

7 Ways to Pray During This Pandemic

The Holy Spirit didn't tell me in advance about the coronavirus pandemic. I was just as shocked as everyone else when I realized that a deadly virus outbreak in China would shut down the world.

But at the beginning of 2020 when I spent some time praying for the year, the Lord gave me three words. He said simply: "Rest. Reign. Receive."

I wrote those words down in my journal, prayed about them and tucked them away. I suspected they would become clearer as the year progressed. The message suddenly made sense in early March, when my schedule was canceled and I was forced into an unscheduled sabbatical!

I was especially intrigued by the word "reign." I felt God was calling me to better understand my authority in Christ. The Bible says we have been made both "kings and priests unto God," (see Rev. 1:6 and 5:10, KJV), and we have been "seated ... with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus," according to Ephesians 2:6 (NASB).

I don't typically think of myself as a king. But if I am the King's son, then I am His heir—and I am invited to reign with him. This is clearly what Jesus meant when He told us: "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it" (John 14:14). We are invited to extend His rule over the earth through prayer. He has given us His authority. He invites us to use it.

That's the posture I'm taking as I pray for this global crisis. I'm praying from a position of kingly authority. If I pray according to His will, He will use my prayers to establish His kingdom on earth! Here are seven ways I'm praying for the coronavirus pandemic. I invite you to join me.

1. **Take authority over the virus.** Jesus told His disciples He had given them “authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy” (Luke 10:19a). That includes viruses! Sickness and disease are from Satan. Rebuke the virus and command it to die. It is under our feet. As we pray, the number of cases will diminish, along with the number of deaths, and the spread of the virus will stop.
2. **Pray for peace to replace anxiety and fear.** Today, it seems that worry is more contagious than the virus itself. People are paralyzed by fear of getting infected, by the loss of a job or by lines at the grocery store. People are even hoarding food and toilet paper! Yet 2 Timothy 1:7a (NKJV) says: “For God has not given us a spirit of fear.” Fear is not from God. We can use wisdom to minimize contagion, but people today are overreacting in irrational ways. Ask God to send His peace to troubled communities.
3. **Pray for miraculous healings for those infected.** I’m grateful for new drugs that can stop this virus, and we can pray for medical researchers to discover these cures quickly. But let’s remember that Jesus is the source of divine healing. When He began His ministry, Peter’s mother-in-law was cured of a fever—and by the end of the day, “He healed many who were ill with various diseases” (Mark 1:34a). Let’s pray for an outbreak of supernatural healing!
4. **Pray for the traumatized younger generation.** I am deeply concerned for our high school and college students because this pandemic has traumatized them. Schools have closed, all sports have been canceled and graduations have been postponed. Many are struggling with depression and thoughts of suicide. There’s something special about this generation of youth—and the enemy has targeted them. Rebuke the enemy’s plan and ask God to raise up

this special group of young people to accomplish God's purpose.

5. **Pray for unity to replace divisiveness.** It's disheartening to see how people are biting each other's heads off during this crisis. Fights have even broken out in grocery stores. Meanwhile the media continues to inject tons of negativity into our national conversation, and politicians are blaming each other instead of working together across party lines. Let's stand in the gap and ask for healing in our land. May God forgive us for our hatefulness. I'm praying that media leaders will apologize for making this crisis worse by spreading so much toxic venom.
6. **Pray for economic stability.** This microscopic virus has brought us to our knees. Some of the world's biggest corporations are edging toward bankruptcy. Millions of people are out of work because their jobs are not considered "essential" in the middle of a pandemic. But I don't believe God wants to starve us. Pray that the virus will weaken quickly so we can get back to work. And pray that America's government and business leaders will depend on God's wisdom when we restart the marketplace.
7. **Pray that the church will shine in the darkness.** This has been a strange month for churches around the world. Our buildings were closed, but ministry continued—though online gatherings, small group Bible studies, outreaches to the poor and homeless, school lunch programs and a general outpouring of compassion. This isn't a time for the church to hide. Even though social distancing keeps us farther away from people than normal, pray that we will discover creative ways to share the gospel with a world that is overwhelmed by bad news.

Many Christians around the country have begun to pray that

this virus will be vanquished by Resurrection Sunday, which is April 12. I have circled that day in red on my calendar. I am praying for an end to this pandemic within 18 days. Easter is a celebration of the day Jesus conquered death. May it also be the day we dance in the streets as we witness an end to this plague.