to fall asleep and to fall down and die.

What really strikes me about this entire story is that with everything that is going on with Eutychus, Paul doesn't seem in the least bit attuned to what he's going through. Eutychus is getting progressively worse in the text, and Paul's preoccupation with what he had planned to say prevents him from even seeing what going on in that young man.

Yes, Paul does go down to pick the boy up when he falls, but notice what he does. He tells others it's not a big deal, "Don't be alarmed! He'll be fine!" Paul, in my interpretation, minimizes what has just happened, and then goes back to preaching another six hours until the morning. While most commentators see Paul's actions here as a good thing and worthy of emulation, I was horrified because when people experience trauma, and that's what has happened here, the last thing we should do is minimize what they've gone through, falsely claim it's no big deal, and then go back to doing what caused the pain in the first place. Instead, we need to be aware and attuned to what people are struggling with and minister to them with the love and empathy of Christ.

	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
-	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_
	_

DelmanCoates.org Stay Woke

No Limits with Pastor Delman

Stay Woke

Acts 20:7-12

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- 1. Why do you think it's important for the church to communicate messages that are theologically relevant?
- 2. What has been your experience of your church being attuned to what you and your fellow believers are going through?

Iow can you show the empathy and love of Christ to someone who needs it nis week?

DelmanCoates.org Stay Woke