

3-15-2020
A BIBLICAL RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS
by Pastor Frank Bissol

Intro: There has been much attention given to the outbreak of the coronavirus. In fact it seems that the news stations have been covering the issue non stop for about a week. This has led to a mad rush on the stores for items that people fear they will need in case they are quarantined in their homes. You cannot buy Lysol, toilet paper, and many other items in the stores. In fact, I had to buy Lysol on eBay for the church.

I think that we all need to try and stay healthy to the best of our ability. God gave the Jews dietary laws to protect their health. Also, the Bible itself mentions the need for people being quarantined when they show signs of certain sickness:

In Leviticus 15:1-14 the Lord talks about washing and separating from an individual with a uncleanness or issue.

Lev. 13:45 A leper was to be quarantined from others.

Lev. 14:34-44 A house can be quarantined because of a leprosy in the house.

Now you will notice there are only two things that the Lord gives to help thwart away spreading of sicknesses, which is labeled an uncleanness. Those two things are: being separated, and washing.

So all you can do is avoid being around others who are sick and washing your hands often.

Let me share a few things about what the Bible says about sickness and disease. I believe every sickness and disease that afflicts mankind has entered this world because of the uncleanness of sin.

The wages of sin is death, Rom. 3:23. So as sin abounds, so sickness abounds. Now the liberals and progressives of this World boo-hoo that. In fact, we have certain political candidates saying stupid things like:

We choose science over fiction," Biden said. Fiction I assume is the Bible?

Then he went on to say, "We choose truth over facts." God confounded his criticism of God's Word.

When someone says they believe in Climate change, or evolution, in the very use of the word believe, they are admitting that the science of these teachings is faulted with fake scientific facts. There may be an observable rise in global temperature over the past

100 years, but is this man made? This is yet to be proven. We give man too much credit and God too little.

We don't have to believe in the law of gravity, we can see and observe it. True science cannot and will not contradict God, who created the laws of nature and science. $2+2 = 4$ because God said so. When He fed the multitudes He made the two fishes and seven loaves feed thousands (see Matt. 15:34).

True science just observes facts and natural phenomena, and comes up with conclusions, theories and laws. However, when someone says they believe in science they mean they believe in the scientists. Scientists are just men, who may sometimes know more than you, but they do not know everything. We can pray our scientific community comes up with a treatment for the Coronavirus, but my faith is in the Lord, and I do pray for our leaders to do their best.

There are some scientists that think faith and science are diametrically opposed. This is nonsense.

I quote a recent article I read:

At a recent scientific conference in New York City, a student asked one of the scientists participating in a panel discussion on science and religion a provocative question. "Can you be a good scientist and also believe in God?" The scientist, a Nobel laureate, quickly responded: "Belief in the supernatural, especially belief in God, is not only incompatible with good science, this kind of belief is damaging to the well-being of the human race!"

Freud who through his faulty ideas damaged a whole generation of families and parenting once said:

Freud responded to the question of the existence of God with a resounding "No!" He felt that all beliefs in God and heaven were projections of childish and infantile wishes for the protection and authority provided in infancy by parents. The fulfillment of these childish wishes resulted in a fantasy of a God and heaven and life after death. For Freud, the very idea of an idealized "Superman" in the sky was "so patently infantile and so foreign to reality that it is painful to think that the majority of mortals will never rise above this view of life."

Now what is the Christian's stand concerning trusting in man's ability to come up with a solution for the Coronavirus?

I believe we should do what Hezekiah did when he was faced with a crisis in his nation. Hezekiah used the knowledge and scientists of his day to prepare the best he could for an impending emergency. He realized that the king of Assyria was going to be coming up against him, and he engineered an ancient engineering marvel in his day. He dug a tunnel to divert water into Jerusalem and away from the armies of the Syrians. The two

crews dug a tunnel towards each other and met at the right spot. He fortified the walls, but in the end none of that could have protected Him. In the end he fell on his knees to God, and prayed to God for protection.

