Coronavirus Social Distancing Daily Devotion #18

Pressing On

**Philippians 3:12 (NASB)** *12 “ Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus*.”

Paul was a man who knew his calling. He knew what God had put in his heart and he did it. He surrendered to the call of God to share the Gospel with everyone he met in every town and village he visited. And he was greatly opposed from nature to animals to people, but he kept going.

I’ll let him tell you about it*,* ***2 Corinthians 11:23-28 (NASB)*** *23  “Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. 24  Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. 25  Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. 26  I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; 27  I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. 28  Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches*.” Folks, that’s pressure! But he kept going.

We are now deep into our social distancing and it looks like it will go for at least another month. And by now you are greatly getting on each other’s nerves. If you have more than one person in your home, you probably feel like a pent-up animal that is ready to tear into the next victim who gets in your path. This is a weird time for all of us. It’s hard. It’s hard because we want to get out and do our next thing. We don’t like to be trapped or even feel trapped. And the truth of it is, we don’t like people enough to be around them this long without going and doing our thing.

Or you might be feeling the opposite. For you, maybe its loneliness. Maybe you are wondering when you can be with someone again. Just to be in the presence of another human being, someone you can actually talk to and get a verbal response. That too is a lot to deal with. That’s a lot of pressure.

That’s why Paul becomes a good example, in the face of much adversity and weird days, he kept going. He experienced all that. He was alone at times. He was in crowded places. He was hurt and frustrated and challenged by others. He was accused, etc. But he kept going.

You know why he kept going? Because he had a bigger goal in mind. His focus was on the souls of men and women. He was bent on obeying the Lords command to reach as many people as he could before it was too late for them. He knew the path of unrighteousness would lead people to hell. And he couldn’t stand to think about that. So, he kept going. He did everything he could to get his focus off himself and his problems and focused on Jesus and the eternal joy that was waiting for him. That’s what we need to do right now. We need to get our focus off ourselves and put it back where it should be - on Jesus and His will for each of us. Do you think about your neighbor right now? Do you think about your co-worker right now? Someone, other than yourself? Pick up the phone and call someone. Write a quick note to someone. Text them. Send them a Facebook message. Pray for them. Do something so you are not the focus of your life. I promise you God will lift you out of your difficult time because you will become a tool in His hand to reach someone before their soul enters eternity.

This is how Paul concluded his thought in his letter to the church in Philippi.Phil 2:13 – “*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14  I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”*

Now more than ever is the time to keep pressing on.