

Keeping Our Distance From Each Other Is Not the Will of the Father

After my parents divorced, I chose to live with my father when he remarried. I don't remember all the particulars, but I knew it was what I must do.

The first few mornings of life with my step-mother were very important. I watched as she prepared to leave the house for work. On her way out, she always hugged and kissed her two boys.

She included me. I can still remember the smell of her perfume and the softness of her touch on my cheek.

Like many sleep-craving teenagers, I had a habit of sleeping late. But I vividly remember running up the stairs from my basement bedroom early in the mornings to make sure I was on the couch watching cartoons with my brothers. I didn't want to miss her touch of acceptance and affection.

We were given the sense of touch for all the moments of our life.

I think it was those memories of my step-mother's touch that opened my heart to become a hugger. My early instinct for hugs during charismatic "song services" was to perfect the side-hug.

A few decades later, I realize I was protected in my youth.

The coronavirus has taken so much away from our lives. The list of sacrifices grows daily for all of us.

Easter services streamed nicely through my devices and the Word of God was alive in my heart. I listened to worship music

all weekend. I was fully aware of the significance of Holy Week.

But this was the Easter that will be recorded in my memory as the Easter without God's gift of touch. Yes, it was necessary and scientifically sound.

But 20% of our senses lay dormant on Resurrection Sunday. Imagine an Easter without sight, sound or taste. I wonder what thought we would have engaged a year ago if we learned we would soon experience a season without God's gift of touch.

Jesus doesn't want us to keep our distance from Him or from each other. It is necessary today but so restrictive.

As Jesus was led by the Spirit into His ministry while on Earth, we see Him as a man of high touch.

"He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she rose and served them" (Matt. 8:15).

"Then He touched their eyes, saying, 'According to your faith, let it be done for you'" (Matt. 9:29).

"But Jesus said, 'This is enough!' And He touched his ear and healed him" (Luke 22:51).

Jesus healed the dormant senses.

We need to reach up to Jesus today and cry out, "Heal these hands that long to touch Your people. Return to us the gift of touch."

We are taught to "call for the elders of the church to lay hands on the sick" (James 5:14). We can't do that today.

We know the anointing is activated through the laying on of hands. We can't do that today

We have learned to pray for one another, often with a light touch on the forehead, to calm their fears and encourage a

stronger faith. We can't do that today.

But we can do something today.

We learned the power of touch from the Giver of life. We are made in His image. We can do what the woman did who hemorrhaged for 12 years. She pressed through a crowd of people and touched the priestly edge of Jesus' garment.

Now more than ever, we must press in to the King of kings. We must pray and seek His touch. We must pray for safety to touch our loved ones again.

This coronavirus must be destroyed. God didn't create us to keep our hands to ourselves. As with the other gifts of our senses, He intends for us to minister with the gift of touch.

Rise up early in the morning. Take a seat in the presence of His majesty. Expect a touch from the Father.