

Give thanks for our loved ones

And remember, shoppers, to support our local businesses this holiday season

Be thankful for those at your table on Thursday.

To say that Thanksgiving 2020 will be different than many in years past would be an understatement. It seems that with each passing year there is one less loved one to celebrate the holiday with. The one to be absent this year is Rhonda's dad Ron. He was one who enjoyed a holiday, it didn't matter which one it was because celebrating a holiday meant two things, family and food.

Thanksgiving was one of his favorites because he had a love for homemade cornbread dressing, potato salad, fried turkey and all the trimmings, and of course the desserts.

His absence will be just one of the changes that will be in place this year but I think his chair being empty will likely be the hardest.

I have no doubt we are not the only family that will have an empty chair at the table, so with that in mind, I encourage everyone to take a moment to talk to

the loved ones this holiday season. Take a minute to reflect on the memories you have shared with them. God never promises any of us a tomorrow and we never know whose chair will be empty next year. Who knows, it could be ours.

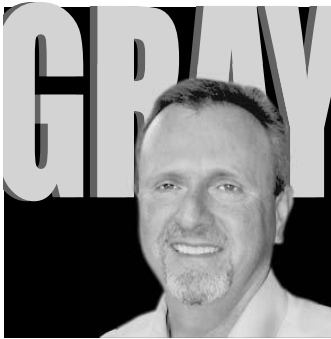
So this Thanksgiving, I encourage you to give thanks to you family, friends and most of all our Heavenly Father.

Support our businesses

As many of you have read by now, Saturday is Small Business Saturday. This special day was set aside in an effort to encourage shoppers to support locally owned businesses. If there was ever a time that our small businesses needed the local shoppers, it is now.

The stress that local-owned businesses have experienced is devastating. While the dollar amounts may not match those

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK



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of the large box stores, when you take into consideration the percentage of sales these businesses have lost due to the pandemic, they have taken a much harder blow than the large national chains.

Some might ask, why it is important to shop local? To that I say that when it comes to personal service the small, locally owned business is more customer-friendly than the employees of the larger store. Why is that, you wonder?

Well, many times the reason is when you shop with a small business that is locally owned, you are working with the owner. The owner recognizes the importance of customer service and going the extra mile to please the customer. For a local business owner, every sale matters.

I have seen times when I was forced to buy from a national chain that I had

trouble getting waited on. I think many times the chain store is so shorthanded, the workers realize the only way to balance the day is by slowing themselves down and limiting the number of people they wait on.

Since the pandemic the number of people who have converted to online sales has increased drastically. But again, a local business provides services that you cannot get with online shopping. Customer service is one thing but another is the opportunity to see and touch the item. This is unlike online shopping, when a lady may or may not know what size the item truly is until it arrives. I bet it only took once or twice to figure out the item that looked like a great deal online wasn't such a deal when it arrived. I also wonder how long it took some online shoppers to realize that a large in an American size is not the same as a large size in China.

Again, I encourage you to support local businesses, not just on Saturday but all year round.

Caring for others will help keep blues away for the holidays

Now is the time to develop your plan for avoiding a blue holiday season and having a merry holiday season. I love Elvis' song "Blue Christmas," but I don't want to have one. However, even in the best of times holiday blues strike most people.

If you are missing a significant person in your life the blues are inevitable. You miss them sitting at your table. You miss them coming in your home. You are reminded of how much that person meant to you. Holiday shows don't often help. While some are festive, they often remind us of the voids we have in our lives. We don't always enjoy songs like

I'll be home for Christmas because we know that often home is a past memory. Being reminded of the past is not always warm and fuzzy.

Social isolation will only make this year tougher. The best in life are the friends, family and positive relationships we have. Talking on the telephone, video chats, and good human relationship connections are important for your spirit.

Churches, groups, fraternal organizations, etc., need to think about reaching out to people this season. Real, actual communication is the key. People don't need more robocalls, more Facebook videos or mail to read. People need real human interaction and this may be the toughest December in our modern history to have this.

Sunday school classes, senior adult organizations, school organizations, classes, teams, should coordinate efforts to reach out to each other and to others. Letting others know you are thinking about them with positive reinforcement

will be critical this holiday season.

Suicide happens too much during the holiday season. With COVID-19, unemployment and so many issues facing our planet, the environment for an upsurge of suicide is ripe. People can be saved from this by us all helping each other.

