

**Wednesday, May 6, 2020**

**Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...**

**"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received:  
that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried,  
that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,  
and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.  
Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time,  
most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep."**

*(1 Corinthians 15: 3-6)*

The current pandemic has created some new terminology in society. One such term is the phrase, "the new normal." It's not meant to be a good thing. It refers to a lifestyle that is not as "carefree" as life was before the pandemic struck. The "new normal" has to do with social-distancing, smaller gatherings, no non-essential traveling, and the wearing of face coverings.

I recently went to the grocery store and just about everyone was wearing a face covering of some kind, including me. If I had just arrived in a town where everyone in a grocery store was wearing a face covering and I wasn't, I think I would either leave or very carefully inquire about what was going on. The sad thing is, when I was in the grocery store the other day and saw everyone wearing face coverings, it seemed almost "normal." And I didn't feel conspicuous in mine. I guess that's what is meant by the "new normal."

"New normals" generally refer to events that have a "pre" and "post" reference. There was "pre-Pearl Harbor" and "post-Pearl Harbor." We talk about "pre" and "post" World War II. We talk about "pre" and "post" 9/11. And we will likely be talking about "pre" and "post" COVID-19, at least for several years to come.

There is another "new normal" that we should be accustomed to as Christians. This "new normal" has to do with "pre" and "post" resurrection of Jesus! The cross exists on the "pre-resurrection" side of Jesus' resurrection. A lot of things existed on the "pre-side" of Jesus' resurrection, including the fear that the disciples felt after Jesus was crucified. But then there came the "post-side" of Jesus' resurrection. In fact, Jesus' resurrection became the "new normal" for the disciples and many believers in the Book of Acts. It became normal to talk about the resurrection of Jesus and all that it meant for those who believed it. Jesus' resurrection is the "new normal" for our lives as well – even if it's not so "new" any more.

As Christians we are living on this side of the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus' resurrection has changed everything! Sin and death have been defeated. Because of Jesus' resurrection, there will be a resurrection for you and me as well. So, the "new normal" for Christians is that we do not need to fear death. We can know that the grave is temporary. This "new normal" means that Jesus is alive and is directly involved in our lives, especially if we allow Him to be. The "new normal" of Jesus' resurrection means that there is always power and hope in our lives. The Bible says that this is the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

The "new normal" of Jesus' resurrection overshadows any other "new normal" that we might be living with in our world today. There are likely to come many more "new normals" as we draw closer to the Day of Jesus' return. The Bible talks about many details of "godlessness" becoming the "new normal" in the Last Days. Even this "new normal" is not a threat to you and me as believers. It is an opportunity to continue to shine bright in the world with the message of the cross and the resurrection of Jesus.

God's peace!  
Pastor Jim