

# Back to Church! But Back to What?

Friday, May 15, 2020

We are permitted to come back to church this Sunday based upon Gov. Hogan, but what does that mean? I know your immediate response may be CHURCH (with a slight bit of frustration). However, what are we coming BACK to?

I mentioned this idea a few weeks ago in my message. Many of us have said statements like “I just can’t wait until it gets **BACK TO NORMAL.**” Although I know what we all thought we meant, I wonder if **WE** fully understand what we actually said? Is getting **BACK TO NORMAL** really what we **NEED**. We may need to come **BACK** to a **NEW NORMAL**. As a matter of fact, I’m telling you right now I, Jason Miltz, need to come back to a **NEW NORMAL** and with the **LORD’s** help Tilghman Road’s approach to God’s mission will be **NEW** also.

Think about it, in the NT, when the church was persecuted they scattered and grew. God blessed the “scattered” and the church grew.

I by no means want to say we’ve been persecuted because of social distancing, however we have been limited, restricted, & quarantined because of COVID-19. Many of us have not seen each other since Sunday March 8, 2020 and although yes we miss each other, **HOW** are we coming **BACK** to church? It would be good just to see each other’s smiling faces, however there’s more at stake here than just seeing someone’s smiling face.

God’s been adjusting my attention & focus. I’ve talked to several individuals and pastors and I’m hearing the same thing from them. God’s adjusting their focus. For some of us, God may not want us to come **BACK to NORMAL**. For many of us, I believe God is calling us to come **BACK to a NEW NORMAL. GOD’S NORMAL!**

What’s that mean? Well the normal that I was living before **MAY BE MY** normal, however **am I living the way God wants me to live?** Is that the

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**NORMAL** way He wants me to live or have I become **COMFORTABLE** in **MY WAY** of life and it's **NORMAL** for me, but it's not the way God has called me to live?

Last night if I would have made this announcement it would have been completely different. As a matter of fact I shared with the deacon's my plan for reopening at this point. Then God gently reminded me that I never bothered asking Him. What? Ask God if He wants us to have church? **OF COURSE HE DOES!** That is what I thought and that's not necessarily incorrect however we must **UNDERSTAND the IMPORTANCE of the NOW moment we are in as God's people.** It's not just about getting to walk **BACK into this BUILDING AGAIN.**

Yes God wants us to gather together in His name, however if we're not doing His work His way or fulfilling our responsibilities as His children then there needs to be an adjustment. Am I excited to come back to *smiling faces, people I miss, the pew/place that I sit...or* **BACK TOGETHER with God's people for God's purposes?**

**Am I excited about getting MY RIGHT BACK to go to church or am I excited about getting MY RESPONSIBILITIES BACK with God's church?**

That's a reference to my message this past Sunday so if you missed it I encourage you to go let God speak to you while you engage it.

So after thinking about, discussion with the deacons and prayer I feel confident that the Holy Spirit is leading me to the following actions over the next several weeks. I know everyone may not like this or understand this however I plead with you to go **ALL IN 4 ALL THINGS** with God and see what **HE** shows or tells you.

- 1. The church will still be closed this Sunday, May 17, 2020 and we will Live Stream only.**

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- a. This has NOTHING to do with health concerns or fear of COVID-19. This is solely because of how I feel God leading.
- b. The reason for this is I sense God calling Tilghman Road to a time of Prayer & Fasting.

### **2. I sense God calling us to a time of Prayer and Fasting from this Sunday, May 17 until this Saturday, May 24, 2020.**

- a. That's one week, 7 days to Fast and Pray.
- b. About What? About us as individuals and as a church.
  - i. I'm calling for a week of pushing food or whatever you can away and praying and reading the Word of God instead.
    - 1. I do urge all of us, unless due to health concerns, we try to fast **MEALS**. If you have health issues (not hunger issues) then I completely understand but find something that is a **SACRIFICE** and give it up and spend that time with God.
  - ii. I'm asking us to sincerely search ourselves as well as ask God to search us too.
    - 1. Repent for anything God would deal with you about.
    - 2. If you need to **CALL** someone and make things right then do it. If you need to do something **ELSE** to make things right, then do it.
    - 3. This must be a time of emptying us of ourselves and lining us **BACK** up with the Father.
  - iii. Regardless of what or when you fast I am asking all of us to make time in the evening spending time in the Word of God. Don't just read a devotional or a verse or two. Spend time in His Word. Make the sacrifice during this time of prayer and fasting.

### **3. There will be a "Solemn Assembly" on Sunday, May 24, 2020 @ 5:00 PM. THIS IS NOT JUST ANOTHER CHURCH SERVICE!**

- a. We WILL NOT gather together physically for church on this Sunday either. We will STILL ONLY LIVE STREAM services.

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- b. I sensed God calling us together for a “SOLEMN ASSEMBLY” on this day, not gathering for “church” just a “Solemn Assembly” at 5:00 PM.
  - c. This is a call for all in the church who can safely come out (if due to your health status or age you are not able or feel it’s best to stay home then I ask you to go to prayer in your home @ 5:00 PM).
    - i. We will be tempted to believe this is not that important. That is a lying deceiving thought from the enemy of your soul. What God is calling us to is extremely important.
  - d. This is a call to Repentance & Adjustment before the LORD.
  - e. There will be NO planned message or worship. This WILL BE a gathering of God’s people for a “Solemn Assembly” of seeking His Face for a NEW NORMAL...HIS NORMAL in our lives as individuals **and** in this church...His church.
4. We will be seeking God about reopening on May 31, 2020.

I need everyone to understand I am just as excited to get **BACK TOGETHER** and see you all too, however we are in an extremely important time right now and we need to **HEAR** from God before we go **BACK to NORMAL**. I can’t let my **EXCITEMENT** to see **YOU** cause **ME** to **MISS HEARING** God. Please...join me in seeking God’s face in these desperate and extremely important times that we are living in today.

Tilghman Rd folks if you have any questions please don’t hesitate to call me. Thank you. God bless you and Lord have Your way with Your people. We Love you all and are anxious to see you all.

Respectfully submitted in the LORD’s Service,

Bis. Jason J. Miltz, Senior Pastor, Tilghman Rd CoGoP.