

Sermon Notes

Psalm 119:52
"Comfort in the Law"
March 15, 2020

SCC's Response to the Coronavirus

- 1) We will not shut down Sunday Service at 10:00 AM.
 - a) If things get worse we will look into jury-rigging a camera to stream/upload the service to the internet for those who wish to stay at home.)
 - b) We will keep the greeting times in the liturgy but are asking people not to shake hands.
 - c) We are canceling Communion during Lent for the Sundays in March.
 - d) We will have the Lord's Supper on Sunday April 5th, on Maundy Thursday on April 9th and Easter Sunday on April 12th.
 - e) We will be using self-sealed pre-filled individual communion servings.
- 2) All events, except Sunday worship, are canceled for the next two weeks.
 - a) Which is Sunday, March 15th through and including Sunday, March 29th.
So the next three Sundays, March 15th, 22nd & 29th.
 - b) So all the following events are canceled:
 - i) All Studies (Sunday School, Confirmation, Adult Sunday Studies, Tuesday Morning, Wednesday Evening and Men's Study).
 - Check out Pastor Doug's YouTube channel, "Simply Reformed"
 - He is looking into having some sort of study via the internet for Wednesday night at 7:00 PM, maybe through YouTube or googlehangouts.
 - ii) Committee meetings (Council & Christian Education).
 - iii) Coffee Hour
 - iv) Diaper Bank
 - c) We are also canceling the Special Meeting for the bylaws today.
(It will be rescheduled at a time in the future.)
- 3) At the end of the month we will reevaluate the situation.
- 4) We will be keeping people informed through email and our website (sccwinsted.org).

Reaction?

- 1) What is your reaction?
 - a) Perplexed? This is new territory for all of us.
 - b) Concerned? Understandable, especially when looking at Italy or thinking about the Spanish influenza of 1918-1920.
 - c) Frustrated that we are overreacting because of our modern secular media-driven culture?
That might be true.
- 2) How should we react? Where do we get wisdom and/or comfort? Many excellent options:
 - a) Could focus on God's sovereignty.

Matt 10:29-31

- b) Or on the Gospel, the ultimate expression of God's love and power. Rom 8:35-39
- c) Those are great and good options!
- d) Pastor Doug, strangely, has found great comfort in God's Law.
- e) As the magisterial Psalm 119 (the longest Psalm in the Bible, all about God's Law) wonderfully proclaims: *"I have remembered Your ordinances from of old, O LORD, and comfort myself."* – Ps 119:52
- 4) Protestants rightly tend to focus on the "Second Use of the Law," or the "Evangelical Use" which is like a mirror to show us our sins to drive us to the cross. Gal 3:22-30
- 5) The Law is still good, still useful, for the Gospel freed Christian, as taught in the New Covenant!
- a) **Luke 16:17** – *"But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail"*
- b) **1 Timothy 1:8** – *"But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully,"*
- c) **Romans 7:12** – *"So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good."*
- d) **Romans 3:31** – *"Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law."*
- 6) To give a few examples of the use of the Law during this time of confusion:
- a) Should we take the Coronavirus very seriously?
- i) Our Governor and President (i.e. the "magistrates") have commanded us to take this seriously, so we must.
- ii) Why? Because their authority comes from God and we are commanded in Scripture to obey. So God is indirectly speaking through them. Rom 13:1-7; 1Pet 2:13-17
- iii) We mindlessly obey politicians?! No. But we are called to submit to all lawful authority.
- iv) What comfort it is to trust in God, not worry about debating "what ifs" and instead focus on our present task. Matt 8:8-10
- b) The foundational definition of the Law, loving God and our neighbor, as taught by the Lord Jesus Himself, brings wonderful clarity. It helps us to prioritize what is important. Matt 22:36-40
- i) Public worship on the Lord's Day, especially the preaching of the Word, is critical and will not be canceled. Besides, the President requested today be a day of prayer. Ex 20:8; Mark 16:15; 2Tim 3:16-4:5
- ii) Committee meetings, and even Bible studies, can be postponed.
- iii) Something like the Diaper Bank is a bit more difficult, since it is about loving our neighbor. However, protecting the saints is also a concern for the church. Gal 6:10

Conclusion

- 1) Our comfort, hope, assurance and focus is in God alone.
- 2) There is great comfort in His sovereignty and supreme hope in Christ's Gospel.
- 3) God's Law is always a sure lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Ps 119:105
- 4) When we use the Law rightly, in the freedom of the Gospel, we walk by the Spirit. Rom 8:3-4