



CENTRAL SDA MESSENGER- "BRIEF"

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An Opportunity as We Wait ~ by a Simple Seeker

"Dear brothers and sisters, be patient as you wait for the Lord's return. Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen. ⁸You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near."

James 5:7-8 (NLT)

Hello Central Church Family!

I pray that God has kept you and yours safe and healthy, and that He will continue to do so. As we continue to take measures to protect ourselves and others, the stress of waiting... and hoping for a return to something similar to "normal" can grow to the point that it can be difficult to take, especially when it seems that there is no known end in sight. And as we face this challenge together, I offer two strategies to help you endure these trying days.

First, you need to take care of yourself. God wants us all to be healthy and happy, even in difficult times. Much of how we see the world depends on our attitude, and our attitude can be greatly affected by the things we do to keep ourselves active and connected. Send a card, phone a friend, wave to folks in your neighborhood. Even with the harshest restrictions, we can all take steps to reach out to others. Others will be blessed when you make an effort, and that will help us feel better, too. As for your own health and well-being, nothing is better than the tenets of a healthy lifestyle found in the acronym, NEW START. If you are unfamiliar with it, just Google it. Reaching out to others and following the steps in NEW START, and you'll find that what we are enduring with COVID-19 is only temporary.

And second, this trying situation is actually an opportunity for us believers. As frustrating and challenging these times can be for those of us who believe in Christ, imagine how difficult and near-insane this world must seem to those who do not have a close connection to our Creator! They are frightened, thirsty, and hungry for the Bread of Life, and they likely don't even know it. They just know

they do not understand, and without the hope of our Savior, there is no imaginable outcome which seems satisfying. That's where we can help.

God is looking to us to share the Gospel, to show the Love of Christ, to provide a way to look at this world and understand that our Lord has a plan – a plan that ends with our salvation! There is no politician, no philosopher, no self-help author that can offer anything of substance to address the problems of this world. None of us have the answers, but we know our God does!

And as James wrote in the passage above, we must be both patient and active. As we wait for Christ's return and the gathering or "harvest" of believers, we must also be involved, just as every farmer works hard and tends to his crops throughout the growing season. We can plant seeds in someone's life about Christ, water and nurture the growth of others as they seek to know more, and finally, provide help to keep the distractions and withering effects of this world away.

So don't let these temporary restrictions get you down. Trust the Lord, for He loves you with an Everlasting Love. But don't keep that Good News to yourself! If you make yourself available and willing, God will give you the opportunities and the words to say. Build a relationship with those who are hurting and searching, and soon enough, they will want to know where to find Christ's peace that rules your life.

"Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near."

Main Worship Service: Saturdays @ 10:50am
Please join us!! (masks required, 25% maximum in person occupancy per NM Governor's Order)

LIVE STREAMING and other resources at :

www.abqcentral.org