

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mrs. Calvert, Mr. and Mrs. Hadley, Mrs. Kelly Hall, Mrs. Elizabeth Jackson, Mr. Mark Law, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Sowder, Ms. Ward, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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Serving God While Isolated

By Derek Long

We are living in a time where due to the Coronavirus people are having to isolate themselves either because they have the virus or have been in contact with someone who has. Our situation is not entirely a new situation. In the Old Testament, we find lepers who had to isolate themselves (Leviticus 13). In the New Testament, we find individuals who were not allowed to move about freely due to imprisonment. Yet in these circumstances we find individuals who continued to serve God. I wanted to suggest a few ways we might continue to serve God even if we end up having to be in isolation for a period of time.

It is important to remember isolation is not something Christians should choose. God commands Christians to assemble together (Hebrews 10:24-25). If we are capable of assembling, we certainly should but in a time of illness such may not be possible for a period of time. God commands Christians to go and teach the gospel (Mark 16:15). It is certainly easier to teach the gospel when we are around others than when we are isolated from others. God commands Christians to be hospitable (Hebrews 13:2; 1 Peter 4:9). It is easier to be hospitable when we are around others than when we are in isolation.

One way we can serve God even if we end up isolated due to the Coronavirus is by studying God's word. God wants Christians to diligently study His word (2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Peter 2:2). Time spent alone can be used profitably by us reading and studying the Bible. If we end up isolated, maybe we could make it a goal to study the Bible more if our health allows such.

Isolation may limit our interactions with others but we still have access to God. We can pray while we are isolated (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Romans 12:12). In times of loneliness and suffering, it can be helpful to go to God in prayer. If we are isolated from others, we can still pray for those we care for and are concerned about. Let's not forget to pray as we end up being isolated (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

Our isolation does not mean the word of God quits being spread. Paul realized this fact while he was in prison. In 2 Timothy 2:9 he says, "For which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained" (NKJV). It is true Paul might not could spread the gospel in the way he had normally done while in prison but God's word was still going to spread even when he was in prison. Isolation due to the Coronavirus may keep us from spreading the gospel in the same ways we normally would but it does not mean the gospel cannot still be spread. Paul would write epistles or letters to other Christians while in prison (Ephesians; Philippians; Colossians; Philemon; 2 Timothy). If we want to spread the word of God when we are isolated, we could do a similar thing. We can write letters to other Christians and non-Christians and spread God's word in that manner. It is also good to remember that even though we may be isolated there are still others who can go and teach the gospel during that time (Philippians

1:12-18). We can pray for such individuals and their efforts while we are isolated. We can encourage them to continue on in the work God has given them when we are isolated.

Sickness and times of isolation can be used to help remind us of our weaknesses and our need to be humble before God. Sickness and isolation can help remind us of the brevity of life. If we can learn lessons from time of sickness and isolation, it may help us come out of the other side of the situation stronger (Romans 5:3-4; James 1:2-4). We may be more determined to make the best use of our time (Ephesians 5:16; Colossians 4:5; Ecclesiastes 9:10). We may be more determined to value our relationships more (Ecclesiastes 9:9). We may be determined to always be prepared to die and stand before God in judgment (Hebrews 9:27).

Let's be people who are determined to serve God no matter what situation we find ourselves in! Let us seek out the opportunities available to us to serve God even when it seems many opportunities we normally have are not available! Let us learn to be grateful for the opportunities we normally possess and be determined to use them to the fullest throughout the rest of our lives!