

A Collaboration of Celebration

Fident Friday Family - November, 2020

The Challenge

What is something that you're thankful or grateful for that is unique to the calendar year of 2020?

- Lessons learned
- Opportunities presented
- Obstacles cleared
- Goals achieved
- Habits formed

The following are your answers *[retracted or edited in spots to keep anonymity]*.

Mental Clarity -AD

I feel like I have gained more mental clarity that could only have come about thanks to the amount of “alone” time I have had this year. In an odd way, I’ve had far less alone time (being surrounded by my family) and on another hand, I’ve had more than ever (fewer client meetings).

Definitely thankful for the clarity around what I am seeking to accomplish in the years to come.

Steadfastness of Jesus -RM

I am very thankful that in spite of what is, will and has happen this year, Jesus is always the same, His love, mercy and grace never waver or change and His promise to never leave or forsake us is especially powerful to me over the past *[time period]*.

Extra Time with Kids -PL

[Wife] started homeschooling the kids this year and while it has been hard work (for her, not so much for me, haha) and probably not something she would have pursued without the nudging of Covid, it has been great to see the kids so much more excited about learning.

While it's difficult to appreciate the extra time and experience with the kids while we're busy trying to keep our heads above water, I think it will be something that we'll look back on with incredible gratitude.

Time at Home & Productivity -MH

I am thankful for more time at home, two months of which was forced, but the rest a byproduct of that. This year taught me that I can spend more time at home, that I don't need to be at the office at 8am in order to have a productive day, and that productive doesn't need to mean busy.

A Multi-Facet Approach -CH (1 of 2)

Financially: Thankful that we became serious about setting a financial plan for the future instead of just wishfully hoping we achieve our goals.

Family: We were able to grow our family by one little member this past *[month]*.

Habits Formed: Thanks to the pandemic my wife and I realized how much we depended on media to fill our empty time in the day vs filling it with something that can enrich us. We've removed social media from our phones and we set up limits for how much TV we can watch/stream during the day. We now spend 45mins-1hr reading the Bible and having dialogue about what we read.

A Multi-Facet Approach -CH (2 of 2)

Habit Formed: Personally, the pandemic helped me re-prioritize fitness back in my day. I now get up and go to the gym at least 3-4 times each week before the kids get up because I've realized it's the only way I'll actually workout.

Working from home: This one is definitely a double edged sword, but I've really appreciated my time at home. It's given me time with my kids that I know I wouldn't have had naturally. I've been able to start and finish everyday with them since March and I know going back to the office means I won't be present as much. So for now, I'm enjoying just being present with my family and I hope/think they feel the same way!

Quality Time -JH

For me, it was the added time I got to spend with my wife, and our two good friends who lived with us when we were shut down and all working from home. We made a big brunch most every day and slow-cooked dinners almost every night, often prepared on our Green Egg while we would sit outside and watch it smoke, talking about life and deep things. It was a really special time.

Both have since moved out to houses of their own after having lived with us for several years, and so it was the best way to spend our last months together and made our friendships deepen and richer all because of Covid!

New Opportunities with Kids -BC

Some things I'm thankful for in 2020...

- more time to rest, more time with Jesus, more time at home
 - increased involvement in children's education
- committed to healthy changes, time at home allowed for some healthy habits to be formed
- HS sports streamed online which allowed us to watch most of niece's volleyball season
- \$ saved from less entertainment options open/available, especially during summer months

A Condensed List from Abundance -CH

Ok for my list of gratitude, I'll keep it to like 3-5 things or so...it could go on for hundreds or thousands of lines:

God's grace - whew did we ever need it in abundance this year

"Slowed" time - this year really slowed some things down, especially gatherings/meetings/in-person stuff...I might be in the minority but I really enjoyed the (albeit forced) slowed pace

Supernatural blessings - full on protection from job insecurity, \$ showing up right when we spent it to bless others, etc

Working from home - for me this isn't new but 1-we had to help a lot of people transition to it and 2-I'm just so glad so many got to experience it and it seems to have changed the future look of how work gets done

Perspective with Young Kids -JK

Despite the turmoil of sorting out childcare and education alternatives over the last 11 months, I feel especially thankful this year for all of the extra family/kid time we've had.

