

How To Be In Control When Everything Is Out Of Control

Contributed by Howard Gwartney on Mar 16, 2020

Scripture: Philippians 4:6

Denomination: Baptist

Summary: Our country is on edge regarding the stock market, politics and the COVID-19 virus. As believers, the LAST thing we should do it PANIC and the first thing is to PRAY!

HOW TO BE IN CONTROL WHEN

EVERYTHING IS OUT OF CONTROL

Philippians 4:6

Philippians 4:6 (NKJV) Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

INTRO. Wow! What an important verse for us today! I saw someone posted this picture on NeXT Door Friday. John Candy Pic. "Sorry folks, the world is closed!"

Yesterday, Patsy and Pat went to Walmart and Sam's Club. Less than half a mile away at Costco the police were called to break up a fight inside the store. Our country is on edge regarding the stock market, politics and the COVID-19 virus.

As believers, the LAST thing we should do it PANIC and the first thing is to PRAY!

This is not the first time the world has been faced with a pandemic. Illness and disease have always been a part of our human existence. Tragedies and catastrophic things have happened since the beginning of time.

In 1918, the Spanish Flu killed an estimated 50 million people. That was 100 years ago – not long ago, when you think about the record of human history. But there have been some scary times in my lifetime. There was an outbreak of the same flu virus in 2009, which killed an estimated 200,000 people.

How many of you remember Y2K...in the year 2000 all the computers were going to crash and take over the world? How many of you remember the H1N1 virus, the swine flu, the Asian flu, the bird flu, Ebola, etc.

Most of us like to be in control! We don't want to panic. But often it seems like things get out of control, don't they?

1. THINGS OUT OF OUR CONTROL

A. Our Crises

From time to time we find ourselves in the middle of a crisis. At least we think it's a crisis. Whatever it is that happens, we have NO CONTROL over it.

B. Our Country

Hey, folks, it's not China's fault that people all over the world have contracted the Corona Virus! Even if it was their fault! What can we do about? Nothing! By the way, contrary to the left's view, the Coronavirus is not President Trump's fault, the House nor the Senate's fault, or Nancy Pelosi's fault!

By the way, some of you ladies found out Friday at the Bible study that Pastor Mark Thomas in Pueblo West, CO has been forced out of the school he has been meeting in for the last several years because the school districts in the area are not permitting any gatherings to take place in their buildings because of COVID-19.

I'm happy to report to you that, after you prayed, Pastor Mark got the keys to a facility that will easily seat 200 and have made an offer on a piece of property with a new building already on it! PTL!

C. Our Citizens

We can't control what the citizens of our neighborhoods. Do you get NeXT Door things in your neighbor? It is amazing the things that people rant about online. Some kids have been throwing eggs in the neighborhood, some people complain about people riding their motorcycles or dirt bikes out in the open fields, kids have been destructive to the playground equipment. Not long ago some child started a fire and burned the playground nearest our house to the ground. The HOA board is not doing its job!

Now, personally, I think people should be held responsible for their actions and attitudes. But the truth is, we can't control them.

D. Our Critics

If there's anyone who knows anything about criticism it's parents, politicians and pastors! And not necessarily in that order! People are so quick to criticize everything we do, every decision we make, every direction we go.

E. Our Circumstances

Have you ever asked anyone how they're doing, and they respond, "I'm doing okay, under the circumstances!" I always want to say, "Well, what are you doin' under there?" Hey, there are things simply out of our control. You can't control the weather:

Whether the weather be cold, or whether the weather be hot

Whether the weather is good, or whether the weather is not

Whatever the weather, we'll weather the weather,

Whether we like it or not! Vance Havner

You can't control your circumstances at your work. And you can't control women!

2. THINGS WE CAN CONTROL

All too often we get distracted by the things we can't control that we lose focus on the things we can control. The external conditions of the world keep us from being consistent in our walk with the Lord and our prayer life and Bible study!

A. Our Thoughts

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.

How many you are like me and are guilty of "stinkin' thinkin'?" How many of you are like me and get a bad attitude sometimes?

2 Corinthians 10:4 (NKJV) 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

We can get to thinking that we're smarter and classier and sharper than any other of the people we're around. Let me remind you that the God's Word says:

Galatians 6:3 (NKJV) For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

B. Our Temper

2 Timothy 3:1 (NKJV) But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

Galatians 5:22 (NKJV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

C. Our Tongues

Often the combination of our thoughts, and our tempers can lead our tongues to say things we shouldn't say. How many of you have ever put your foot in your mouth?

ILLUST. I was riding in a van with several preachers years ago. You know how a lot of preachers like to talk and laugh and have a good time. Well, that's what we were doing on this van. I spoke up and said to the guy next to me, "Hey, have you seen Bro. _____ lately? He's got him some new hair...at least it'll be his in 3 or 4 more payments!" I started laughing and then I realized the preacher I said that to was wearing a toupee! I felt like such an idiot!

Someone said, "It is better to be silent and be thought a fool than to speak and remove all doubt." Several people are attributed to have made that statement, including Mark Twain and Abraham Lincoln. But we do need to control our tongues. And, no, I'm not forgetting that James 3:8 says that "no man can tame the tongue." However, I think this verse in Proverbs helps us understand the point:

Proverbs 17:28 (NKJV) Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; When he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive.

D. Our Turmoil

Job 20:2 (NKJV) "Therefore my anxious thoughts make me answer, Because of the turmoil within me.

Job 30:27 (NKJV) My heart is in turmoil and cannot rest; Days of affliction confront me.

Psalm 38:8 (NKJV) I am feeble and severely broken; I groan because of the turmoil of my heart.

E. Our Terror

Psalm 27:3 (NKJV) Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, In this I will be confident.

Psalm 56:4 (NKJV) In God (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?

Psalm 118:6 (NKJV) The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?

F. Our Time

Ephesians 5:16 (NKJV) redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Romans 13:11 (NKJV) And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

G. Our Treasure

Matthew 6:21 (NKJV) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

There ARE things we can control, as believers, with this one caveat: we can only control these things with the power of the Holy Spirit active in our lives.

3. THINGS ONLY JESUS CAN CONTROL

Proverbs 21:1 (NKJV) The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.

He controls everything! He controls the weather, the seasons, the sun, moon and stars.

John 1:1 (NKJV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Let me encourage you think about 3 things:

1) Remembering that TROUBLE is a part of this sin-cursed world, BUT Jesus Christ has overcome the world. Our biggest problem, SIN, has been cured by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus! Because of the cross and we can have a heart of thanksgiving in all things. By the way, God can help us to be His hands and feet to people who are in trouble, we can help them!

2) Regard the TRUTH and not the media hype. The world is not ending because of this virus. It is a serious condition, especially for those of us who are older. Hopefully, we can get it under control we will forget about it in time.

3) Repent of TREPIDATION. If you have been panicky over these things, let me remind you our text. Repent of your trepidation, fright, anxiety, fear, worry, alarm, concern, torment, etc.

Dread, distress, disease and even death may come. Repent and remember God's promises and RUN to Master. Jesus is in control. He's still on His throne!

As a teenager, I remember hearing this little chorus. Perhaps you know it too.

Every promise in the book is mine,

Every chapter, every verse, every line,

All the blessings of His love divine,

Every promise in the book is mine.

Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV) Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."