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“From the Pastor’s Desk”

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Cooped Up, Fed Up, and Motivated

I doubt that it has escaped your attention on the current Newscasts or Facebook, of the frustrations that the American people are having in dealing with this Coronavirus (epidemic/pandemic); which is also often referred to as COVID-19. And I dare say that many of you are also having to deal with various issues in your home as well. And if you are like me you may also be asking the question: *Was this governmental shut down all that necessary?*

I know the way in which it was presented to us at first by the medical community sounded at the time that it was the reasonable thing to do. Because, at the time, what they believed and projected to us was huge in regards to the amount of possible loss of life. I remember hearing, that according to their projected models, they estimated between 100,000 to 200,000 lives would be lost by the end of 2020.

But then they changed that estimation down to 60,000 lives, and in doing so made the claim that conditions improved “...because the American public maintained safe-at-home social distancing directives.” However, forgive me, but I have my doubts on this...because in no way could they actually know what every American was doing. I believe they projected that claim without any real proof...only mere assumption. No one came to my home to see what was happening....Did they come to your house or to any of your neighbors?

Naturally all of us want to protect human life if we have any decency in us. But I think what is being ignored is what this “government ordered shut down” has actually done, to our economy as well as the countless number of families and businesses. We are continually hearing reports of families who have suffered hardship such as: suicides, mental breakdown, spousal and child abuse, and the elderly being totally separated from their families. Not only that, think about the people who have serious health issues which are not being addressed and being referred to as being “non-essential.” Yet, at the same time we see how politics got into the picture when it was decided to label “**abortion**” (the killing of human life) as something “essential.”

And have you heard this? There is even a debate now on what should be reported on the “*death certificate*,” when a person dies. When prior to all this, it would have been normal to list the cause of death due to a heart attack, stage 5 cancer, etc.

SEEING ONLY THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG

But what I have listed above is only a part of the problem due to this governmental shut down. I believe that the American people are not really seeing the pain and frustration each of us are experiencing, whether you live alone, or are raising a family, or a part of the senior community. Many people who felt pretty comfortable with their retirement accounts are now truly worried...if they have not enough to make it before they depart their earthly dwelling place. Some couples who thought that they had accomplished their job of raising their children well and sent them out into the real world to make it on their own, now are finding that they need to come home.

Churches of all sizes are finding out that their financial challenges are just beginning, especially those who have large debts, building programs yet to complete, or huge staffs that they will probably need to lay off. Each church is facing the question as to how many of their people will return once this is over especially if they were not that excited to be in the House of God in the first place. How long will it be before they can have their choirs sing, youth camp gatherings or even Sunday School classes begin? And what about the volunteers; how many will defer such service now if this continues to provoke fear and questions in the workers minds? What about the Missionaries whose support could dissipate if the people fail to return? Yes, we are facing many challenges in the unforeseen future and we need the help of the Lord to give each of us wisdom in dealing with all this.

ARE YOU FED UP, YET

Yes, I dare say many of us are “cooped-up, fed-up, and I hope will be motivated.” Are we going to be motivated never to allow this kind of thing to happen again? I personally have a suspicion that the whole thing was hatched up by some “*political operators*” carried out by the “*news media*” which saw an opportunity to make use of the “*break-out*” in China and convince such organizations as the “**World Health Organization**” to deceive, manipulate the President and his advisors’ to take some kind of drastic action in order to stop this pandemic.

When you consider the four leading causes of death back in 2017 in the USA were: Heart disease – 647,457; Cancer – 599,108; Alzheimer’s disease - 121,404; and then there is Diabetes – 83,564 and at this date we still do not have the real figure of USA deaths yet! Why? Due to manipulation of the figures on death...but even if we take the total figure they are using it’s still not as high as any of these figures. Yet I have seen no shut down of government for any of these diseases. No call of a pandemic for any of the above.

NOAH’S ARK

Now one of the common signs I keep reading and hearing by our Governor of California is “**stay home**.” I wonder why he never has called for that when the children were running wild on drugs. I wonder why he never called for this with the many divorces? I wonder why he didn’t call that for every woman who gets an abortion? The Scripture says:

“As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark....Matt.24:37

A lot of things were going on in this old world. But then God stopped everything for Noah and told him to enter the ark. Noah obeyed. Then came judgment. I know a lot of things could be read into this verse. Nevertheless...don’t forget the first line; “*As it was in the days of Noah.....so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.*” Never in the history of America has our religious freedom been brought to stand-still. Yes, the church is trying to manage the situation without the church building. *But could it be that Gabriel is about to blow his trumpet?*

Noah was inconvenienced from his normal way of life when he was told to enter the ark. But it was evident that his work in reaching his community was done. Now all this faithful man and family could do is abide and await for the next move and direction of God. It was not easy for Noah or his family to live in these uncomfortable conditions. Think about it; he was force to live with strange creatures...probably smelly ones. Confined, lock in (Genesis says that “*God shut him in.*” Gen 7:16. He was locked in for 370 days. Gen. 8:20) We have been sort of locked in for the past 45 days....and we are already complaining.

Now I have thought about all this. And I could speak to this in various ways. I could speak about Noah’s endurance for 370 days. When I flew to South Africa some time ago I was on the airplane 18 hours. That was enough for me. We could talk about family harmony in a time like this. My wife has lived with me in marriage 60 years now. The hardest time was when we lived in a motor home 8 years. Once we moved out into a home she would not even think about getting in that motor home after that. I had to sell it. She would not even go for a ride.

But I thought of another place. Jerusalem. Psalm 122:1-3 tells us Jerusalem is a city that is compact together. The tribes love to go up there to worship. I have been there. The walls are all joined together; and the houses are all united to one another so as to make a compact place. The ground occupied by Jerusalem never could be large, as it was surrounded with valleys, except on the north, and hemmed in with hills, so that, from the necessity of the case, when it became the capital of the nation, it was densely crowded.

This, moreover, was usual in ancient cities, when they were made compact for the sake of defense and protection. But Jerusalem both today and in ages past is practically synonymous with violence. “*Perhaps no city on the entire planet has witnessed as much violence over such a long period of time as Jerusalem, conquered dozens of times, reduced to rubble no less than five times, and in recent years a frequent target for Palestinian terrorists trying to reclaim their land.*” Everybody wants to visit Jerusalem. Jesus said, He has gone to prepared a place (a New Jerusalem) for us (John 14:3) Read about it in Rev.21:1-2 “*coming down out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*” Could it be God is allowing this state of being “**Cooped-up, fed-up, and motivated**” could be to get our eyes back on Him? Think about it....and be motivated to be prepared...and make an adjustment. Amen.