I applaud our president, he has gathered together the best minds of the medical field to try and come up with solutions and he declared a state of emergency to release funds to purchase test kits, but he ultimately declared today a day of prayer for this crisis. You do what you can do, and trust God to do what no man can do. God's part is more important than all that you can do.

Let me share what you can do. Limit your contact with large crowds. One of the reasons I have not canceled church services is because we don't necessarily have large crowds in our church. Ratio of square feet to people in the room is probably as good as any grocery store that you go into to get food. Will you go to the grocery store and skip church? But I will not condemn anyone who for health reasons, or for concerns, feels they need to stay home. I have never done that before the coronavirus and I will not do it now. My policy is that if you can safely get here, come, if you can't come I will not condemn you. You will stand before God, not me. I am here to help you, not hurt you in any way. I think we need to exercise caution with hand shaking and getting too close to one another. We need to wash our hands often. We may have to cancel some fellowships and dinners where we share food, I am not sure about that yet. We will have to see how it goes. I don't know, as this thing progresses we will see what the Lord has.

Let me share what you need to stay healthy, but always realize ultimately it is the Lord that is in control, not you.

There are three things that you cannot live without.

You need Air to breathe.	3-4 Minutes without air and you're dead.
You need water to drink.	3-4 days without water and you can be dead.
Your need food to eat.	30-40 days without food and you're dead.

So the best way to stay healthy is clean fresh air to breathe.

Clean fresh water to drink.

Healthy food to eat.

- 1. Concerning air: My wife got the flu one year because she was dusting off our kiosk in the mall. She got the flu from the dust that came off the top of the kiosk. We think she got the swine flu. Clean fresh air is key, be careful of the air you breathe.**
- 2. Clean water, drink a lot of clean water. It is said that the coronavirus will lodge in your mouth and then go into the lungs. When you drink water you flush the virus into your stomach and the acid in your stomach will kill the Germ. Most people are dehydrated, you should drink 1/2 your body weight**

in water ounces every day. I tried to drink 3-5 glasses of water early every morning. Doing so is like changing the oil in your car, it is good maintenance.

- 3. Good foods: Truth is that fresh vegetables, fruits, and nuts are the healthiest foods for you. A lot of the processed foods today are killing us. There is a saying, the whiter the bread the quicker the dead. We have to limit our Carbs because of our health. My wife and I have stopped eating bread and when we go through Sam's club bakery, the scent is like arsenic to us. Remember, God gave a fruit in the midst of the garden called the tree of life. Whatever was in that tree could heal us of the coronavirus. Too bad we don't have it today. Fruits and vegetables may not be that tree, but maybe they are a reflection of that tree in a small way. Each of us may need certain vitamins to help supplement for the loss of vitamins that our foods lack. You should seek the mind of the Lord for supplements that will enhance your immune system. Vitamin C, E, D and other supplements can help boost your immune system.***

Now as Christians I want to address what our response should be to this virus. Statistics show that there are people that are going to get sick and die from this virus. We pray not, but maybe even some of us or our loved ones may be affected. I don't think that we should take this lightly, but as Christians we should be able to trust in the Lord and lean on Him through this crisis.

I think the best thing that the authorities have done for this crisis is what our president has done when he declared today as a day of prayer for our nation in this time of crisis. Will we trust in men for deliverance?

Psalms 20:7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

Psalms 118:8 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.

Someone recently said to me, the whole world is in turmoil over a little virus, and all the scientists are baffled about how to deal with this. Yet we are supposed to believe they know what they are talking about when it comes to global warming and climate change. Again, man's attempts at solving the problem may be worse than the problem itself.

Let us look at some biblical verses in response to our Christian response to times of crisis.

I. WHAT IS THE WORST THAT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU?

Truth is that the worst that could happen to you, is that you get sick and die. But the truth is that even before the news came that there was a virus being spread, there was

always the possibility that you could get sick or get in an accident and die from something else.

