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President's Perspective

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Living among the cornfields and beanfields of Ohio has its benefits. We literally watch winter melt away, followed by farmers hard at work preparing and planting, culminating in the growth of crops throughout the summer. Our prayer is that this summer, we will all grow spiritually as much as the corn does physically. In this edition of *Cedarville Magazine*, we have several ideas for you to consider for nurturing your spiritual growth. In addition to those, may I make a few suggestions for you to consider?

This has been an incredibly difficult season for all of us. COVID-19 has presented an endless list of decisions to make with inadequate and evolving data. Statistics show that many pastors have quit, and nearly all pastors have felt the intense pressure of navigating COVID. Here are four suggestions that I believe would be a great encouragement to your pastor. Will you join me by carrying out at least one of these suggestions this summer?

First, let us write our pastors an encouraging letter. Pastors have been criticized and had members leave because they either took the rules too seriously or didn't take them seriously enough, and no decision could please all sides. Paul writes in Ephesians 4:29, "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear." Let's all write a letter to our pastors mentioning two or three specific examples of their faithfulness to encourage them.

Second, let us renew our commitment to our local church (Heb. 10:25). During this season, many have avoided church for safety, watching online instead. We all fear that the habit of attending church in person will never return to the same level, even though we know being present in person is better. Let us make a commitment this summer to return to in-person church attendance and to emphasize the importance of church attendance among our family and friends.

Third, let us engage in personal discipleship relationships. Paul writes in Philippians 3:17, "Keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us" (Jesus, Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus). We benefit when we mentor others or in being mentored ourselves. Coming out of the season of face coverings and 6-foot social distancing, let's seek out those close meaningful relationships that can transform our spiritual lives and the lives of others.

Fourth, let us take our time with the Lord to the next level (Rom. 12:2). Let us commit this summer to spend consistent time with the Lord and to take that time with the Lord to the next level. Whether that means we read more, meditate more, memorize Scripture, keep a prayer journal, take a free online Bible class, or other steps, let us grow spiritually through deepening our personal walk with Christ.

Our mission states that "Cedarville University transforms lives through excellent education and intentional discipleship in submission to biblical authority." Life transformation and intentional discipleship don't stop when the semester ends. In fact, the summer may offer us all even more time to grow in godliness as we strive together for the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ.

In Christ,

Thomas White, President

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