

Staying Apart, While Coming Together -- No Contradiction for Body of Christ

The following is a statement from Bishop Danny Yohannan, Vice President of [Gospel for Asia](http://GospelforAsia.com), concerning the current Coronavirus crisis:

The coronavirus COVID-19 is now impacting our daily lives, and -- for many of us -- consuming our thoughts and conversations every hour. It's also driving us into physical isolation as many of us self-isolate and try to stay home as much as possible to lower our risk of contracting and spreading the disease.

A majority of churches around the world have even cancelled their services and/or switched to a streaming platform instead of meeting in person. But in this time of unprecedented isolation, we -- the Church -- need to come together like never before. We might have to socially distance ourselves from others physically -- but we must allow this crisis to draw us closer to each other in our hearts, minds, and Christ-like actions.

"Separate, yet come together" -- it seems like an oxymoron, a contradiction. So, how do we do that?

1. Come together with God. It's vitally important for every one of us to draw closer to God during this anxious time, so that He may draw closer in a personal way to each of us. In times of trial and tribulation, God's people have always run to the outstretched arms of God, and the love of God has flooded them with His light, peace, and hope.

2. Come together as a family. This is a life-changing moment when we can choose to invest our precious time with our loved ones: encouraging them, talking with them about things that really matter, laughing together over memories, and praying together as a family—especially praying for those suffering with the virus and for wisdom for the leaders of our nation. Also let us never forget to pray for God's mercy and grace for millions who still wait to hear about the love of Christ for the first time. Let's be careful not to waste this opportunity.

3. Come together as a community of believers. We might be separated in body but we will always be together in spirit and in prayer. Use the full range of today's communications tools -- phone, social media, video chat, teleconferencing, live streaming -- to stay connected to your fellow believers, the Body of Christ. This is crucial -- and with modern technology there's no reason why we need to become spiritual castaways. Thanks to the incredible technology available to us, following the Scriptural command to "forsake not the assembling of yourselves together" (Hebrews 10:25) is possible anywhere, any time, in real-time.

4. Come together to serve the most vulnerable.

At this time of fear and



uncertainty, let's not forget the most vulnerable among us -- the elderly, those with health issues, the homeless, and the poor -- as well as those around the world with personal crises that can be utterly devastating (Matthew 25:40). I assure you: COVID-19 will not stop Gospel for Asia serving the most vulnerable families and children across Asia, and showing them the love of God in both word and deed. **Come together during Lent by putting our focus on God.** As we are being encouraged to socially isolate ourselves, let us remember we are in the season of Great Lent. Rather than "social isolation," we can practice "ascetic prayer." We can turn this into a God-focused time as we all use this chance to quietly pray and intercede for those around us, and for those who are suffering. May God be merciful to us all as we cry out to him. Kyrie Eleison (God, have mercy).

Finally, COVID-19 might stop us gathering together in our traditional worship settings, but it will NEVER stop the Church! We will fight this crisis on our knees in prayer -- and we will fight it together. Nothing, absolutely nothing, is able to separate us from the love of God that is found in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:39).

Danny Yohannan is vice-president of Gospel for Asia (GFA, www.gfa.org), a leading faith-based mission agency, bringing vital assistance and spiritual hope to millions across Asia, especially to those who have yet to hear the "good news" of Jesus Christ. In GFA's latest yearly report, this included more than 70,000 sponsored children, free medical camps conducted in more than 1,200 villages and remote communities, over 4,000 clean water wells drilled, over 11,000 water filters installed, income-generating Christmas gifts for more than 200,000 needy families, and spiritual teaching available in 110 languages in 14 nations through radio ministry. For all the latest news, visit our Press Room at <https://press.gfa.org/news>

What is Good Friday?

Good Friday is a holiday celebrated by the Christian Church in commemoration of the day Jesus died on a cross. Christians believe that the death of Jesus as a willing sacrifice paid the penalty for the sinfulness of humanity. As a result, we can receive forgiveness today.

