

From The Pastor's Study

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In The Pastor's Study I try to stay on the positive side if things but the truth is often not such a positive thing. In these times we need to face truth but avoid the panic so many are pushing.

The world has changed, not just our little corner of it, but the whole world and I keep looking for God's hand in it. I could easily go to the extreme and proclaim this is punishment for a world on it's way to hell. Many discussions are all over the web that we are in the end times, that Jesus will return soon. And certainly scripture can easily be read to support this. These are scary times for sure, and I am no different than most of America, I am concerned.

I wonder if our grandparents and great-grandparents felt much the same way in the late 20's and 30's when the world was in the grips of what is known as The Great Depression. When I was younger I listened as my grandparents and even my parents spoke of that trying time; about the rationing, the bread lines, my stepfather talked about driving a truck for \$0.25 a day. I was told of pets being used to feed families because food was so scarce.

Before the war my grandfather, the person I was named after, was a carpenter but he was also a fisherman. That was how he fed his family. Part of his daily catch would be sold, some was swapped for other food or things needed for his family, the rest was used to feed family and if there was enough, friends and neighbors. I now wish I had listened more intently to those stories and the things they did to survive that terrible period. I wish some of those who survived that time were around today to guide us through the days to come.

This pandemic is having a devastating affect on our nation and our world but after this passes there is more to come and it may well be around for a long time. Businesses have closed, people are without jobs, some supplies are getting scarce and it will not get better soon. Our financial system, along with the rest of the world is in trouble and a complete turn around is going to be required and it will be harder on some than others. But I don't believe we are in the end times, but it is a time when this nation has to develop an attitude that is completely foreign to most people.

The hording of something as simple as toilet paper is an indication of our need to change our view of "things". During The Great Depression we learned that sharing

with our neighbors was a key to survival, that doing what Jesus would do helped to get through times like this. Just like our food pantry; we will continue to provide for those in need as long as we can, that is what Jesus would do. If our neighbor needs something, Jesus calls us to do what we can.

We, as Christians, know something those outside the church don't know; the government isn't going to save us, they wouldn't even if they could, the politicians are still trying to figure out how to gain by this. But we have something that can't be taken by hoarders can't take from us or prevent us from having; we have Jesus Christ. We don't face anything alone, Jesus has promised to be with us, always, and He never goes back on His word. The nation needs to discover our secret; churches need to once again be filled with people seeking the kind of help only Jesus can provide.

We have the responsibility to pray for one another, for His church, for our families, for the hospital staff, for the clerks and workers in groceries, for fire and police departments, for our service members and their families, for those who lost their income, even for those people who treat us poorly.

Yes, these are trying times and we are called to be on the front lines. Not on the front lines like those who are fighting the virus but like those who spend time on our knees seeking God's grace for those who suffer.

May the God of mercy be with us all, now and forever.