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Reflections

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The Divine Disruption

I'm a planner. I can't help it. It's what I do. When there's a task to be done or an event to execute, my mind immediately starts working through all the possible scenarios and the steps to completion. I even like to prayerfully strategize and map out where we're going as a student ministry years in advance. Sure, life happens in real time, and sometimes adjustments must occur. But isn't it better to make adjustments to an existing plan than to have to come up with a plan on the fly? I like vision. I like being on a trajectory.

So you can imagine how I'm doing in the midst of this pandemic! Almost overnight, all our best laid plans lay in ruins. With each passing date of a calendared event or series or trip, I feel a deep sorrow for what will not be—at least for now. I grieve for our high school and college students—especially our seniors—who are missing major milestones that may not simply be rescheduled. We are watching our world undone. And there seems to be no end in sight.

The challenge to think and plan long-term right now is daunting. Who knows what is going to happen in a week or month or year? But perhaps that's the gift of this moment. Truth be told, we've never known what might happen in a week or month or year—or even a day.

James 4:13-16 says, "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit'—yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.' As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil."

James is cautioning us against arrogant planning—of assuming that we know the future and depending on the "certainty" of what this world has to offer. Now, he is not against planning itself. Instead, James calls us to a humble pursuit of the heart of God, telling us to plan with the condition "if the Lord wills." Why? Because as Proverbs 19:21 says, "Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand." Only God is in control, and only God knows the future. To make plans without this mindset is folly and warrants repentance.

James also encourages us to examine what plans we fill our lives with—because life is short; we are but a mist. That's why the psalmist prays, "Teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90:12). Knowing that our days are numbered helps us put into perspective what is really important and to fill our lives with the things that really matter.

So as we grieve the loss of what we thought our future would be, let us also humbly receive this divine disruption with thanksgiving. Perhaps God is getting our attention, reminding us that only He is sovereign, only He is steadfast, and He will do whatever is necessary to draw us back to Him. And let us continue to plan, but as we do, let us join our Savior in also praying, "Not my will but Yours be done."

His,
Ricky Stark
Minister of Students



Sunday Morning at 10:15

Bereafirst.online.church or Facebook Live



Sunday Night at 6:00 pm

Come early and claim your spot in the parking lot!

Tune your radio to 88.9 for our service.

***Remember: Please stay in your cars and respect social distancing guidelines.**



Class of 2020, I know this is not how you pictured your senior year ending. I am so sorry this health crisis has hit at what should be one of the most joyful seasons of your life. I want you to know how much we love

you and how very proud of you we are. In the midst of unprecedented obstacles, you have risen above it all, and nothing—not even a pandemic!—can take away what by God's grace you have achieved. Regardless of what lies ahead, we are still going to do something special to honor you and celebrate what God has done to bring you to this moment. **We plan to recognize our graduates on Sunday, May 31.** Stay tuned for further details. **For now, we need a couple of things from you. Please email me (rstark@bereafbc.org) your senior picture and a baby picture along with a favorite Bible verse, where you're graduating from, and what your future plans are.** I am praying for you, and I am so excited for what God has in store for you. If you are in Christ, He knows the plans He has for you—and they are plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future (Jer 29:11). And if your hope is in Him, your future is bright.

—Ricky

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 BREAKFAST TO REMEMBER

FOCUS PASSAGE: JOHN 21:1-19

KEY BIBLE VERSE: GALATIANS 5:13B
Serve one another in love.

LIFE APPLICATION:

I can show love to Jesus by serving others.

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.

"To God Be the Glory"

"O Praise the Name"

1 Chronicles 16:35-36

"Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather and deliver us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name and glory in your praise. Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!"

"What a Beautiful Name"

Colossians 1:16-18

"For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent."



Sermon Series on 1 Corinthians:
Transforming Faith

Transformed by the Gospel
1 Corinthians 1:10-25

1. We are united in Jesus. vs 10-16
2. We are united in the Gospel. vs 17-25

RESPONDING TO THE WORD INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the basis of Paul's appeal?
2. What are some things that churches or Christians often divide over today?
3. What would be the Lord's appeal to those who are divided?
4. Why is it important that believers find unity?
5. How does division in the church hurt its witness?
6. In what ways are we united in Jesus?
7. What was the focus of Paul's ministry?
8. What was the focal point of Paul's preaching?
9. How does the Great Commission unite us?
10. What is the difference between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of this world?

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.