

Friday, May 15, 2020

Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...

"So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, 'If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'"

(John 8: 31-32)

Throughout this COVID-19 pandemic, I have felt a little bit like a ball in a pinball machine when it comes to what to believe. I start to think one thing, and then I hit a "bumper" that shoots me in a different direction, and then I hit another bumper that sends me in a new direction. Then when I think I have a clear thought process about the whole thing, the "flippers" at the bottom of the pinball machine fling me to the top again which starts the whole thing over.

Not knowing exactly what to believe or understand about this virus is mostly due to the fact that the experts are learning new things every day. And they are able to share their current information with us because we have 24-hour/day news to let us know the latest. We know more about the specifics of diseases like polio and smallpox because they happened long enough ago that we (the royal "we") know the beginning and the end of that era. The time will come when the same will be true about COVID-19. But for now we are still living the saga, which means information changes almost on a daily basis.

One example of this "ever-evolving" barrage of information has to do with the virus' effect on children. Near the beginning of the pandemic, I remember us being told that it generally had very little effect on children. More lately, I have read that the virus attacks children in a way that was previously unknown. Also, at first we were told that the virus likely originated from a "wet market." Now the opinion is that it originated in a laboratory. I don't blame anyone for this constant "pinball" information. They are doing the best they can with what they know at the time. We probably would not like it if they told us, "We will tell you everything about the coronavirus in about 5 years when it is all over." I doubt Americans would be pleased with that response.

This "pinball machine" phenomenon is not limited to the topic of the coronavirus. People are "bumped" around when it comes to what to believe about a lot of things – including things about God: Who He is; How we can know Him; How we get to heaven, and on and on. But you and I don't need to be bounced around at all. There is only one Truth. There has always only been one Truth. There can only be one Truth. And that Truth is Jesus. Paul wrote these words to Timothy: "(God) desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all..."

Make no mistake about it ... there is A LOT of false information out there on the subject of the truth. In fact, we live in a post-modern society, which means that many people don't believe there is such a thing as truth. How much sense does that make?! But the Holy Spirit has revealed the Truth about Jesus to us and what He has done for us. Jesus tells us in the reading above that if we "abide in His Word, we will know the truth, and the truth will set us free."

So, when you and I feel bounced around when it comes to the whole truth about the pandemic, or anything else in this world, we can find our solid ground in God's Word. God's Word is our anchor. Its Truth never changes. In fact, the Bible says that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." It is always true that God loves you. It is just as true today that Jesus died for your sins as it was yesterday. It will be just as true 6 months from now, or 50 years from now, or even 1,000 years from now that Jesus rose from the dead, and that because He rose from the dead, so will we! Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."

God's peace!

Pastor Jim