

Going Back!

Windows Millennium Edition has a wonderful feature. If your computer completely goes haywire there is a feature where you can restore it back to a date when it was working correctly!

I actually had to try that once and - - guess what - - it worked! I lost everything I had input since the date I restored it to, but it worked great.

Wonder if Bill Gates and company could create a program for the world where we could do that?

If you had that kind of option would you want to restore the world to September 10, 2001?

What an awesome idea!

The more I think about it - - the more complicated the decision becomes.

Those who lost loved ones in the three airplanes and on the ground at the twin towers and Pentagon would give an answer - - a resounding YES - - DO IT!

Now the clock would not stop - - it would just roll back and begin ticking again.

We would still have world terrorism on our hands and Osama bin Laden to deal with.

OK, you say, let's pick another date - - and roll back to that date.

What date would you pick?

The grim headlines are right on target - -

"The world changed and it will never be the same again"

We now live under the cloud of anthrax and other chemical and biological threats along with the continuing threat of the horror that happened on September 11, 2001 and the possibility it could happen again.

Oh how innocent we were. How trusting and naive in our comfortable culture. How safe and free we felt. Now all of us feel violated and we do not know what or who to trust any more. At least in our lifetime nothing will ever be the same again.

Our finest sons and daughters are prosecuting a war for us now in a far away place. Their mission is to stamp out terrorism wherever it exists and to remove the means for its promoters to repeat the horror of September 11, 2001. They desperately need our love and prayers - - but mostly they need our affirmation of their dedication and loyalty and our abiding appreciation for the sacrifice they are making.

Our precious freedom comes to us with an awesome price. Never think that it came free or without cost. Protect it with all your might and force. Never cheapen the blood and sweat sacrifices of those who prepared this path for us - - by giving away our freedom. Part of the reason that this terrorist element hates us so much is the fact that we are free.

Is it worth the lives of our finest sons and daughters? Our history affirms that it is and our yearning to "breathe free" confirms it. Freedom is not ours to disregard or give away - - it is ours to protect and affirm - - whatever the cost.

Our founding forbears engraved that into our historic foundation documents - - the Constitution and Bill of Rights! We now know that there are those in this world who would snatch that away from us if given the chance.

We found out in that horrific moment on September 11, 2001 what losing our freedom would look like. I never want to see a scene like that again. I never want the world to see a scene like that!

Do you know what the most often spoken phrase in the United States was on September 11 and the following days - - It was "I Love You!". It was spoken on cell phones from doomed airplanes. It was spoken from telephones in the Twin Towers. It was spoken in many languages and in many ways.

In our final moments we just want someone to know that we love them. We wonder how in a world with so much love - - how could there be so much hate and anger.

Beloved, we know in our minds and hearts that there is no rolling back of the clock. Time stands still for no mortal!

Our world, the one that will never be the same again, is where God is counting on us to be the people of God that we were meant to be.

We are going to spend a lot of time binding up the wounds of our people - - both physical and mental. We have a lot of brick and mortar to put back in place.

We United Methodist Christians have this time in history to make a significant difference. God has surely brought to this place for just such a time as this!

Let me use some imagery that I used in the 1996 General Conference Laity Address. We must become "healing stations" where all of God's people can find that "balm" that will heal their bodies and souls. The local church is where that is manifested in thousands of ways across our great land.

The church of Jesus Christ is called to be a healing agent in this time of open wounds. We need not debate the "just war theory" or whether or not we should be doing what we are doing to protect our freedom. We the church are called to bind up the wounds - - not debate what caused the wounds. We are not called to make pronouncements or proclamations of political impact - - we are called to fall to our knees in prayer for those whom we have elected to lead us through these times. We are not called to put people in categories of Democrat, Republican, Liberal or Conservative, Moderate or whatever - - we are called to demand that they seek out the best in everything and hold them to the highest ideals of freedom and democracy. That is what Jesus would do!

We just completed our national media campaign of "Open minds, Open hearts and Open Doors." Let us never take that sign down! "Open Doors" is what Jesus Christ was all about.

We have the answer to hate and anger - - it is love and compassion. We have a "Savior to share with the nations" and "a never dying soul to save."

Jesus said "I love you!" from the cross at Calvary!

We are in the Kingdom business!

We are Kingdom people!

"Lift high the cross - - the love of God proclaim!"

A Jim Lane Commentary
October 23, 2001