Christians around the world consider Jesus to have been God in the flesh—the second member of the Trinity. (The Trinity is the understanding that God is one in essence but exists with three centers of personhood.) Seeing the hopeless and sinful condition of humanity, he chose to enter into Creation in the form of the man, Jesus Christ.

Arriving as a baby born to a virgin named Mary, Jesus grew up among us. At about the age of 30, Jesus began his public ministry of teaching, healing, and proclaiming the Kingdom of Heaven.

Three years later, the Jewish religious leaders (who felt threatened by Jesus' rising popularity) conspired against him. The Bible describes how they paid people to give false accusations against Jesus, implying that Jesus was rebelling against the Roman authorities that were ruling over Israel at the time.

Jesus was subsequently arrested, put on trial, and sentenced to execution by crucifixion. After verify-

ing that he was dead by thrusting a sword through his side, the Romans allowed the body to be taken down and down and buried in a tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea. Guards were stationed to watch over the tomb to ensure that no one, especially the disciples, tried to do anything to the body.

The Bible reveals that this was all part of God's plan from the beginning. Several Old Testament prophecies written centuries earlier foretold the crucifixion of Jesus in detail—even before crucifixion became a common form of execution.

So why was the death of Jesus necessary? According to Christian teaching, God is a God of love as well as a God of justice. His love desired to offer forgiveness to all of humanity for its sinful rebellion against him. But his justice demanded that wrongs be punished, and the punishment for rebellion against God is death. So the solution was for God to become a man and pay the penalty in our place.

However, Christians also recognize that Jesus' death was only temporary. On the third day—the day we know as Easter—his tomb was found empty. Over the next forty days, hundreds of eyewitnesses reported seeing Jesus alive. He had walked with them, taught them, and eaten with them. Their conclusion: Jesus had risen from the dead.

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Is Coronavirus Connected to Bible Prophecy? Continued

How seriously should we take the advice given by national and local leaders? How should the Church respond?

First, to address the elephant in the room as it relates to end-time prophecy. We're not in the tribulation period. Scripture is clear that the rapture will occur first. That's not to say things won't get tough prior to the rapture. In fact, Jesus taught in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24, Luke 21, Mark 13) that there would be birth pains leading up to (and ultimately into) the tribulation period. Also, THE tribulation is different from tribulation in general. Jesus told us in no uncertain terms that we would have tribulation in this world (John 16:33). But, the judgments in the tribulation period will be progressively worse than anything the world has ever experienced.

I believe what we are witnessing with COVID-19 is part of the birth pains Jesus talked about in the Olivet Discourse (referenced above). In fact, I think it is a major birth pain; as is the locust plague that is ravaging Africa and the Mideast; as is the large number of social uprisings in countries around the world; as is the increase in earthquake activity; as were the record-breaking Australian wild fires; as is... you get the picture. Birth pains increase in frequency and intensity, and they only increase until the moment of delivery.

This particular birth pain happens to be one that the entire world is feeling. Again, increased intensity. It's also a birth pain that has shaken all earthly things. Sports, financial markets, distractions, hobbies, concerts, you name it—have all been shut down. Those things aren't bad in themselves, but it's as if God is removing any distractions for a moment in history to plead with the world again, 'Look up! Look to me! This world is temporary. Think about eternal things. I love you. I died for you. Please don't ignore me. Turn to me now while there is time.'

I should also add that this is a pebble in the ocean compared to a yet-future global event that will rock the world to its core. If one rapidly spreading virus can cause this type of global disruption, can you imagine what the rapture will do when tens of millions are removed from the world in an instant? That singular event will set all the end-time events of John's Revelation into motion. There have been condensed periods of major supernatural events in the past—creation, the exodus, and the events surrounding the first coming of Jesus culminating with the resurrection. Now, after roughly 2,000 years, we await another period of immense supernatural events which will begin with the rapture. Were it not for the hundreds of major prophecies that have already been fulfilled—including the rebirth of Israel and recent developments in Syria—this notion would be laughable. But I believe it will literally happen. Scripture is clear.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO NOW?
Here are a few things.

