

PRAYING THE WORD OVER THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

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Does it seem to you that life is out of control right now? Many believers are worried and concerned as the Coronavirus ravages the earth. And yet, we have an All-Powerful Father who was not surprised in the least by this seemingly catastrophic event in world history.

The Corona Virus has sparked fear, stress, uncertainty, hoarding, greed, panic, hostility and more! All of these things are not God's desire for His people. In fact, Jesus calls us to courage, peace, boldness, generosity, level-headedness and kindness! If the people of God begin to exhibit the characteristics of the world in this hour, our Enemy, Satan, will win a great victory! However, if those who are committed to being Christ-followers will stand firm and seek His face in this moment, God will receive great glory!

Let's resolve to lean into greater faith, asking God to revive and awaken us, His people. How then, should we pray in the midst of this "unknown" evil that has overtaken our entire world? Let's look to God's Word to inform our prayers:

1. **Pray that a repentant people would turn to God seeking Revival:** "Will You not Yourself revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You "(Psalm 85:6)? John Avant of Life Action Ministries recently said, "...since this

mighty God has invaded our hearts, since He inhabits our lives, we are not out of control. We live in His control. We are empowered with His purpose. We are a part of His plan.

BUT...we have departed from Him. I have and you have. We will feel out of control as long as we stay distant from Him, numb to His call to repent. We will continue to point fingers and fight among ourselves until we find ourselves more astonished by God than we are afraid of a disease or anxious to return to our past patterns. We will feel out of control until we give up our own control and humbly cry out in brokenness, *"I am the problem!"*

He continues, "If there is one thing above all else that is more important in these days (of dealing with Coronavirus) than washing our hands, it is to return to God and let him wash our hearts!"

Prayer: Father God, Creator of the Universe, we bow our hearts before You in repentance. We have tried to control our own circumstances and figure everything out in the midst of the unknown rather than placing our trust in You. Forgive us, Lord, and turn our hearts back towards Yours. May we relinquish control of this harsh reality we are currently living in and trust You to work in the midst of it so that all the world is astonished at Your power and goodness. Help us to emerge from our brokenness before You as holy and purified followers of Jesus, ready to return to active duty on the front lines of Your kingdom instead of trying to control it or figure it out. We bless You, Lord, and ask for Your mercy as we humble ourselves before You.

- 2. Pray for God's people to resist the Devil and have the abundant life Jesus gives us so that others might have it too:** We have an enemy who wants to destroy the people of God as well as take out those who have yet to put their faith in Jesus. In John 10:10, Jesus says, "The

thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” And, James 4:7 says, “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” This is an exciting time for the Church to live up to the expectations and commands of Jesus Christ! Loving and serving others flows from intimacy with the Father. Abundant life results!

Prayer: Lord Jesus, You came to this earth to give those who follow You life...and not just *any* kind of life – *abundant* life! Strengthen us to be the Church You have called us to be so that we might draw others into this amazing abundant life. Help us to stand firm with Your spiritual armor in place (Ephesians 6:10-18), having great faith so that we might extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one (Ephesians 6:16). Help us to live extraordinary lives of service, compassion, and generosity so that those outside of Christ will want what we have more than they want their own selfish desires!

3. Pray that God’s people will overcome fear and anxiety with peace: It is very easy to get overwhelmed and fearful in the midst of the unknown, but God’s word says, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7). “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

Prayer: Prince of Peace, You calmed waves and storms and people wherever You went. May we be carriers of Your peace even when we cannot comprehend the scope of this destructive virus that threatens the lives and livelihoods of many. Help

us to spread peace and not fear wherever we find ourselves. Guard our hearts and minds so that our emotions and thoughts are tuned into You instead of the uncertainty that swirls around us. Help us to be overcomers who help others through this crisis rather than those who live in fear and do nothing but help ourselves. We want You to be made famous because of how we represent You, Lord Jesus.

- 4. Pray for the Church to rise to the opportunities God is giving us to show compassion, creativity and unity that will show off the power of Jesus:** During this uncertain season, people are looking for help from the government and from the medical community, but it seems the Church is perceived as a superfluous entity affected by the virus through having to close its physical doors to contain the spread of the disease. What if the Church became the shining light on the hill, a beacon of hope and transformation, the Living Gospel of Jesus to our neighborhoods and communities? If ever there was a time, this is it! Let's ask God for the Church to do extraordinary things through our Extraordinary God!