Make a holiday telephone list of people you are going to call often between now and Jan. 1. You may call them every week. Or, it may be someone who needs a call every two or three days. Keep the calls brief. Often five or 10 minutes will be a boost to someone. If you text message or video chat, then commit to connecting with others with occasional chats and

brief hellos.

One of the ways to boost your spirit is to be helpful. Who can you help this holiday? How can you help your local school? How can you help someone who is hurting more than you? How can you help a local human aid group or senior citizens' group? You may know people who have lost loved ones. If you do, it helps to talk to others and say, "I know how you feel and what you are going through." There are people all around who may not be suffering as much as you. When you take your mind off yourself to help someone else, then you will find your load will be a little lighter and your spirit brighter.

The blues may sneak up on us this season. However, begin making your game plan now for overcoming and moving beyond them.

(Contact Glenn Mollette at GMollette@aol.com and visit his website at www.glennmollette.com and visit his facebook page at www.facebook.com/glennmollette.)



GUEST COLUMN

By Glenn Mollette
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"So, the NBA is not banned for giving sanction to the torture, murder and oppression inflicted on its citizens by the Communist Chinese government, but the two ministers are banned (by Disney) for pointing out that they sanction such barbarity."

Mickey Mouse — friend of tyrants?

Last month the Disney Corporation banned two men from all Disney properties worldwide for life. Who are these horrible men and what heinous crime did they commit?

The first is the Rev. Patrick Mahoney, director of the Christian Defense Coalition in Washington, D.C. The other is the Rev. Kris Keating, president of Bright Mercy Ministries.

So, what did they do to earn the complete abhorrence of the Disney Corporation? Were they caught molesting children? Were they involved in the trafficking and slavery of children? Were they purveyors of child pornography? Any of these would certainly be ample grounds for being banned from Disney properties for life.

Their terrible, awful and deeply offensive behavior involved leading a peaceful protest against the National Basketball Association at a checkpoint during the playoffs at the "bubble" at the Disney ESPN Wide World of Sports Center in Orlando, Fla. So, what were they protesting?

Those who read this weekly column will remember how we have added our voice to those exposing the hypocrisy of the NBA, which mouths much about social justice, systemic racism and oppression in America — while cashing their multi-million-dollar paychecks — yet seem to develop laryngitis when it comes to speaking out against the forced labor, forced abortions and persecution against Christian churches and Muslims in China, and the persecution of anyone who speaks out against the Chinese Communist Party policy and its dictates.

When Houston Rockets General Manager Daryl Morey tweeted, "Fight for Freedom. Stand for Hong Kong," the Communist Chinese government threatened to shut down all game broadcasts in their country. The NBA immediately apologized, calling Morey's tweet "regrettable," and has, in a shameful display of cowardice, kept quiet ever since. Chinese dollars won out over human freedom and

even human lives.

So, the Revs. Mahoney and Keating thought it would be appropriate to protest the dissembling of the NBA at the playoffs, where the best of their teams would be on display before crowds of Americans. Surely the Disney Corporation, which has praised Black Lives Matter and other leftist protests, would favor a peaceful protest against the blind eye and the deaf ear the NBA turns toward

Communist China. After all, Walt Disney was known to be a man who supported traditional American values, and what would be more traditionally American than protesting the sanction of tyranny?

In a press release authored by the two ministers, they said, "It is unconscionable the NBA had training at a facility at Xingjiang — the province where the Chinese authorities brutalized, imprisoned and tortured over 1 million Muslims." Perhaps, to the NBA, Muslim lives do not matter.

For their concern over tyranny and injustice, Mahoney and Keating were issued citations for trespassing and banned from all Disney properties throughout the world for the rest of their natural lives. So, the NBA is not banned for giving sanction to the torture, murder and oppression inflicted on its citizens by the Communist Chinese government, but the two ministers are banned for pointing out that they sanction such barbarity. Perhaps Chinese lives do not matter.

The test of one's convictions is what one is willing to pay to maintain them. No one is truly against injustice if they pretend it doesn't exist for the sake of dollars. The NBA and the Disney Corporation have no moral authority to speak on the issue of injustice.

(Dave Gunn is the nom de plume of Dr. David E. Gonnella, pastor of Magnolia Springs Baptist Church in Theodore. The opinions expressed are his own and do not necessarily reflect those of the church or its membership.)

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To write a letter to the editor, you can mail it to the Call News at 7870 State Street, Citronelle, AL 36522, or email it to editor@thecallnews.com

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