

Pastor's Update, Saturday, July 11, 2020

Happy Saturday WFMC Family! As usual, here are the links to tomorrow's "gatherings:"

Sunday Worship (all links will be live by 6:00 a.m., Sunday)

[WFMC YouTube Channel video service](#)

[WFMC Truthcasting/podcast message only audio](#)

[WFMC Facebook page, for Facebook users](#)

[WFMC Livestream Service](#) beginning at 8:30 a.m. (Note that the Livestream is recorded and left posted and viewable through Tuesday. You don't have to watch it at 8:30 a.m. – you can return to it later.)

Print editions of all messages are available at www.wilmorefmc.net as well.

ABF Meetings:

[Click here for the current list of ABFs meeting online, their times of meeting and links to meeting sites.](#)

Tomorrow, the Homebuilders ABF will meet on campus in the sanctuary following the 8:30 worship service. This is our first attempt to re-start on-campus ABFs, so we can see how the technology goes.

YBF (Youth Bible Fellowships) 10:00 – 10:40 a.m.

Middle school guys, middle school gals and high school [Click here for those links.](#)

Here is a Neat Children's Note-Taking Sheet for Sunday sermons, especially boring ones. [Click here to download.](#)

Wednesday Night Ministries are Re-starting Next Wednesday, July 15. [Click here for all the details.](#)

Notes on Sunday In-Person Worship: Once again, both the Quick Facts and the Full Explanation / FAQ documents have been updated. If you've not checked these out, [please do so here.](#)

A Word About Our Governor's Guidance (Order) Regarding Masks: There are a lot of ways to approach and parse the governor's executive order that was issued this past Thursday, especially with regard to places of worship. I realize that how we each look at this depends on many factors - freedom, trust, motive, constitution, effectiveness, science, perception, preference, what type of "business" we are, safety, compassion, and on and on. I also realize that this order, like several others from weeks past, may well not stand up in court.

Regardless of your opinion on masks (and we all have one and they differ,) let's remember that followers of Jesus are called by God to be law-abiding people, so long as those laws of man do not contradict the laws of God. And the wearing of a mask in certain circumstances does not contradict the law of God. It may offend some of us politically, it may be uncomfortable, it may embarrass some of us, but it is not nearly a faith/salvation/Jesus is Lord issue. So we will, as the Apostle Paul wrote (with much more at stake than the wearing of a mask, I might add) *"...be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God."*

We will also remember Paul's last sentence there, where he says, *"Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment."* - Romans 13:1-2

Part of our witness for Christ includes being good citizens and honoring our earthly leaders wherever we can, which includes wearing masks on the way in and out of campus facilities, and in any situation on the church campus, inside or outside, where social distances of at least six feet either cannot be observed, or are not being observed.

Due to the way our sanctuary and classroom seating is arranged with six foot distances in place, however (and due to the fact that we are not singing and thus projecting our voices,) it does not seem to me that we need to wear masks in the sanctuary, as per the governor's guidance. All are certainly welcome, however, to wear them at all times.

I encourage you, too, not to give in to the politicization of the mask. There is no shame or danger in following the counsel of the apostle Paul in this instance regarding our authorities. As I've said, there may well come a time when orders from those who govern us do offend the gospel, but this is certainly not one of those times.

Finally, let me add a couple more paragraphs I discovered this week from Owen Strachan, Associate Professor of Theology at Midwestern Baptist Seminary – written in 2007. In light of what's happening in our nation / government...things I agree with and things I don't...I personally found this first quite challenging, and then very helpful and then even empowering:

The Christian's Place in Society: Respectful and Law-Abiding

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ~Romans 13:1-2

Later on in this same chapter, the apostle Paul brings up the notion of "respect." He encourages Christians to go beyond mere obedience to the law, and to adopt a posture of congeniality to one's government and ruling officials (when possible). This is a simple but potent idea for Christians. We are not simply to trudge about, following the rules of the state. We are to exude a healthy warmth for our country and locality and mark ourselves as those who strive to obey the law and their officials.

This section in Romans 13 comes immediately after a lengthy section on conformity to Christ. This shows us that one's relationship to the law closely reflects our level of Christian maturity. Less mature believers show less respect for the law and the state. More mature believers show more mature respect for the state. One's attitude to one's government and one's involvement in it is thus a much stronger indicator of our conformity to Christ than many Christians think.

On a list of entities and groups to which we are to concern ourselves, I think many of us would rank "respect for government" very far down—maybe number 15, or perhaps number 20. In the Bible, however, Paul's section on government follows directly a more abstract section on Christian conformity, indicating to us that our attitude to the government and our conduct within society is far more tied to our level of godliness than we might think. In voting, obeying laws and rules, speaking well of our authorities, praying for them, paying our taxes fairly, and other such deeds, Christians show that we are a unique people - a people who honor our government and submit to it when it in turn honors and respects us.

Christians, then, are to take pains to adopt a respectful attitude, even as we remember our roles as hated citizen, gospel witness, and prophetic voice. Christians in society do not choose one of these roles. Instead, we merge all of them, and seek to fulfill all of them with courage and conviction. In this way, we mirror our Savior, who paid His taxes, spoke the gospel, denounced individual and societal evil, and bore the hatred—and the sin—of wretched, fallen man on His cross of redemption.

And Finally, in the Interest of Keeping Our Sense of Humor About All This:

**Wife: Did I get fat during quarantine?
Husband: You weren't really skinny to begin with!
Time of Death: 11:00pm
Cause: Covid**

Peace and Blessings, Sisters and Brothers,
Pastor Daryl