

The Church's Response to the Coronavirus

Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. -Matt. 11:28

There is quite a panic across our nation and the world regarding COVID-19. I recently watched a news report high-lighting a local business that provides safety equipment for different environmental danger situations—everything from gas masks to complete hazmat suits. Of course, with the Coronavirus approach they were almost sold out of many items. The message was clear, “you better get ready or else!”.

The CDC tells us that the virus will come our way, but that we need to remain calm and make reasonable preparations—extra hand-washing, extra cleaners, stock up a few meds for fever & cough, and avoid international travel.

A more important question is: what should be our response to any illness as people of faith?

- 1. Don't Panic.** One of Jesus most quoted phrases in the New Testament is: “Don't be afraid!” or “Take courage!”. We walk by faith, not by sight and physical crises does not supersede spiritual courage. Take a step back, breathe and pray for God to protect and provide opportunities for ministry in caring of neighbors, friends and co-workers.
- 2. Obey God's command's regarding care for the hurting.** Reasonable risk has always been the expectation for people of faith. Care for the sick is part of the DNA of being a follower of Jesus. He touched the leper, gave sight to the blind, fed the hungry. Many of the hospitals around our world were started by Christians who wanted to provide care—we need to do the same. We don't retreat in crisis; we step up and serve!
- 3. Trust God.** God promises to always be with us—not just in the easy days. Media today is designed to create news just as much or more than to report news. We need to be plugged in to relationships and to Scripture. We share from the overflow, so we need to be full of God's Word.
- 4. Take care of the Temple NOW.** 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 reminds us, “..do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body. Since our physical bodies belong to God, it should motivate us to care for them in honor to Him. Getting enough sleep, eating healthy, regular exercise and avoiding unhealthy habits should matter. This prepares us to face illness

with a stronger immune system to aid in fighting off disease and recovering more quickly when we do become ill.

Psalm 46 reminds us to keep our eyes on our God at all seasons and in every crises and remember that HE IS WITH US...

*God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.*

*Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.*

*There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.*

*God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.*

*Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.*

The Lord Almighty is with us;

-Michael Lum, Minister

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