

Daily Bread – Nourishment and Info from Your Pastors  
March 31

Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

We are hoping this finds you sheltering and distancing to stay healthy. I find in one sense - I have had some time to reflect in ways "normal" life has not allowed. I have longed and sought ways to get in that space where I can take some time.

I want to invite you to find a way to reflect on things.

Jesus often took time to get away from others to pray and reflect. Jesus did not have a mandatory shelter in place or a pandemic. However, Jesus knew the wisdom to pull away in order to get perspective. This is a perfect time for each of us to use this time away from many things in our lives. Perhaps to think about a variety of aspects of being a human being.

**Relationships.** Now that we have had time away from people. Can you reflect on some relationships that have not been especially healthy? Reflect on how you might handle those relationships when we get back together. Some people are life giving in a relationships and others can be detrimental to staying healthy.

Spiritual assessment. How are each of us feeding the spiritual parts of our lives? What practices might we put in place to grow our relationship with God and grow our sense of God's presence in everything and everyone? How can I be more loving to others and to my self so I can realize the potential God has placed in me.

**Habits.** Do we have habits that need to be changed? It takes 21 days to make a habit. Sounds like we have 21 days to create good habits and eliminate those we know are not healthy.

Personally this has been a good time to think about being a pastor. How I am doing in the ways I handle situations? Am I being effective? Where is the opportunity for me to do better? Jon and I often reflect on the bigger picture as pastors and the kind of church God is calling us to be. Some days when I am so busy going from one thing to another with no time to really reflect on what I am doing - I feel like I am just putting one foot in front of the other.

**Purpose and gifts.** What is your purpose? What are your gifts? I often look at others and think - I want to be that person when I grow up. Make a plan, work the plan and then reassess the plan. Repeat.

I know that God created each of us to live in to our potential. That is how God wired us. God has given each of us a variety of gifts.

I am like everyone - I spend time worrying but I have come to the point in this pandemic I want to change what I focus on. I often have asked God to give me some

time at home - away from it all (Calgon commercial start here). Will you join me in taking full advantage of this time we have been mandated with?

Please pray with me:

*Loving God, help each one of us to put aside those habits of worry and fear that are not helpful. Help us to remember you are with us each and every moment. Give us the wisdom to realize worry does not change our situation but we have been given a great gift of time. Assure us whatever emotions we are feeling - it is okay. Strengthen us to move beyond just letting life go by. Show our hearts how to break free from the bondage of fear. We want to be what you have created us to be. Thank you for caring for our needs, not our wants. We are yours. Use us to bring hope, love, grace and even your presence to others remotely if we have to. We love you. Amen.*

Grace and Peace,

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**Watch!** Watch the Faith UMC Facebook page tomorrow morning for the first item in our photo scavenger hunt.