The Bible says,

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

Ecclesiastes 8:8 There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

Just yesterday I was talking to a man who told me that a relative of his just dropped over and died of a massive heart attack. That man was only a few years older than me. In other words, it is possible that we could just fall over and die, which has nothing to do with the coronavirus.

Another mentioned in a prayer meeting to pray for a family that was just driving down the road and a water truck hit them head on. Most of the family died.

Nearly 1.25 million people die in road crashes around the world each year, on average 3,287 deaths a day. An additional 20-50 million are injured or disabled. More than half of all road traffic deaths occur among young adults ages 15-44.

In the US, for 2016 specifically, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) data shows 37,461 people were killed in vehicle crashes, an average of 102 per day.

In 2010, there were an estimated 5,419,000 crashes, killing 32,999, and injuring 2,239,000. A little under 1% killed, and about a 50% chance of being injured.

Now in light of that, death is a reality, so the important thing is that we prepare for death, and make sure we know the Lord. We need to make sure we have accepted Christ as our Lord and Savior and we are in right relationship with Him.

Jesus said,

Matthew 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

You would think people would be more fearful of eternal death than physical death, but they are not!

Remember that the Bible says we should also fear the judgment seat of Christ,

II Corinthians 5:11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

This verse is not talking about hell but about the Bema seat judgment where we are judged according to our good works. As Christians we should be concerned about that!

Remember what the Lord says is in store for those who love God.

I Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

As true born again Christians, we should not have the same view of death that the world has. We should not be foolish and reckless but at the same time we need to remember God is the one that establishes all things.

Rather than having a fear of death we should have a greater fear of dying and standing before the Lord empty handed and without proper fruit.

II Corinthians 5:11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

II. IN TIMES OF CRISIS, WE AS CHRISTIANS SHOULD SHOW OURSELVES MORE NOBLE THAN THE WORLD.

1. This crisis presents a great opportunity for you to manifest Christ to a lost world.

A. OPPORTUNITIES TO WITNESS MAY ABOUND.

I Peter 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

Recently Brother Ken told me that as he was shopping in a grocery store he saw a lady that seemed bewildered about the fact that a lot of things she was looking for were out of stock. Just then Ken said to her, there is a short supply of toilet paper. I noticed there is one box left maybe you better buy it. She looked over and thanked him. Then Ken gave the lady one of our Smiley Tracts. He said, she just stood in the middle of the aisle reading it. If it were not for the crisis, I doubt she would have even been interested to read the tract.

B. Paul was a great example of manifesting Christian virtue and leadership in a time of crisis:

Paul warned the ship's captain and Centurion to not set sail.

Acts 27:9 Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,

Acts 27:10 And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.

Acts 27:11 Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul.

After this Paul and the ship were overcome by a storm.

Acts 27:20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

Acts 27:21 But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.

Acts 27:22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.

Acts 27:23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

Acts 27:24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

Acts 27:25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

Acts 27:29 Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

Acts 27:30 And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship,

Acts 27:31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.

Acts 27:32 Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

Acts 27:33 And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing.

Acts 27:34 Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you.

Acts 27:35 And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat.

Acts 27:36 Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat.

Acts 27:37 And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls.

Acts 27:38 And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

Acts 27:39 And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship.

Acts 27:40 And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore.

Acts 27:41 And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.

Acts 27:42 And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape.

Acts 27:43 But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land:

Acts 27:44 And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.

Acts 28:1 And when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita.

Here we see Paul the Apostle showing himself an example to all those around him. By the grace of God in times of crisis we should rise above the crisis,

What I see happening in our country today is similar to a stampede of wild animals.

Again I am reminded of this verse:

Ecclesiastes 8:8 There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; **neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.**

What wickedness people will resort to if they think their life is in danger. We teach people they are nothing more than animals in our schools and we wonder why they act like animals?

We as Christians need to manifest the wisdom of God and power of God in times like this. We need to represent God to a world that does not know God.