First, we should not live in fear. God is still in control. He's in control of the world, and in control of your life. He didn't cause COVID-19, but he allowed it. There is a

paradox inherent in this discussion. God is sovereign, yet mankind still has free will. God has told history in advance about where this is all headed, yet our freewill and the nature of the fallen world transpire in chronological fashion. Faith is required. Gods' promises are true, prophecy is real, world events are not random, this is all headed somewhere. Do not fear. Look up!

Second, we should look for new ways to leverage this moment to turn people to Christ. It may look different than 2 weeks ago. The truths of Bible prophecy are beginning to have meaning to a broader audience as the whole world senses these birth pains. Even the secular voices are becoming progressively more apocalyptic. The condition of the world is the elephant in the room. We need to be bold enough to talk about it from a Biblical (i.e., accurate) perspective. Along with that, we should love others and meet needs at a time when most are fearful and need some encouragement.

Third, we should be responsible. Though we should not fear, we should heed wise advice and take the recommended precautions seriously. It's a chance for us to love our neighbor as our self. This pandemic forces us to get our eyes off of our own needs and onto the needs of others. During the worst moments of the initial outbreak, Chinese Christians from the underground church served victims of COVID-19 with grace, joy, and love. Because of such acts, the underground church in China continues to explode. What the enemy meant for evil, was turned to be used for good. The political division in our own country has even (momentarily) subsided a bit. Much like after 9/11, our country is (at least somewhat) joining together as one. I believe this will end once the major threat of COVID-19 has passed. Then (I believe) it will be globalists vs. nationalists at an even greater level.

Fourth, let this time of uncertainty draw you closer to God. If I can be completely real for a moment, the Lord has shown me several things the past few weeks that I need to work on. Nothing earth-shaking, but areas of my thinking and reactions that God has brought to the surface so I can turn them over to him. The closer I get to the Lord, the more I realize how much I need him every day.

These are serious times—and we need to be ready. We need to be ready for whatever lies ahead—and we need to do so with courage, boldness, joy, and hope in a soon-coming King. Everything else fades away in the bright light of His promised future return. We don't know the day or hour, but all Biblical indicators are that we could very well be the generation that experiences the rapture. What a privilege—and a burden—to be alive at this time in history.

Are you ready? Why not put your trust in the only thing that is really stable?

Todd Hampson | ToddHampson.com

COVID-19 Causes People Around the Globe to Seek Spiritual Assurance at Unprecedented Levels

Online Ministry Pioneer Global Media Outreach is Ramping Up to Meet the Need

PLANO, Texas, -- As the COVID-19 virus stokes worldwide fear for physical, financial and employment well-being, Global Media Outreach – the pioneer and leader in online ministry – is seeing an unprecedented rise in inquiries about faith, God and the Bible during this pandemic.

"Fear is a natural response to a situation like this that none of us have encountered before," said Global Media Outreach Founder and Chairman Walt Wilson.

"What we're seeing is millions of people open to talking about faith in the face of fear, and we're ramping up to be available for them. According to Google, searches about fears around the virus, uncertain finances and employment are growing rapidly."

Global Media Outreach reaches individuals around the world on the Internet, mobile and a proprietary, secure messaging system. As individuals respond to a message of hope online, they receive support to grow in their faith and are connected to Christian community.

Founded in 2004, the organization has reached close to 2 billion people and seen more than 223 million respond positively to a message of faith and hope in Jesus. The internet ministry pioneer has touched lives in every country on, offering spiritual guidance, encouragement and peace.

Now, even that number is growing, and Global Media Outreach

is issuing a call to meet the demand.

"We have grown strategically and intentionally so that through our staff and volunteers we can scale up to meet the higher and higher levels of need we're seeing now," said President Jeff Gowler. "With uncertainty about COVID-19, our personal touches have gone from 350,000 people per day reaching now upwards to 500,000. The only limit we face is the financial cost of telling people we're available through online and social media ads. People dealing with fear and anxiety need comfort and support, and we're here to help."

