

"The Church And The Coronavirus"

Contributed by Andy Grossman on Mar 21, 2020

Scripture: Psalms 91:1-7

Denomination: Holiness

Summary: What the Christian should do and believe in response to the Coronavirus Plague

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March 22, 2020

Psalm 91:1-7

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday. A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you."

My granddaughter, Cassidy posted that seventh verse on Facebook last week. I felt so proud of her. While most people are giving into fear and panic – she puts things into the true perspective. Place your faith in God and you have nothing to fear. If you are living in that love relationship with the Most High, He will protect you. Thousands may fall – ten thousand may fall at your right hand -but God promises that it will not come near you. It's your choice – faith or fear.

I choose faith. Do you remember the definition of faith? It is built on hope. (Hebrews 11:1) "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

Hope is the trusting expectation that God will keep His Word. Faith is believing that word, trusting God and then acting on that. I think what that means in the midst of what we are going through right now is to believe three things and then respond. What we need

to believe is, 1. God is aware; 2. God cares; and 3. God protects. Then, fourthly, we need to respond to that belief.

First of all, 1. God is Aware. Do you think this pandemic caught God by surprise? I don't! I think He was aware of it before it was hatched up by men in so secret laboratory in China – if indeed that is what happened. Some say it was a biological weapon gone wrong. I don't know if that is true or not – but I know this: God was aware before that virus was created and He was aware of the antidote before it was needed. I have been reading that Israel has discovered a cure for it. I read where China and South Korea have used an old-fashioned anti-malarial drug, Chloroquine phosphate, to not only successfully treat it but to prevent coronavirus, too.

I predict in a matter of weeks, if not days, this pandemic will be over – eliminated or at least controlled. Does that mean we should not take this plague seriously? No. We should wash our hands often as prescribed. We should keep our distances from each other – especially around strangers. We should isolate or quarantine ourselves if we feel sick. Those are just good common sense measures. But there is no need to give into fear, terror or panic. God has got this. He has our back. This plague may get worse. A thousand may fall to the right and ten thousand to our right – but we need not fear. We can put our trust in God. Read that promise with me again.

“Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”

Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday. A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.”

Psalm 91:1-7

God is aware. This did not catch Him by surprise. David wrote about pestilence and plague thousands of years ago to encourage and comfort us. God is in control. And you know what? God will somehow use this for good. In my devotions this week I once again was reminded of how God can take something bad and use it for good. Romans 8:28 (one of the first Scriptures I memorized) says,

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

That tells me, also, that 2. God cares. People are panicking and acting like God doesn't care. I expect that from the world but not from Christians. God has not forgotten or forsaken you. Peter wrote,

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7

God, Himself, says, "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."
Deuteronomy 31:6

"God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

Hebrews 13:5

God has not forgotten us. God has not forsaken us. Many people are acting that way; they are living that way. But He has not. God cares for you. As a loving father or mother looks at his child in love – so does God look at you and me. Now that I am officially an old man, I can tell you that I have never seen God's child forsaken, forgotten or neglected. With David I can say,

"I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread." Psalm 37:25

I have experienced so many wonderful answers to prayer through the years; I have seen and experienced the miraculous time and again. It tells me that God cares. He cares for me and He cares for you. The Scripture says,

"As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children – with those who keep his covenant

and remember to obey his precepts." Psalm 103:14-18

Do not doubt that God cares for you. In times of plague or plenty; in times of pestilence or prosperity, God cares for you.

Since God loves you as He does 3. God will protect you. Let's visit our Scripture one more time.

“Surely he will save you from the fowler’s snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday. A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.”

Psalm 91:3-7

The Children of Israel rebelled against God. And God sent a plague of snakes to entice them to turn from their rebellion. Read it with me.

“They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!”

Then the Lord sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you. Pray that the Lord will take the snakes away from us.” So Moses prayed for the people.

The Lord said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.” Numbers 10:4-9

There are a number of things that strike me about this story. One is that it was actually an act of love from God to turn the people to Him; secondly, God used the plague for good; thirdly, God had Moses make an idol of a despised snake to be their salvation – as He did with the horrid cross of the Romans. Fourth, the source of their salvation would eventually become an idol to them. People worshiped the snake on the pole instead of their Savior, and lastly, all the people had to do to be saved from death was to look up at that snake on a pole. They continued to be bitten (because of their sin) but they wouldn’t die if they just looked at God’s source of salvation. Today we see that snake on a pole all the time. Where? At the doctor’s office. It is a symbol of healing. What was meant to hurt became a symbol of healing. Army Medic symbol. Lapel pin.

God will protect you, as He did these people, if you look to Him for help and healing and hope. God is aware of what you are going through; God cares what you are going through; and God will protect you as well.

So what is our response to be? 4. Trust God. Believe Him. Trust Him. Place your faith in Him. This coronavirus plague is an opportunity for growth and spiritual maturing. We are so blessed. We have lived most (if not all) of our lives in comfort and prosperity. We live in a land of plenty. Now the whole world is shaken by this pandemic or plague or pestilence – whatever you want to call it or label it. Will you react in fear – or faith. Again, I'm not saying to take this lightly or foolishly. Don't be like that professional basketball player who, when instructed not to touch things needlessly, did exactly that as a joke. He touched the microphones and podium and a number of other things to show he was not afraid. In the next day or two he was diagnosed with the virus. He was very humble after that. Don't do that. I don't think we need to live in fear – but be cautious. Be wise. Follow those good guidelines. But remember – 1. God is Aware; 2. God Cares; 3. God Protects, 4. Trust Him.