

*“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).*

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## GOD ON SOCIAL-DISTANCING

Larry R. Ping II

This current distress during which the world is suffering has introduced several new things. One of which is the idea of “social-distancing.” The technical definition of this is “a set of non pharmaceutical infection control actions intended to stop or slow down the spread of a contagious disease.”

Were you aware this is not a new concept to God, or His Word? Did you realize God, on numerous occasions, commanded “social-distancing”? Consider these passages as verification.

**“THOU SHALT NOT FOLLOW A MULTITUDE TO DO EVIL” (EX. 23:2).** When a person of faith sees evil and the workers thereof, he is to *“Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away”* (Prov. 4:15).

**“WHEN THOU ART COME INTO THE LAND WHICH THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE, THOU SHALT NOT LEARN TO DO AFTER THE ABOMINATIONS OF THOSE NATIONS” (DT. 18:9).** God made His wandering children constantly aware of the dangers of socially joining the heathen nations of the Promised Land. Regarding the practices of those

folks God said, *“Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them”* (Dt. 12:30).

**“HE THAT WALKETH WITH WISE MEN SHALL BE WISE; BUT A COMPANION OF FOOLS SHALL BE DESTROYED” (PROV. 13:20).**

We ought to surround ourselves with those who are wisdom-filled (Col. 1:9). Encircling ourselves with worldly folks will bring destruction. Consider what happened when *“the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose”* (Gen. 6:2). *“God saw...the wickedness”* which resulted and said, *“I will destroy man whom I have created”* (Gen. 6:5, 7).

**“BE NOT DECEIVED; EVIL COMMUNICATIONS CORRUPT GOOD MANNERS” (1 COR. 15:33).** Any time the Bible employs the words *“Be not deceived”*, it indicates some have already been tricked, and men will continue to be so if the warning is not heeded! Solomon *“loved many strange women”* (1 Ki. 11:1). He had *“seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart”* (1 Ki. 11:3). Nehemiah 13:26 says with reference to Solomon, *“nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.”* If the wise man can be deceived in this regard, so can I!

God, in calling for His people to “socially-distance” themselves from *“unfruitful works of darkness”* (Eph. 5:11), displays His great love and concern. May we heed the Divine call to keep ourselves from those who cause harm.

## “SUCH A TIME AS THIS”

John Edwards

With letters sent throughout the kingdom of Ahasuerus *“to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day”* (Est. 3:13), Mordecai said to Esther, *“... who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”* (Est. 4:14). During these challenging, uncertain times, when millions of people are under stay at home orders and things are changing rapidly every day, here are some spiritual things to consider *“for such a time as this”*:

**LIFE IS UNCERTAIN.** The wise man said, *“Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth”* (Prov. 27:1). Remember what James said to those who say, *“To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain”* (Jas. 4:13)? *“Whereas ye know*

*not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that”* (Jas. 4:13-14). Such a time as this points out what we do not know, and the need to say, *“If the Lord will”*.

**HELP COMES FROM THE LORD.** Such a time as this is but an expression of our need for God who can do more for us than earthly persons. *“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth”* (Ps. 121:1-2).

**NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN.** 'Tis true what Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 — *“... there is no new thing under the sun.”* There have been pandemics before, as well as sickness, death, earthquakes, famines, floods and the like. As bad as it is, it has been much worse! Imagine such a time as this: a seven year famine and all countries going to Egypt to buy corn (Gen. 41:57). No rain for 3 1/2 years (Jas. 5:17). All you have is *“an handful of meal”* and *“a little oil in a cruse”* (1 Ki. 17:12). *“Great famine in*

*Samaria...So we boiled my son”* (2 Ki. 6:24, 29). *“No peace, but great vexations upon all inhabitants of the countries”* (2 Chr. 15:5). *“Great dearth throughout all the world”* (Acts 11:28).

**NO CAUSE FOR PANIC.** Many today are gripped by fear. Anxiety and worry weigh a person down. *“Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop”* (Prov. 12:25). Read Matthew 6:25-34 to learn, *“Take no thought for your life”*. The birds are still singing and the flowers are still blooming. *“Be not dismayed whate'er betide, God will take care of you”*, we sing. *“Be careful for nothing...”* (Phil. 4:6).

**PRAY.** Rather than fear and anxiety, *“...in every thing by prayer and supplication...let your requests be made known unto God”* (Phil. 4:6). The Lord taught, *“Men ought always to pray, and not to faint”* (Lk. 18:1). Paul instructed, *“Praying always...”* (Eph. 6:18).

**GIVE THANKS.** Notice how Paul said to pray — *“with thanksgiving”* (Phil. 4:6). We are taught to give thanks in all circumstances (1 Th. 5:18). There

are so many things to be thankful for, in such a time as this!

**BE FORBEARING AND LONGSUFFERING.** At such a time as this, when people are fearful and afraid, depressed and stressed, it's easy for folks to act and speak in ways they would not otherwise. We need a good dose of Colossians 3:13 — *“Forbearing one another”* — and 1 Corinthians 13:4 — *“Charity suffereth long, and is kind.”* No need to fall out with brethren who seek to serve the Lord in these challenging times.

**HELP OTHERS.** Some are doing very well. Others are barely doing. Have a wide open hand (Dt. 15:7-8), remember the principle set forth in 2 Corinthians 8:14-15, and look on the things of others (Phil. 2:4).

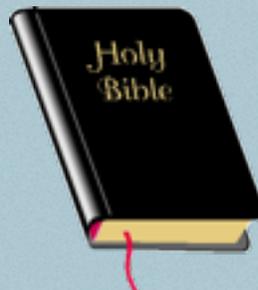
**BE RIGHT WITH GOD.** If your heart is not right with God, you need to make it right. As one who has never obeyed the gospel of Christ: Hear the word (Rom. 10:17), believe (Heb. 11:6), repent (Acts 17:30), confess Christ (Mt. 10:32), be baptized (Acts 2:38) and be faithful (Rev. 2:10). As a Christian who has sinned: repent, confess and pray (Acts 8:22; 1 Jn. 1:9).

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