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Reflections

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April 16, 2020

(864)246-1921

How Will We Emerge From Quarantine?

How will we emerge spiritually from this period of quarantine? Will our relationship with the Lord be stronger? Will we miss the blessing hidden away in this period?

During the first couple of weeks of not meeting together, there was much to accomplish at our church as we moved to a completely online format. To keep our church connected during this shutdown, everyone on the staff shifted with the challenge. After trial and plenty of error, we were up and running and our congregation was able to join together online and through Zoom meetings. In the mayhem of that first couple of weeks, adrenaline and deadlines kept all of us going - both at church and in your own work settings! As the days have now turned to weeks, we must be willing to ask how this has impacted our daily walk with the Lord? Have we sought out time to be with the Lord in prayer? Have we discovered a new rhythm of discipleship and Bible reading? Has our spiritual growth been interrupted in the same way as our gatherings?

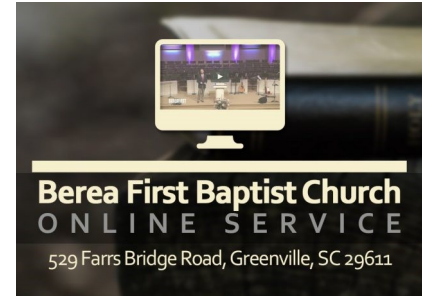
The Old Testament book of Nehemiah took place just after the Babylonian Captivity. The Israelites were finally allowed to begin returning to the Promised Land. As word came to the palace, Nehemiah learned, "The survivors who are left from the captivity in the province are there in great distress and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem is also broken down, and its gates are burned with fire" (Neh. 1:3). Nehemiah soon received permission to travel to the Land to see the condition of the people and the rebuilding work. As he arrived in the Land, he called them to action and they rose to the challenge. "Let us rise up and build." Then they set their hands to this good work" (2:18).

As the people rebuilt the walls surrounding Jerusalem, they faced internal challenges, outside opposition, and distractions from the work. But more significant than a structure or city was the spiritual rebuilding that soon occurred in their lives. Ezra read the Law in chapter 8, "Then all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground." Revival occurred as they returned to the Lord in their rebuilding journey.

Though our story today does not fully mirror the 70-year captivity of the Israelites in the Old Testament (maybe it's starting to feel that way), there are certainly lessons to learn from their account. Like the people's response to Ezra reading the Law, are we looking for opportunities to worship the Lord at home? Will we emerge from quarantine praising the Lord as the Israelites did in Nehemiah 8? I look forward to our corporate gathering that will happen in His time, but I look forward with greater anticipation the stories of how God used this to refine your faith and love for Him.

God bless you in these days! If we can minister to you and your family during this time, please let us know.

Michael Hodge



Join us for our online services:

Bereafirst.online.church
or Facebook Live

Sunday morning, 10:15
Sunday Evening, 6:00
Wednesday Evening, 6:30

ANNIE ARMSTRONG EASTER OFFERING

100% of your gifts support
North American missionaries.

Our Goal: \$12,000

Received: \$3,705

Reaching Center

Items needed in April:
OATMEAL PACKETS AND GRITS

Kentucky Mission Trip

July 11-17

If you're interested in going to Kentucky and have never been with us before, please call the church. 246-1921.

We had a very
#BereaAwkwardEaster!
Here are some of
our favorite photos:



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WORSHIP SERVICE GUIDE



"I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being."
Psalm 104:33



KIDS TIME

Mrs. Julie will be sharing our kids time during the service today.

LESSON: JESUS, THE SAVIOR - A WALK WITH JESUS

FOCUS PASSAGE: LUKE 24:13-35

KEY BIBLE VERSE: 1 JOHN 4:14

The Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. We have seen it. We give witness to it.

LIFE APPLICATION:

I can know Jesus lives today.

As we respond in worship and sing to the Lord, take time to meditate on these Scripture passages below that relate to this morning's songs.

"The Lion and The Lamb"

1 Peter 2:22-24

"He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed."

"His Mercy Is More"

Psalm 103:9-12

"He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

"O Great God"

Psalm 51:10-12

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit."



Sermon Series on I Corinthians:
Transforming Faith

Transformed by the Call of God

I Corinthians 1:1-3

1. We are called the church of God. Vs 1-2a
2. We are called saints. Vs 2b
3. We are called a part of larger fellowship. Vs 2c-3

RESPONDING TO THE WORD INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did Paul point out his apostolic calling?
2. In what way has God called you to serve Him?
3. What does it mean to you to be a member of God's church?
4. What responsibilities come with being a member of God's church?
5. How does someone become a member of God's church?
6. What does it mean to be a saint? When does a person become a saint?
7. How does your perspective on life change when you reflect on being a saint?
8. How does an awareness of the call of God bring about change/transformation in your life?
9. What effect does knowing you are a part of the larger fellowship of God's people have on your life? If none, what effect should it have?
10. How is your life being transformed by God this year, month, week?

QUICK TIPS for STAYING CONNECTED DURING THIS TIME

This GUIDE is designed to facilitate an ongoing conversation about our service. Consider gathering with family around the table OR give a friend a call and talk through the "Interactive Discussion Questions" above. Spend time in prayer responding to the worship, message, and online gathering. Ask God to reveal His will in our life.