

Overcoming Fear in the Midst of the Corona Virus

Dear Friend,

As the coronavirus takes over the daily news it is easy for us to be gripped by fear. Practicing social distancing and other methods of preventing the spread of the virus must take place, but it doesn't have to be done in a spirit of fear. Such fear will immobilize us from being God's instruments of hope and healing in this time of crisis.

If we are going to stop this disease from destroying our community and our lives, we must ask God to root out the cancer of fear which feeds us the message of hopelessness. The cure for this cancer of fear is 1 John 4:18 which says "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear."

The fact is if we truly believe that we are loved, we will experience the powerful antidote to the poison of fear. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believeth in him shall not perish but have life everlasting" (John 3:16). It is His love which frees us to live a life of faith and love that is not paralyzed by fear.

Because, "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son," we can sing the songs of hope on the coldest, most fear filled nights, that life may throw at us. Not only does God proclaim, "I have loved you with an everlasting love" (Jeremiah 31:3), but He also demonstrated it through sending His Son, Jesus Christ into the world.

Jesus, through His death on the cross, personally revealed the truth of John 15:13: "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." In Rev. 1:5, 6 we see Jesus described as the One, "Who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve His God and Father."

I have to ask myself, "Why is it so hard for me to receive the messages of hope in the midst of disappointment, and despair?" These messages of hope are actually the proclamation of God's love revealed through the Scripture, and the millions of forms of art called creation.

I know that the same Spirit of God, which from the beginning of time hovered over the waters of emptiness, formlessness and darkness, desires to bring forth order and light (see Gen. 1:1-4) in the midst of the most hopeless situations.

You and I are told explicitly in Romans 8:37-39 that nothing can separate us from the love manifested through Jesus Christ. "I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

I know it is much easier to talk about God's love than it is to exercise it by helping those in need. Yet in Matthew 5:16 Jesus commands us to, "Let your light (of love) shine before men (and women), that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in Heaven."

Daily it takes faith for me to confront the fears which would love to immobilize me. But I know I cannot allow that to happen. God's love compels me to help those in need. If I know God is with us, then by faith I will engage in the actions of compassion and justice that are needed at this time of darkness.

As the pandemic of the corona virus strikes the world, let us continue to wash our hands, maintain social distancing and overcome the fear that this virus brings.

Let me encourage you to relax and respond to fear with hope. Even if hope gives out continue to shift down one more gear to that of faith, which manifests itself in love. Then continue to move down the highway of life knowing that the perfect love of Jesus Christ casts out all fear. As you do this and read your Bible daily, faith will get down deep into your spirit. Then you will become more than a conqueror through Christ who strengthens you daily.

Now please pray without ceasing and go forth in the fullness and power of our resurrected Lord. The time has come for us to let His love drive out all fear, in order that we may let Christ's healing power of love flow through us into the hurting world in which we live.

Yours in Christ,



Larry Rice

PS I also want to encourage you to pray and read 5 Psalms a day plus 1 Chapter from the gospel of John. In addition to other portions of scripture. There is so much in the Word of God that will help you. Please now, pick up your Bible and read Psalm 91:5-10 and see the promise of protection God has for you.