

March 14, 2020

Dear WFMC Family,

Annette and I just returned from the grocery store. As you have experienced as well, the paper aisles were empty! Even the receipt machine at the gas station pump was out of paper! :-)

As a few have suggested, [here is a link](#) to my first ever attempt at a short video devotional message, maybe for Sunday if you so choose.

Or, you could listen to a message from wilmorefmc.org.

Or, you could go online and find a truly good preacher to listen to. :-)

Whatever you choose, do take time tomorrow to observe the Lord's Day and spend some time in intentional worship...lead an informal time of worship for your family or with a couple friends. You've probably heard that tomorrow has been declared by our president as a national day of prayer. Let's pray for those who are sick and their families, for those who are living in fear and anxiousness, for the professionals who are providing medical care, for those working on treatments and a vaccine for COVID-19, and for our leaders to act with wisdom and courage as they make vital decisions that impact each of our lives.

Also, as I've already written, in these days when the pace of life has been slowed for (some of) us, why not take the time and reconnect with family? Use the gift we've been given to encourage and engage. Let the Lord speak through our upturned schedules. Celebrate the Lord and His goodness in your life.

Here is also a link to a great little (old, but oh so relevant) devotional thought by C.S. Lewis. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/cs-lewis-coronavirus/>

I woke up this morning with a few thoughts about this whole event that I'll share here.

One thing this event reveals to me about me is that I really resist two things: 1) Change, and, 2) Having to do something that I don't really want to do, or, Not being able to do something that I do want to do.

Regarding the first, I find I like that which is normal, expected and routine, so much so that I almost don't know what to do with myself when I can't do what is "normal." In that way, this event is stretching me quite a bit, so I'm trying to simply embrace the challenge.

Regarding the second, and closely related to the first, I think this event has great potential to reveal idols in our lives. Am I so resistant to change because normalcy is really an idol in my life?

What is it that's most upsetting to you about this somewhat forced change in schedule? Change itself? Not being able to do something you want to do? Not being in control? The cancellation of sports? The stock market loss? The loss of a bit of freedom for a week or two? Maybe that thing is more of an idol to us than we realize, and maybe we need to thank God for this opportunity to recognize it. That may be one spiritual lesson we could learn through this.

The other thing to remember is that, here in the US, we're so used to getting our way, we forget how many people around our world have never experienced the sort of freedom that we enjoy daily. They suffer beneath things like disease and tyrannical governments and economic uncertainty regularly...it's their way of life, unfortunately. So this happening here reminds us to thank God for our blessings, and also to pray for, and work for, freedom and justice for those people, for whom Jesus died, in other places and circumstances.

Of course, I'm writing here on the church e-chain which comes from the office and is not my normal e-mail address. So your replies go to the office e-mail. If you'd like to reply to me, you can do so at ddiddle@wfm.net.

Thank you to all who have offered your help in various ways. As circumstances warrant, we'll be in touch.

Blessings in these strange days.

Pastor Daryl