

Fear - Wisdom - Opportunity

Statements from the internet (search pastor and coronavirus)

Conflicting statements (Wisdom from above does not bring confusion)

- Some say it is a **sign of the end**, others say it is **not the end of the world**¹
- **God Sent Coronavirus To Make Moms Stay Home With Kids**²
- Evangelical pastor claims **coronavirus is God's 'death angel'** to 'purge a lot of sin'³
- The **coronavirus is a Satanic attempt to kill older Christians** so socialism can take over in the U.S.⁴
- The **Coronavirus is the work of SATAN** and a sign the world has 'strayed from God' - and **claims Christians will be protected from the virus**⁵

Will all Christians be protected? Or is it possible some will die? (fear, doubt)

- The 60-year pastor of a Baptist Church in St. James Parish, described as a "big teddy bear" with a passion for Jesus, **died this week from the respiratory illness tied to the novel coronavirus**, his wife said Friday.⁶
- A 60-year-old pastor has become the **first patient with COVID-19 to die in Malaysia** as the country's coronavirus cases climb to the highest in Southeast Asia. **His wife and daughter are also reported to have tested positive**⁷
- Scott Armstrong's world has suddenly become very small. **The 48-year-old Lead Pastor of City Church-Eastside in Atlanta is quarantined** with COVID-19.⁸
- **Georgetown pastor has coronavirus**, church says⁹

Should we defy government or are we to submit to governors and kings as unto the LORD?

- A Louisiana **pastor defies a state order** and **holds a church service** with hundreds of people¹⁰
- A pastor in Florida said **fears of exposure to COVID-19 was a "demonic spirit,"** and he encouraged his parishioners to show up to worship and **not heed warnings from officials to avoid crowded spaces.**¹¹

¹ <https://www.express.co.uk/news/weird/1257731/Coronavirus-Bible-COVID19-end-of-the-world-latest-coronavirus-news>

²

<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/progressivesecularhumanist/2020/03/christian-minister-god-sent-coronavirus-to-make-moms-stay-home-with-kids/>

³ <https://nypost.com/2020/01/29/evangelical-pastor-claims-coronavirus-is-gods-death-angel-to-purge-a-lot-of-sin/>

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<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/progressivesecularhumanist/2020/03/pastor-claims-coronavirus-is-satanic-plot-to-bring-socialism-to-the-u-s/>

⁵ <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8077919/Brian-Tamaki-says-coronavirus-outbreak-work-SATAN-sign-world-strayed-God.html>

⁶ https://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/coronavirus/article_49e1ea22-6abc-11ea-9fff-177411bf6aa6.html

⁷ <https://www.christianpost.com/news/60-y-o-pastor-identified-as-malaysias-first-coronavirus-victim-son-says-death-has-no-sting.html>

⁸ <https://www.fox5atlanta.com/news/atlanta-pastor-shares-coronavirus-battle>

⁹ <https://www.fox5dc.com/news/georgetown-pastor-has-coronavirus-church-says>

¹⁰ <https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/18/us/louisiana-pastor-coronavirus/index.html>

¹¹ <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/miami-dade/article241209151.html>

Is it a lack of faith to take preventative measures or is it using wisdom?

- One pastor says only “sissies” & “pansies” wash their hands to prevent coronavirus -- Christians who use hand sanitizer have "fake faith" etc¹²
- Evangelical pastor mocks ‘pansies,’ won’t close church for coronavirus¹³

Does this kind of proclamation bring glory to the God of miracles?

- Tampa pastor who claimed to cure Zika now says he will cure Florida of coronavirus¹⁴ (to date: Florida has 763 cases and has had 12 deaths)¹⁵
- One man was selling toothpaste¹⁶ as a cure
- And a tv evangelist was selling silver solution that he claims kills the virus¹⁷

Three things the LORD spoke to my heart (No Fear - Seek Wisdom - Look for Opportunity)

1) **This is not a time for fear** (when there is fear we make bad decisions) - hide when we should act, act when we should rest, be silent when we should speak, speak when we have nothing to say

- Psa 34:4 ESV **I sought the LORD**, and he answered me and **delivered** me from all my fears.
- **Seeking the LORD will deal with our fear**

2) **This is a time to use wisdom** - choose carefully those voices you allow to form your thinking and decisions

- Jas 3:13-17 describes two sources of wisdom -
 - **Wisdom that is NOT from above** - jealousy, selfish ambition - earthly, unspiritual and demonic - resulting in confusion and vile practices
 - **But the wisdom from above** --- is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.
- Jas 1:5 ESV **If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God**, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.
- **Seeking the LORD will give us wisdom**

Bottom line is this is a time for us to be in prayer, to be seeking the LORD, both to deal with the fears of our lives AND to gain wisdom --- He wants us to LOOK to HIM

- Psa 34:5 ESV **Those who look to him are radiant**, and their faces shall never be ashamed.

3) **Look for Opportunity** ---In Acts 4 there was an opportunity for the church to recoil in fear

Act 4:29-35 ESV And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all **boldness**, 30 while you stretch out your hand to **heal, and signs and wonders** are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus." 31 And **when they had prayed**, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and **continued to speak the word of God with boldness**. 32 Now the full number of

¹² <https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2020/03/pastor-says-sissies-pansies-wash-hands-prevent-coronavirus/>

¹³ <https://nypost.com/2020/03/17/evangelical-pastor-mocks-pansies-wont-close-church-for-coronavirus/>

¹⁴

<https://www.orlandoweekly.com/Blogs/archives/2020/02/26/tampa-pastor-who-claimed-to-cure-zika-now-says-he-will-cure-florida-of-coronavirus>

¹⁵ <https://www.news-journalonline.com/news/20200321/coronavirus-cases-in-florida-soar-to-763-12-deaths>

¹⁶ <https://www.fastcompany.com/90477180/hucksters-are-ready-to-try-to-make-some-cash-on-coronavirus-cure-scams>

¹⁷ <https://www.npr.org/2020/03/11/814550474/missouri-sues-televangelist-jim-bakker-for-selling-fake-coronavirus-cure>

those who believed were of **one heart and soul**, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had **everything in common**. 33 And with **great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus**, and **great grace** was upon them all. 34 There was **not a needy person among them**, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold 35 and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

-- Instead of recoiling in fear they prayed for boldness

-- Rather than cease praying for the sick, they continued to do so

-- Rather than becoming protective of their possessions, they gave to the needy...NOT ONE NEEDY PERSON

TO DO:

- 1) Spend time in prayer - as a family, as a church, in small groups, on the phone with a friend, let's call upon the LORD
 - Let's help those with fear to overcome it
 - Let's seek wisdom so we can hear God's voice and direction in these difficult days
- 2) Let's look for opportunity to meet the needs
 - We can begin in the church
 - But what about your neighbors? Especially the elderly? What does it look like in these times to be a good neighbor?
- 3) Keep in touch with one another

Ways to stay in touch

- Show Website
- Prayer meetings on Zoom (Randy and Necol Mon-Thursday 7:00-8:00)
- Get a church directory and call some people
- Use facebook to encourage and offer hope

Ways to reach out

- **Make a card or a letter and take it out to the neighborhood** - offer to help, offer to pray, leave your phone number and name.
- **After the virus**...maybe think about a neighborhood dinner strategy (home on every street)
- **Adopt a Nursing home** have kids write a letter, color pictures, or make a card for the elderly residents in nursing homes (I saw where someone donated a bunch of flower vases to one of the nursing homes)
- **Robin and Rose invited Marilyn and Stephanie Hartenstein** over to watch the church online, then they are staying for lunch...
- **Peggy Wrigley called** to check on Marilyn