2. IN TIMES OF CRISIS WE SHOULD MANIFEST THE LOVE OF CHRIST TO THE WORLD!

John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Who can argue against the virtue of godly love?

Remember this, there is only one reason that the Lord has left us in this world and that is to be a witness for Him.

Acts 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

Acts 1:7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 1:9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

This was the last thing the Lord said to His disciples before He was taken up. The heartbeat of God is His desire to see lost people come into the Kingdom.

Think about this, Jesus, who was rich and secure, co-equal with God Himself, took on flesh and became a man to procure our salvation.

Isaiah 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Matthew 8:14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

Matthew 8:15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

Matthew 8:16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:

Matthew 8:17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

He bare our sicknesses. Meditate on that!

How did He do that? He died on the cross for our sins. Is it just a coincidence that the Lord allows this plague around the time of the Passover? Such a little thing it is a tiny little virus, that disrupts everything. Yet according to the Bible, Jesus took upon Himself our sicknesses.

Now the truth is that if Jesus were bodily present He could wipe away this virus. And someday He will do just that when He returns to earth to set up His kingdom on earth. Remember He said, we should be praying "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.." Obviously, you do not pray for something that is happening. This sickness is not God's doing, His will is not being done on earth. The sicknesses

and the diseases of this world are all diabolical in design and in their workings. Jesus when He comes down to earth will destroy all the works of the devil.

We look to science to heal.
We look to science for answers.
We look to the doctors for solutions.
Right now they have no answers.

I called a doctor friend about this virus and he said we have no answers. The only thing that can say is wash and separate from others who you may think have it. The Bible that was written thousands of years before we even knew there were such a thing as germs says wash and separate from those who have it.

Granted, the medical community has made much advancement, but if the medical industry knew so much why are people still dying?

Jesus promises a resurrected body to all those who believe on Him and serve Him. This is God's ultimate solution to man's sicknesses.

We have an opportunity to share His message to all who need it.

Think about this, missionaries for years have left the comforts of home to travel to far away lands to bring the good news of the salvation of Jesus Christ to a lost world. Many have died doing so.

The word witness in Acts 1:8 is the Greek word,

G3144 *martus*, mar'-toos; of uncert. affin.; a witness (lit. judicially or fig. gen.); by anal. a "martyr":-martyr, record, witness.

Translated:
martyr martyrs record witness witnesses.

In Acts 1:8 Witnesses, in Acts 22:20 Martyr, in Rev. 2:13 Martyr.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

ACS 22:20 And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

REV 2:13 {I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat

is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.}

III. WHAT IS THE APPLICATION TO US IN LIGHT OF THIS PRESENT DAY CRISIS?

I do not think that we should be irresponsible in light of this present day crisis. God would have us to do what we can to keep ourselves and our families safe. We should wash often, we should avoid weakening our immune systems in case we do get sick. Yet the fact is, which of us do not contract a cold in the process of everyday life? Is it possible during the allergy season for some of us not to sneeze or get a runny nose? The truth is that the canceling of public events is not so much for the welfare of people as much as it is of keeping the spread of the virus, from spreading rapidly and over taxing our medical people.

Consider what the world is saying about all this:

Here is a quote from the director of the world health organization:

"The danger is that if you do not try and stop this, it can overwhelm your health system," Michael Ryan, executive director of WHO's Health Emergencies Programme, said in a press conference on March 11th. "There have to be very strong efforts made to suppress infection, to push the infection back."

Here are some other significant statements made recently:

"There still may be high numbers of cases - and even deaths - in places that put early social distancing policies in place during an epidemic. Crucially, though, those cases are spread out over a longer period of time. Epidemiologists refer to it as flattening the curve. That prevents a sudden surge in the number of sick people, which can quickly overwhelm hospitals and the health care system. A flattened curve means there aren't as many people sick at once, so they can be cared for and discharged. The outbreak may go on for longer, but the impacts wouldn't be as severe."

