



## ADULT MINISTRY RESOURCE

**Times of crisis** can tend to reveal where our desires, hopes, trust and values lie. "Normal life" can have a tendency to lull us to sleep as we navigate the hustle and bustle of busyness. But in times of crisis, we are forced to slow down and consider what's truly important, especially what is eternally important.

In order to help our Body steward this massive opportunity, here as some ways we can be proactive in honoring God, helping each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, and being salt and light to a potentially fearful or flippant world.

### 1. Draw Nearer to God Personally

Though the government may be calling for "social distancing" and even our own gatherings for a time may be affected, God calls us all to "draw near" to him always.

The promise of James 4:8 is, *"Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded."*

Just as we have been told incessantly to "wash your hands," there is a spiritual washing of our hands that can take place as we come to God, especially asking for forgiveness of our sins. By God's grace and through the gift of faith we receive to trust in Jesus for salvation from our sins, we can be "cleansed from all unrighteousness" as we "confess our sins."

*What would happen if every time you washed your physical hands or grabbed hand sanitizer, you took the opportunity to confess your sins to God, receive his forgiveness in Christ, and gave thanks for God's promise to draw near to us in his Son?*

### 2. Draw Nearer to God with Our Family

At least for the time being, it looks like we all may be in for increased family-time, whether we want it or not. For some, this may not be the most exciting consequence of COVID-19, but it can be an opportunity for families to gather together to draw near to God together.

Some have called it "Family Worship" or "Family Devotions," and these titles alone can cause some to feel unprepared and ill equipped to even know what

to do with such a thing. But leading your family through a time of focused attention on God, his word, the Gospel, and calling for a response of worship need not be something impossible or reserved only for vocational ministers or pastors.

Consider giving this brief model a try:

1. Gather the family at an appointed time.
2. Sing/Recite the Doxology together. If you don't know how to sing it, read it and have your family repeat it a line at a time. Eventually, you may want to try and sing it. If it's best to delegate the singing leadership to someone particularly gifted in that area, that's fine. If no one feels particularly equipped to sing, don't worry about how you sound, SING AWAY! God hears our hearts more than he cares about the quality of our voices.
3. Read a short passage of Scripture. Consider a psalm like Psalm 1, Psalm 46, or Psalm 117. Ask questions about the psalm like, *"Who is the main subject in this text? What does the text teach us about God and his greatness? What does the text teach us about ourselves? What does this text teach us about our need for the Gospel? With God's help, how can I apply these truths to my life today?"*
4. Ask for particular prayer requests and pray for those especially affected by the COVID-19 crisis. You can ask if anyone wants to pray individually or you can lead out as others pray silently.
5. Always be open to the leading of the Lord as this may be a time where children may have questions about what's going on. Speaking God's truth into life situations is something we should be doing all the time, but especially in times of crisis. Allow the Lord to use you to bring comfort, hope, and peace through speaking the promises of God to anxious hearts.

By following this simple guide, we can show our family that God is still sovereign over all things and we can always go to His word to find help in our time of need and to do so with each other.

### 3. Look for Opportunities to Serve the Body and Others in our Circle of Relationships

During these extraordinary times, it can be tempting to circle the wagons and think exclusively about ourselves and our own needs. But the Body of Christ is not a collection of individuals who care only about themselves. In fact, Paul says this is not the way of Christ at all.

He writes this to the church in Philippi,

*"So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any*

*comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."*

(Philippians 2:1–4 ESV)

In the Body of Christ, we are all members of each other. Though separated by distance at times, we cannot be separated in Christ. So, how can we show that encouragement, comfort from love, affection and sympathy in times of crisis?

One of the easiest and best ways we can do this in a season of "social distancing" is to check on each other with a phone call, text, or email. We have the technological means to stay connected with each other if we desire and choose to do so. It may be that some of our members are particularly worried about the impact COVID-19 may have on them or a loved one at high-risk for contracting the virus.

This is a great opportunity to serve each other in bearing one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ in encouraging each other to trust in God through Christ for our very life and breath and everything.

Consider using the following as a guide to call someone to see how they are doing:

- 1) Call, text, or email your circle to see how they are doing.
- 2) Ask them if they have any particular needs either due to the crisis or things not necessarily related.
- 3) Ask if they would let you help them meet this need.
- 4) Do your best to meet the need or work with others to meet the need.
- 5) If you and others cannot meet this need, contact the church leadership for more support and counsel.
- 6) Pray with the person over the phone and encourage them with God's promises like, "*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble.*" Psalm 46:1 There are multitudes of verses we can use to encourage both ourselves and others.
- 7) Make it a regular habit to check on and care for those in your circle and look to include others who may not have such a circle of care.

Seasons of uncertainty can tempt us to think the world is in perpetual chaos and everything is out of control. But this is not the picture we see of God in his Word. God is on his throne, ruling and reigning in Christ. Therefore, we can confidently say,

*"The LORD is my light and my salvation;  
whom shall I fear?  
The LORD is the stronghold of my life;  
of whom shall I be afraid?"*

Psalm 27:1 ESV

In Christ we have no need to fear because God has in Christ saved us from our sins. COVID-19 may threaten our physical health for a season and for some, may even cause death. But not even death is able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. We need to remember that in these trying times and help each other by drawing even more near to God than every before, drawing near to Him with our immediate families, and to reach out to those in the Body of Christ who need our help and encouragement.

COVID-19 is no crisis to God. It is an opportunity to draw near, together, and to serve. Let's do it!