As a dad to small kids, I sometimes think that we all have it backwards: we spend our 30s and 40s working hard towards career goals, when in reality it's this time that's most valuable with our children! Perhaps we should all coast through our middle years then work hard when the kids start heading out on their own. =)

2020 has brought with it great challenges, but I suspect my family will look back very fondly on this strange year.

Perspective from Down Under -CD

Before the pandemic, back in December, our family decided to move to *[city]*, Australia (from *[city]*, TX) for my work.

Despite the logistical nightmare and accompanying stress that we experienced while trying to move around the world in the early days of a global pandemic, we've been incredibly thankful to be here. Life is normal (there's been no community transmission in 7 months), there's no fear of getting sick, and the ocean is beautiful.

Family Milestones -RH

Thankful this year for my family - the blessing of being a husband and a father, our home - we were able to move in the year 2020, and another year with my Dad - ever since his *[medical issue]* 2 years ago, I have so much more appreciated my time with him. We did a 3 day motorcycle ride for his 60th birthday that was incredible.

Family Project Completions -JM (1 of 2)

1 - More family time --we spent a lot more time with each other this year. While this of course brought more craziness, it also meant that we got to have more quality time with the kids this year; that 'early years' time that most people give the obligatory advice to "enjoy because it goes so fast".

2- Loose ends buttoned up: the initial covid shutdown in March left me on unemployment for five weeks. During that time, I made a list of nearly 20 to-dos around the house that never quite make the list under normal circumstances. Things like

organizing my shop. Organizing the garage and epoxy'ing the floor. Painting the laundry room. Powerwashing and sealing the driveway.

This list would have been fine being stretched out over the next 5-10 years. Now they're all done. Checked off.

Family Project Completions -JM (2 of 2)

3- Fun projects: similar to #2, but more satisfying and fun:

Built a loft bed for *[son]*. Restored an old dinghy row boat. Built a custom trailer for the dinghy.

Built a new goose blind.

4- Financially fortunate: while I was on unemployment for 5 weeks, I got paid that "minimum salary" thing in addition to my unemployment \$ as well as commission bonuses for work completed

[Wife] got cut back, but was never off payroll.

Both our tenants also worked in health care and never went off payroll either --we never missed a single rent check.

Family Health -JB

In response to your request from Friday, we are SO THANKFUL that God took care of *[family members who]* recently caught Covid-19, so that none of *[family members]* needed to be hospitalized!

And, we are also very thankful that, to our knowledge, God has protected the rest of our family from catching Covid-19! PRAISE THE LORD!

Comprehensive Analysis -BT (1 of 2)

Lessons learned: The need to be fully present and intentional when seemingly everything is fighting against that. For me, March-May was likely the most intense few months in the last decade given the market correction. I want to be fully present in each client engagement but after 8-10 consults/day, I was exhausted. I realize now in a greater way than before, the need for rest and recovery. Was it Carl Richards who said (?), rest is a prerequisite to great work, not a reward. [Jeremy's note: It originated with Dan Sullivan, but Carl does talk about it!]

Opportunities presented: To be part of the Kingdom Advisors monthly study group and *[local financial advisor's]* recent event – What a blessing to be connect with other advisors who are also believers!

Daily lunch & supper with my family. I remember you mentioning that just working from home doesn't necessarily mean quality time but it sure helps! Working from home – A first in my career and hopefully one that remains.

Comprehensive Analysis -BT (2 of 2)

Obstacles cleared & Goals achieved: For me, I think success has partly been just keeping some of my daily/weekly habits in the midst of so many change vs. starting new habits. I'm not anywhere close to being as consistent as I want but I've largely held to working out 3-4 days/wk, nightly family devotions, daily personal devotions, and maintaining & building new relationships.

Habits formed: I came across Notion & August Bradely on Twitter and have adopted his PPV "life operating system" in Notion. It's been a game changer for me. If interested, he has a number of good videos on YouTube. I've found it to be a good amalgamation of GTD, Michael Hyatt, etc. and replaced a number of apps & systems I've tried in the past.

Gratitude is framed by Perspective

This challenge wasn't designed to be Pollyannaish, or an ostrich shoving its head in the ground. There are real challenges out there. Economically, politically, financially, physically. 2020 will go down as a difficult year for most.

But in the midst of it all - there is reason for Celebration. Let's remind ourselves of that, as regularly as we need to.

I'm grateful for each of you.