

Silver Linings
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The last few months have held more disappointment, distress and grief than any of us could have ever anticipated. As our new socially distanced and reform-minded world carries on, we lose touch with what the world was like just months ago. It's as if you could have taken a snapshot of our world in early March and instantly placed it in a museum for future viewing. "Children, this is what the world was like back in March of 2020 before everything changed."

Change naturally involves fear – fear of the unknown, fear of loss, fear of new unfavorable realities. We hear the phrase repeatedly in the Bible, "Don't be afraid." That's easy when things seem stable. It's even more important now to put our trust in God. None of this is a surprise to Him and His promises have outlasted more difficult turmoil than this. Don't be afraid.

After all, God is in the business of change! From the moment sin came into the world, God has been advocating for change in His broken creation. It took the form of covenants and laws, sacrifices and prophecies. It took the form of God appearing on the earth as a man. It took the form of Jesus crying out, "Repent," which quite literally means, "change." Ultimately, it took the cross of Jesus to bring about the change God sought for humanity. But God used that evil to bring about eternal good. God would suffer for the sins of humans. In exchange, He would give us His righteousness, and change our allegiance from the ways of the world to His way of truth and love. It's the greatest silver lining in history.

So, what's a little pandemic and social upheaval to God? Certainly, God is interested in all the pain and suffering that comes at a time like this, and so should we be. I would also encourage us to be on the lookout for the silver linings. God is in the business of change, and He works good out of the worst of this world. Here are a few things that I see as silver linings in the midst of a difficult time.

The Value of Being Together

Technology allows us to be together virtually, either over our phones or as little talking boxes on a screen. However, there is something deeply unsatisfying about that interaction. We were not made to be physically apart like this. I can say for myself, I will no longer take for granted being present with other people.

The Value of Being Virtual

I remember in our pre-pandemic world how hard it was to get people together with our hectic, crazy schedules. At the time, a videoconference meeting wasn't even an option that I would consider. Now, it's second nature. In a similar way, we had just dipped our toe into the idea of livestreaming worship. Now we have an online audience that spans the country. God has opened up this virtual world to allow us to connect with more people.

Where are your silver linings? Don't miss them. God is busy working for good, even in your life.