Prayer: Compassionate Christ, help Your Church not to shrink back from doing whatever she can to meet needs, to bring hope, to give encouragement, promote unity and creatively reach people with the Gospel! Give us courage and strength to do the extraordinary! Bring us into unity with one another across different faith traditions to help in whatever ways we can, coming alongside of our local, state and federal government officials, first responders, the medical community and social services to meet the needs of people in unprecedented ways! May all that we can do in our humanness be done in the power and strength of Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of the Father! **Prayer:** Pray Jesus' prayer that He prayed over us in John 17:21-26 TLB: "My prayer for all of them is that they will be of one heart and mind, just as you and I are, Father—that just as you are in me and I am in

you, so they will be in us, and the world will believe you sent me."I have given them the glory you gave me—the glorious unity of being one, as we are— I in them and you in me, all being perfected into one—so that the world will know you sent me and will understand that you love them as much as you love me. Father, I want them with me—these you've given me—so that they can see my glory. You gave me the glory because you loved me before the world began!"O righteous Father, the world doesn't know you, but I do; and these disciples know you sent me. And I have revealed you to them and will keep on revealing you so that the mighty love you have for me may be in them, and I in them."

5. **Ask God to protect the elderly and those in compromised health situations who are the most vulnerable to this virus:** We all know people who fall into the high risk group for being susceptible to Covid-19. Maybe you are in that group and are concerned. If so, a powerful and encouraging passage of Scripture to pray over your life is Psalm 23: "Because the Lord is my Shepherd, I have everything I need! He lets me rest in the meadow grass and leads me beside the quiet streams. He gives me new strength. He helps me do what honors him the most. Even when walking through the dark valley of death I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me, guarding, guiding all the way. You provide delicious food for me in the presence of my enemies. You have welcomed me as your guest; blessings overflow! Your goodness and unfailing kindness shall be with me all of my life, and afterwards I will live with you forever in your home."Let's join together and ask God for protection of anyone of any age who is at risk. Ask Him to bring healing to those who are ill as well. Here is a good blessing to pray for those you know in this high risk group: "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your

soul is getting along well” (3 John 1:2). **Prayer:** Lord our God, You are good and filled with mercy. You are filled with compassion and love all You have made (Psalm 145). We ask You to remove sickness from our midst: “But you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water; and I will remove sickness from your midst” (Exodus 23:25). You love us beyond what we can imagine and have our best interests at heart. Please protect those who are elderly, have compromised immune systems, or have other health issues that put them at high risk for this disease. We ask for Your divine intervention and protection and that You will help healthy people to take great care to protect others and serve them.

- 6. Come against depression for those who have lost jobs whose children are out of school, or who feel helpless or isolated:** Being separated from loved ones and/or friends causes many people to struggle with feelings of being left alone and lost. Please consider how you can be an encourager and to pay attention to the situation of others who might be quarantined. For those whose work situations have changed, please be sensitive and creative. Consider hiring people who are out of work or find ways to support businesses that are working differently such as restaurants that are delivering food instead of serving food in a sit-down restaurant. Pray for parents of children who are out of school and may not be able to go to their jobs or get a good childcare situation. With the unknown comes uncertainty and fear. Ask God to use you to be an instrument He can use to be the hands and feet of Jesus for others.

Prayer: Father, thank You that we can cast all of our anxieties on You because You care for us (1 Peter 5:7). You know the plans You have for us...plans to prosper us and not to harm us, plans to give us hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11). Thank You that You heal those who are

brokenhearted and bind up their wounds (Psalm 147:3), whether physical, spiritual or emotional. When the righteous cry for help, You hear them and deliver them out of all their troubles. You are near to the brokenhearted and save the crushed in spirit (Psalm 34:18). We are grateful that when those who labor come to you with heavy burdens, You will give them rest (Matthew 11:28). Lord, Your word says that You give families to those who are lonely and for that we are so thankful (Psalm 68:6). Please do this for those who feel that they have no one and feel depressed and alone. We pray for those families whose children are out of school for an uncertain amount of time. Provide for these families, Lord. Give them all that they need. Most of all, help us to remember that You have commanded us to “be strong and courageous” and not to tremble or be dismayed for You, the Lord our God are with us (Joshua 1:9). May the Gospel of Jesus be made famous in the midst of this virus. May the enemy be defeated and may the Church experience spiritual awakening that transforms individuals, families, businesses, schools, and our entire culture here in this nation and across the earth! In Jesus’ powerful Name, Amen!

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