

“Normal”

It seems like it is difficult to have a conversation or listen to news reports without having someone talk about either getting back to normal or finding our new normal. Every time I hear this, I am reminded of a woman I used to work with named Janice who would frequently tell anyone longing for something “normal” that “normal is nothing but a setting on the dryer.”

As I think about the things which previously were “normal” and contrast them with my status quo, I wonder how much “normal” I really want back. For instance, normal used to be rushing off every afternoon or evening to get from this meeting to that practice, this school event and that urgent program. In the past month, Sara and I have been intentional about going on a walk or doing some form of physical exercise every day for at least 45 minutes or more. This is not something we did when life was “normal.” We have had dinner together as a family nearly every night for the past several weeks. Again, I couldn’t say that when we were living our “normal” lives.

More than ten years ago now, Sara and I participated in Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University. For those of you not familiar with FPU, it is a nine-week course where you learn lessons (some basic, some more advanced) about money management. One of Dave’s main concepts is that taking on debt, except for a house, is a bad idea and you should do everything you can to get out of debt as soon as possible. Dave’s response to the comment that debt is a normal part of the American economy is always:

“Then don’t be normal. If normal is broke, if normal is debt, then be weird! Don’t be normal.”

As experts and journalists keep telling us, we are going to enter into a “new normal.” What they mean by this is that the world around us will not look like, be like, or feel like the world as we previously knew it. But, as we enter into a new normal, we get to be a part of deciding what it looks like. What parts of our old “normal” are really worth embracing as we begin to consider what the new will look like? Could we now be more intentional about making sure things like self-care and hygiene continue in our new normal? What about not packing quite as much into our daily schedules?

I was in a conversation the other day about how “virtual church” attendance has been much higher than before this pandemic. I wonder if it is because spirituality and faith matter more to us now, or if it is because we just don’t have a lot of other options? Once youth sports and Saturday night parties and other things pick back up, will we see the rise in faith participation continue? We are in a very unique time in the history of our society. We have the opportunity to make some serious changes in the course of our lives in the next few weeks. Let’s be careful to not let others define for us what our new normal will be.

Normal is nothing but a setting on the dryer. Normal is what we say it is. What will you consider normal as we begin to get back to our “normal” lives (whenever that may be)?

It is an honor to be your pastor and to be in ministry with you to an amazing God!

Blessings,

Chris





THANK YOU!

My family and I would like to thank each of you for the thoughts, prayers, cards and support provided us during my Dad's illness and after his death. We truly appreciate the love and kindness our church family provides and it is a testament to how we try to help each other during challenges. We look forward to seeing you all in person - hopefully soon - but until then, please be safe.

Love - Jon & Elaine Raymond

**When we pray,
God hears more
than we say,
answers more than
we ask,
gives more than
we imagine...
in HIS own time
and HIS own way.**

Jim Arr

Roy Ball

Les Case

Donald Cohan

Dorothy Conn

Wade Davis

Chad Elmer

Janet Ford

Richard Fuerst

Winnie Fuerst

Harvey Geary

Michael Hatfield

Tara Leach

Leticia and son Ethan

Derek Petty

Steve Raymond

Nancy Rowe

Larry Sparks

Ray Trowbridge

Elaine West

Wilma Williams

Pastor Tom & wife Jennifer

**Congregation de Mellier
Heart and Soul Children's
Learning Center
All Ministries
of the Church**

od grant me the Serenity

to accept the things

I cannot change,

Courage to change the things

I can, and the wisdom

to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;

Enjoying one moment at a time;

Accepting hardship as the

pathway to peace.

*Taking, as He did, this sinful world
as it is, not as I would have it;*

*Trusting that He will make all things
right if I surrender to His will;*

*That I may be reasonably happy
in this life,*

*And supremely happy with Him
forever in the next.*

— Reinhold Niebuhr

W V E R T I C A L L
R O O A F F L S A B
A C R I L I A T O A
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D R K E S O O D D K
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H E L W S L E U T H

Seek

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Random

Sleuth

Backward

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Diagonal

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Horizontal

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