



Monday Morning Missive

Good Tuesday morning, my friends. In case you were wondering, I did not send out a Monday Morning Missive this week. I was spending time with my family for my birthday, and it was fantastic. But I am excited to be back in the office with the rest of the staff this week, and we are looking for a great week of service to our Lord, our community, and our church. And do you know what excites me most of all? We will be back together for Prayer Meeting on Wednesday and for worship on Sunday in the sanctuary. I can't wait to see all of you in person.

Let me say thank you to everyone who has worked so hard on our ministry projects for the schools. You gave lots of soft drinks for the

teachers. You gave hours of labor to pressure wash the stadium. You worked hard on the bench/tables. You served diligently to get the sneeze guards completed. And don't think this work has gone unnoticed. God always sees the work of His people. And the community noticed, too. As the pastor, I have the greatest blessing of receiving all of the gratitude for our church, but let me tell you that I make sure they know it was a team effort. So again, thank you for your willing service. As I delivered some of the sneeze guards last Friday, one of the teachers told me that he had really been talking up our church that very morning. And you know what? It's all for the praise of our Father's glory.

This week promises to be a little quieter, but don't lose the momentum of ministry. Channel those hours of service and all of that energy into praying for the schools. I looked into the eyes of one of our teachers last night, and she

was exhausted. This will undoubtedly go down as one of the most difficult years in these teachers' lives. And don't leave out all of the other school employees who are working so hard to give these young people a sense of "normalcy" in the midst of these abnormal circumstances.

My greatest fear in all of this is that as we prolong all of these restrictions – even though they are for the good of the community in our efforts to keep this virus from spreading – we are going to see a continued downward spiral in the mental and emotional health of people of all ages. Depression will increase. Substance abuse will increase. Violent behaviors will increase. Suicide will increase. Why? Because we weren't created to live like this, and those who are not believers do not have the benefit of the Holy Spirit to keep them grounded in their faith and encouraged in their spirit. As we move further into this very divisive time in our

nation's history, especially as we approach this election, we are facing a powder keg of pent-up emotions, and the fuse has already been lit. We must do everything in our power to defuse the situation and bring healing to the hearts of people. How do we do that? By prayer and the gospel. Give people some of the hope that you are holding in your heart today. Love them like we love each other.

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