

March 7, 2021

Scott's Thoughts



“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” (James 1:17 ESV)

Things have changed but what is normal? The reason I'm asking this question is because over the last year I cannot count the number of times I have heard people say, “I can't wait until we can get back to normal.” Wanting to know more about this word “normal,” I looked it up on Dictionary.com and found an incredible list of definitions. In a dictionary, when there are several definitions, the first one listed is called the radical. In other words, it is the most common and should be used unless it does not fit the situation. Dictionary.com has this definition as the radical - “conforming to the standard or the common type; usual; not abnormal; regular; natural.”

Can we really get back to normal? The world around us is constantly changing. Many of the changes we encounter in our lives have minimal effect while others like births, deaths, or illnesses change our life forever. Using the radical definition, the word “normal” could easily be used to mean that social distancing and wearing masks are normal practices in today's world. Yet, I don't think that is what most people think about when they say, “get back to normal.” When I say it, I'm thinking about getting back to a time that I liked better.

As I think over this past year, I notice that

“normal” for me has changed and that “normal” is about to change again. Last March 15, was the first time I delivered my sermon on Live Stream. At the time, I did not like sitting at my desk speaking into a camera, but it lasted until May 10 when we went back to having in-person services at the building. Live Streaming has continued every week except for a few times that we had technical difficulties. But now that March 2021 is here, the vaccine is more available and the numbers of infections are dropping like a rock, we made the decision to return to a full schedule. Is that normal? Yes, it is but, our “normal” will also include Live Streaming our Sunday morning services and Wednesday evenings' prayer meeting.

Normal has different meanings for each of us. For some it is turning back the clock to a simpler time, for others it is just maintaining our current status for whatever that status is at the moment. Is God satisfied with either of those positions? As we read the Bible, we see that God keeps people safe as they turn to Him for guidance when their “normal” changes. He is God and is powerful enough to not only keep us safe, He also helps us grow to become more like Him in every way. God wants us to have a new normal, one that is more pleasing to Him.

“For at that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, that all of them may call upon the name of the LORD and serve him with one accord. (Zephaniah 3:9 ESV)

Thanks for listening and keep on shining.

—Scott