"Applying social distancing measures to the extent the system allows, though, is the best defense against the spread of the novel coronavirus, particularly without vaccines or treatments available. The goal isn't to eliminate the disease entirely, but to keep cases from appearing all at once. During a pandemic, that can mean the difference between a severe outbreak and one that's more manageable."

The problem we have with all this is that we can enter into a state of germ-phobia:

Someone else writes:

Reducing the chances of your exposure to the coronavirus is perfectly doable. Reducing it to absolute zero is pretty much impossible. You could drive yourself up the wall trying to track the spot on your shirt that brushed against your coat sleeve that had brushed up against a subway pole, but you rapidly reach a point of diminishing returns.

Now here is the crux of the matter:

Another person writes:

This suggests that anyone in a position of power or authority, instead of downplaying the dangers of the coronavirus, should ask people to stay away from public places, cancel big gatherings, and restrict most forms of nonessential travel.

Now this is what the worldly experts are saying about all this:

Now what do we need to consider from God's perspective?

1. WE NEED TO BELIEVE GOD IS IN CONTROL. NO MAN, NOR CAN MAN CONTROL ANYTHING: This is the opposite of humanism.

In the Old Testament the Bible does have laws concerning health issues:

If God says, gather, we are safer gathering, if God says, separate we should separate. The Lord is clear, if you show symptoms of sickness you should separate yourself from the assembly, if you come in contact with people that are sick you should maintain a certain time of separation and wash yourself.

God's people were commanded to maintain standards like this by faith, never having known there were viruses or germs.

So the Scripture is clear, unlike the world. We as Christians should walk in faith.

The Bible also teaches that the most important aspect of the church is assembling together for prayer, admonition, and encouragement.

My policy has always been to not police a person's attendance at church. The church is a place of spiritual help, learning and encouragement and prayer. These benefits should be apparent to those who attend.

We should be careful that when we gather together in the church it is always for the better and not for the worse as the apostle Paul states:

I Corinthians 11:17 Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

2. We also should consider that we should not be tempting God by neglecting our responsibilities for due diligence in protecting ourselves and others when known threats are made known to us.

Remember the devil took Jesus to a high pinnacle and quoted Scripture out of context and said jump off the pinnacle for the Bible says,

Luke 4:10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:

Luke 4:11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Luke 4:12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

I am also reminded of the warning that the Lord gave Josiah about not going to battle with Pharaoh Necho, which warning he did not heed.

II Chronicles 35:22 Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo.

II Chronicles 35:23 And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded.

The Scripture implies that God allowed an unsaved man to warn Josiah and he did not heed the warning.

I am going to ask every man to be in prayer about this matter so we can get the mind of the Lord concerning this.

Now in light of the present crisis we need to be careful we do not give an opportunity for the enemies of the Lord to criticize and malign the church of God. The opinion of the world is this:

"This suggests that anyone in a position of power or authority, instead of downplaying the dangers of the coronavirus, should ask people to stay away from public places, cancel big gatherings, and restrict most forms of nonessential travel."

We need to prayerfully consider what our reaction is to this statement, and the need to obey the Lord, while being careful for the public safety and welfare of God's people. Remember this the command is not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. That assembling together is to be determined by the church itself. It is our divine responsibility to not forsake it.

Therefore I am going to ask you to pray about what the Lord would have us to do about our scheduled assembly times and I would like to meet with the men of the church tonight at 7:00 P.M. to discuss what the Lord would have us to do about this matter.

Today has been wisely declared to be a national day of prayer by our president. He has asked us to pray so that is what we are going to do. We need to pray about our responsibility in this matter. I am going to ask that all the men of the church please come to this meeting and to be in prayer about our church schedule. Also I would like to close our service this morning with an extended time of prayer.

May God give us wisdom as we seek to respond in a biblical fashion and not go beyond the Word of God or not go below it either.

God bless you all and let us pray together this morning....