

Greg Laurie: America, It's Time to Pray Against the Panic

If you would have told me that markets would be depleted and that we could not hold church services on Sunday, I would have thought that you were an alarmist. And if you would have added that it would be best for me to “self-quarantine” because I am one of the “vulnerable” to COVID-19 (I'm 67) three weeks ago, I would have thought you had lost your mind.

Well, it's happened. What a difference a few days make.

The president has declared a national emergency, and America is in an absolute panic.

I'm not quite sure why so many people have emptied the store shelves of toilet paper though. It has become so valuable that we may start using it as currency!

“How much for that coffee? Will two squares of toilet paper do?”

All joking aside, you can see the fear on peoples' faces. They are alarmed and feel as though they don't have control, because the truth is, they don't.

Folks, this is a wake-up call from God Almighty if I have ever seen one. It's time to pray.

I don't mean casual prayer. I am talking about fervent, storm-the-gates-of-heaven type of prayer that calls out to God in desperation and urgency.

We need God in America today. We need him to eradicate what President Trump has called, “An invisible enemy.”

In the Bible, prayer stopped storms, calmed waves, healed the sick, raised the dead and even stopped time. Scripture reminds us, "With God, all things are possible" (b).

We need to turn our panic into prayer. At this time, the sources we often turn to for comfort cannot do anything for us.

Hollywood can't save us. There is no blockbuster film or actor that will get us out of this.

Technology can't save us either. Our smartphones and computer screens just feed us a barrage of information that heightens our stress and anxiety.

Our lawmakers in Washington can't save us from this pandemic. They will hopefully work together and do what they can, but the outcome is outside of their control.

Even the president of the United States can't save us. He has put together an excellent task force to deal with the coronavirus, but they can't fix this for us. We should, however, take their advice seriously.

That is why the president wisely called for a National Day of Prayer.

In his proclamation, he stated:

"As your president, I ask you to pray for the health and well-being of your fellow Americans and to remember that no problem is too big for God to handle. We should all take to heart the holy words found in 1 Peter 5:7: 'Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.' Let us pray that all those affected by the virus will feel the presence of our Lord's protection and love during this time. With God's help, we will overcome this threat."

We need to keep praying, because the worst of this virus may still be coming.

But remember this: God is bigger than the coronavirus. He is bigger than any problem you may be facing right now.

The Bible says, “You do not have, because you do not ask” (James 4:2c). And the Lord promises, “‘Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things which you do not know’” (Jer. 33:3).

The Old Testament tells us the story of a man named Jehoshaphat. He was in big trouble. Three armies were marching toward him, bent on destroying the king of Israel and his people. This terrified Jehoshaphat, and he asked everyone to fast and pray.

He prayed, “O our God, won’t you stop them? We are powerless against this mighty army that is about to attack us. We do not know what to do, but we are looking to you for help” (2 Chron. 20:12, NLT).

And guess what happened?

God answered their prayers, and their enemies turned on each other.

There is a spiritual element to every problem. And this is a time to pray.

Here is a promise from God: “If I ever shut off the supply of rain from the skies or order the locusts to eat the crops or send a plague on my people, and my people, my God-defined people, respond by humbling themselves, praying, seeking my presence, and turning their backs on their wicked lives, I’ll be there ready for you: I’ll listen from heaven, forgive their sins, and restore their land to health” (2 Chron. 7:13–14 MSG).

God says we need to humble ourselves, pray, seek His presence and turn our backs on our wicked lives. If we do that, the Lord promises to hear our prayers, forgive our sins and

restore our land to health.

God keeps His promises. Let's keep praying. {eoa}

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