Global Media Outreach has 3,500 online volunteers, speaking 50 different languages, who answer questions all over the globe and pray for and guide new believers on their spiritual journey through a safe and anonymous system.

"During the present pandemic, Gospel Media Outreach helps those that are hurting and afraid," Gowler said. "We provide a highly personal interaction without physical contact, so those quarantined can still have a deeply personal connection with online volunteers who will encourage and pray for them."

"Right now, matters of faith are front and center for all 7 billion people on our planet. We're calling for people to be bold in uncertain times and partner with us to replace distress with hope and to lead millions to peace and assurance through a relationship with Jesus."

Learn more and find out how you can help at GlobalMediaOutreach.com

How to solve sudoku puzzles

To solve a sudoku, you only need logic and patience. No math is required.

Simply make sure that each 3x3 square region has a number 1 through 9 with only one occurrence of each number.

Each column and row of the large grid must have only one instance of the numbers 1 through 9.

The difficulty rating on this puzzle is easy.

Spring Day Sudoku

6	1				5			
	7			1		2		8
					3	4		
	8	6						9
2	3						4	7
9						6	8	
		7	1					
5		4		7			1	
			3				2	4

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County Announces Sites for Donating Protective Equipment and Supplies for Healthcare Providers

WHAT

Contra Costa County announced the opening of three donation sites for protective medical supplies in West County, Central County and East County. The Regional Center of the East Bay, which serves developmentally disabled residents of Contra Costa and Alameda counties, will be distributing medical gloves donated by Bay Area company along with other medical equipment.

On Tuesday, March 24, Contra Costa Health Services will begin accepting donations of protective equipment and supplies for use by healthcare providers throughout the county.

Businesses and residents are encouraged to donate only the following types of protective medical supplies:

- Eye protection, such as goggles and face shields
- Antibacterial and disinfecting wipes, typically alcohol or bleach based (unopened). NO baby wipes.
- N-95 and surgical masks (in unopened containers/boxes)

Medical gowns: Disposable gowns, as well as cloth surgical and hospital gowns in good condition

Donation centers will be open Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at:

West County: 151 Linus Pauling Drive, Hercules

Central County: 1750 Oak Park Blvd., Pleasant Hill

East County: 4545 Delta Fair Blvd., Antioch

Recognizing the urgent need all healthcare providers have for protective equipment, Bay Area company donated 350,000 medical gloves that will be distributed throughout Contra Costa County. Their donation is one example of the commitment organizations of all sizes have to support readiness efforts.

Please call the Contra Costa Health Services call center at 844-729-8410 with questions about what protective equipment will be accepted. Donation sites will be staffed by county employees.

Spring Cleaning Word Search

A S J N E D R I V E W A Y
B M W O X I N S P E C T A
P A P E T G U T T E R S V
L P S O E B S V A C U U M
A V O E R P A U N C L O G
N S R L M C H E C K S J R
T C L F I E H R O O F I J
D R A I N S N G A R A G E
D E C K A P H T A P Y D W
S E A L T R E S E E D F I
T N R P E W H R V W C A N
A S P A A A H D D W L U D
I U E I J X N R E U O C O
N B T N F I L T E R S E W
S Q S T J E W A S H E T S
Q Z S R E G R O U T T S M

BASEMENT
CARPETS
CHECK
CLEAN
CLOSET
DECK
DRAINS
DRIVEWAY
DUST
EXTERMINATE
FAUCETS
FILTERS
GARAGE
GUTTERS
INSPECT
LAWN

PAINT
PLANT
POLISH
PORCH
REGROUT
REPAIR
RESEED
ROOF
SCREENS
STAINS
SWEEP
UNCLOG
VACUUM
WASH
WAX
WINDOWS

Romans Road To Salvation

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Romans 6:23a "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans 5:8, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 10:9,10 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Romans 10:13 "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Pray this Prayer: Lord Jesus, forgive me for all of my sins. I believe that you died on the cross. And that you were buried, and on the third day, God the father raised you from the dead. And I ask that you come into my heart and be me Lord and Savior. Thank You Jesus for Saving me. Amen.