

Daily View

"But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today'" Hebrews 3:13

August 5, 2020

Optimistic or Misty Optics?

On March 21st, when I began this project that I call the "Daily View," I had no idea I'd be still writing it in August. In the first issue, I said, "Predictions for the length of this hiatus range from 2 weeks to 2 months or more." Ha! Little did we know that the "more" meant 4-5-6 months or more.

I started this to try to help the church stay connected and to provide lighthearted, sometimes humorous, relief from all the bad news. And, of course, I aimed to put a spiritual spin on everyday events to help us keep our focus. But that has become more difficult as this health crisis drags on. I mean... *can you believe what has happened since March?* Besides the disease, which has resulted in 9500 deaths in California, so far, there has been massive unrest that broke out after the George Floyd death. That sparked riots, the re-energizing of the BLM organization (a Marxist, anti-family, pro-abortion outfit) and a recharged Antifa that is burning Bibles and U.S. flags in the streets of Portland as we speak.

More relevant to us, we've been shut out of the church building and even when we've been able to meet, we have to do it in shifts. That's taking its toll. "Going to church" is a central part of the life of faithful Christians, and that's the way it's meant to be. God wants us to assemble. Nehemiah 8:1,

From a bed & breakfast in Leavenworth, Washington, October 2015. I admit the translation of Romans 8:19 is unusual, but I love that they put scripture on their wall!

And all the people gathered **as one man** into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the Lord had commanded Israel.

Fellowship (*koinonia*) is precious. We help each other physically, psychologically and spiritually. It makes the elders' (shepherds') job easier when we can see everyone at once and identify those who are not with us. It's really hard to shepherd a flock that we can't see, a flock that never comes back to the fold. Taking the analogy a step further, how do we help those who are walking

through the "valley of the shadow of death"? Your shepherds ("pastors") take our role seriously and it often keeps us up at night or, in my case, gets me up early in the morning.

There are plenty of other reasons to be pessimistic right now

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and there's a lot of consternation among people who keep up with what's going on in the world. Some who are "youngsters" (at least in my eyes) think that this is the end of America as we know it. Boomers know better because we've heard that before. However, I will admit that this is the worst it's been since the 1960s.

But I'm sick and tired of all the negativity and pessimism and situational depression. I'm the most positive person I know but even I have been down in the dumps at times. No more!! Know why? Here's why:

God is still in his heaven...

The gospel is still being proclaimed...

God's word still goes out and will not return empty...

... and Jesus ever lives to make intercession for us.

What more do we need? Rest your eyes on these texts and take comfort in them:

"...the Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth be silent before Him." *Habakkuk 2:20*

"All flesh is like grass
and all its glory like the flower of grass.

The grass withers,
and the flower falls,
but the word of the Lord remains forever." *1 Peter 1:23-25*

"Is not my word like fire, declares the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?" *Jeremiah 23:29*

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Hebrews 13:8

I'm going to focus on these and other texts that transport us into another, eternal dimension and give us new eyes to see above all that is going on. Someone said, *"it's hard to be optimistic when you have misty optics."* Only one thing can clear up our vision and that's God's word. "Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him" (Proverbs 30:5).

Will you join me? Remember that Jesus came that we "may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10)