



Monday Morning Missive

Have you ever seen a more beautiful morning. Here it is late Spring in Alabama, and the temperature is cool and the humidity is low and the sky is blue. There is nothing more refreshing and nothing renews the heart more than sitting on your front porch drinking coffee and enjoying the beauty of God's creation. We all need those moments to kickstart our day and remind us of the important things in life – especially when the world around us seems to be nothing but chaos.

I was thinking this morning about this chart I came across years ago that would help you determine your stress level. Different activities were given a number value, and you could look at what was going on in your life to figure out how much stress you were under. I bet they never took

into account pandemics, social isolation, or the violence that is hitting hard in many of our cities. The level of uncertainty in life has never been higher – and neither has the amount of stress that most of us are experiencing. That is why it is imperative that every one of us finds something that we can do to release the stress. Exercise is always good. Manual labor. Reading a good book. Playing with your children. Taking a nap. Working on a hobby. You need to find what works for you and take any opportunity to let the stress go. Deal with what you can deal with, and recognize that some things are always going to be beyond your control.

I haven't talked about numbers much lately, but I wanted to give you an update on how things are going here. Financially, God is blessing our church through your faithful giving. I am so proud of you for being obedient to the Father through this crazy time. Our attendance numbers are very interesting. For example, in our 3 worship services combined, we had 150 people on

campus. Through our online ministry, we add another 125 people. Let me explain how we get that number. We look at the total number of minutes viewed and then divide it by the length of the service. It is not completely accurate, but it is the way the experts tell us that we can estimate the viewing audience. That means we had 275 people in worship which is about what we were averaging when all of this started. Again, thank you for being so faithful.

The one area that concerns me is our Sunday School. Many of us believe that our next greatest priority is to be able to get back to some kind of small group gatherings. I am working on some ideas with our staff, and one thing we are suggesting is that you invite a few people that you are already fellowshipping with and begin to study together. I can send you the Small Group Discussion Questions to guide you in digging deeper into the Sunday morning sermons or you can use the regular Sunday School literature. All of us are hungry for these encounters, but it takes

someone to do the inviting. Wednesday night prayer meeting and Bible Study along with my Men's Bible Study will begin to meet on Wednesday July 1 at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary. One of our women's Bible Study groups is planning on starting back soon, too. These are important opportunities as we begin to move back to our normal operations.

One more thing, this morning. That phrase "normal operations" may not be the best way to talk about the future. I think many of us feel that the future holds something greater than "normal operations." We need to start thinking about what God has been saying to us concerning what church is supposed to look like. Maybe our "normal operations" was not exactly what God had in mind for His church, so He gave us a little break to rethink and re-vision. Let's all start praying about that asking God to guide us to that "undiscovered country" known as the future. (Yes, it is a Shakespeare reference, but I was actually thinking about the Star Trek movie.)

Anyway, I am praying for you today.

Bro. Ben

Dr. Ben Hayes,
Senior Pastor
First Baptist Church Dadeville
bhayes@fbcdadeville.com