

## **Thank God for the Rain**

An ancient proverb says, “It’s an ill wind that blows no man good.” Even the storms that inflict the greatest damage also water our crops. Life is like that. On almost every level.

A good example of this principle made the headlines in our local paper twice this week. My reaction was probably inappropriate, but I chuckled when I saw the report that the execution of a death-row inmate in Texas had been delayed by the outbreak of COVID-19. The same virus that was killing people all over the globe saved this guy’s life. A killer is still alive because of a killer. That struck me as ironic. As funny in a macabre way. Later that same week a second Texas inmate got a similar extension of life because of the virus outbreak.

So...Has the virus pandemic been totally bad? If you think so, ask any third-grader who gets to stay home and watch cartoons instead of going to school? If you see only the menace in the virus, talk in confidence to the multitude of folks who are silently jubilant that at least for a few weeks they don’t have to endure mindless, boring, poorly prepared sermons on Sunday morning. Or listen to the millions of American workers who are ecstatic this week because the virus shutdown is forcing their employers to learn that working from home may be far more efficient than providing expensive office space and making their workers waste hours commuting twice each day.

Don’t hear me wrong. I’m not glad we’ve been hit so hard by the novel coronavirus. It has hurt thousands of people and cratered far too many businesses. But, like every disaster before it, this one has taught us truths and forced life modifications we never would have thought of without it.

Sometimes the only way we can learn and grow is through suffering. The apostle Paul got hit with what he called “a thorn in the flesh.” Nobody has a clue whether he was suffering gut pains, heart pains, arthritis, or something like insomnia or vertigo. Whatever his malady might have been, he wrote later that at first he begged God to take it away. But then he realized that the weakness he endured had helped him to see the power of Christ in a way he never had.

Surely none of us would have asked for or welcomed this virus, but it’s here anyway. So, instead of despairing or moaning, now would be a prime time for us to open our eyes to new, unexpected blessings.