

With everything that is going on with the Corona virus (COVID-19), I thought it would be appropriate to address what we can do as believers in Jesus Christ, and what we can do as a church.

The Advisory Board of Goshen Baptist Church has been diligent in addressing some concerns that will help us in being pro-active. First of all we will suspend the Greeting during Sunday Morning Services to maintain social distancing as is recommended by the Center for Disease Control. To limit the number of people handling offering plates, the offering plates will no longer be passed across the pews. Ushers will be at each end of the pew making the plates available for giving of tithes and offerings. There is hand sanitizer on each table in the sanctuary, and you are encouraged to take advantage of them. A phone message has been sent to the congregation asking that if you are sick, or if you are concerned about your health safety, do not attend church. We will understand. For the month of April, Communion will be suspended. We have just installed a new sound system and are currently working on an online format for our Sunday service. All weekly Bible Studies, meetings and other activities have been suspended until further notice. Canceling Sunday Morning Services will be the last step, but unfortunately that may happen also. These are a few of the precautions we have taken as a church.

I want you to think about how much this has affected our lives. Our public schools and Universities have been closed. Many people are working from home, or not being able to work at all. Restaurants, bars and movie theaters have been closed. Many businesses have **temporarily closed or reduced their hours of operation. The financial market has dropped to an all time low. Sporting events on the local, state and national level have been cancelled. To say the State of West Virginia and our Nation is in a panic is an understatement. The media has not helped matters by sensationalizing the situation.**

So what can we do and who can we turn to? Paul told us in Philippians 4:6-7, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your request to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." The very first thing we need to do is start praying and stop being anxious. Pray for the leaders of our nation and our state as they make these decisions. Pray that God will grant the wisdom and understanding. Pray for the families that have been affected by this virus. Pray that there might be a cure for this virus. Pray without ceasing. If you feel hopeless, pray.

The next thing we can do is realize who is in control. Paul also wrote in Romans 8:28. "All things work together for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His Purpose." God is not going to allow anything to happen to His children unless it is His purpose or His will. God knew this was going to happen long before the corona virus existed. We as believers need to trust God. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6

I believe the enemy, Satan, has used the corona virus to get people's minds off of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately that can be true of us as Christians if we are not careful. Do not allow Satan to get our eyes off of Jesus, who is in control. Keep your eyes focused on Christ. Do not allow Satan to steal your hope. The song writer wrote, "My hope is in the Lord, who gave Himself for me, and paid the price of all my sin at Calvary. His grace has planned it all. 'Tis mine but to believe, and recognize His work of love and Christ receive." Let us never forget that God is in control and we need to trust Him.

I believe there is one more point that we can do as believers in Christ. Matthew 13:43 says "then the righteous will shine like the sun. " This is a time for us as believers to shine! We can shine because we might not know all the effects of the corona virus, but we know the One who does know. When the world starts to panic and fall apart, we can share the hope of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a great opportunity for us as believers to witness to the lost.

This could be a time when some people who never thought about their vulnerability start coming to church and seek God. They are searching for love and acceptance. Let us at Goshen Baptist Church be prepared to show the Love of Christ to those who are seeking answers. We have the answer in Christ. Let us be prepared to "Let our light so shine before others, that they may see your good deeds, and glorify your Father in Heaven." Matthew 5:16
Let us shine church!

"In times like these - you need a Savior
In times like these - you need an anchor
Be very sure, Be very sure
Your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock.
This rock is Jesus, Yes He's the one
This Rock is Jesus, the only One

I'm very sure, I'm very sure
My anchor holds, and grips the Solid Rock.”

Pastor Dan Meadows
Goshen Baptist Church