

Life in Quarantine

David Flatt

Life in quarantine has begun to settle in for most of us. At the beginning of this virus outbreak, some did not take the situation seriously and some took precautions. Regardless of what we thought, life as we knew it began to rapidly change beyond our control.

We have made various adjustments to daily life. Many people have begun to use delivery services for groceries. Schools and universities are using online instruction. Restaurants are closed. Katy Mills Mall and the Galleria are closed. Barbershops and beauty salons are closed. "Social distancing" has been introduced into our vocabulary.

Aside from those who have been meritoriously deemed "essential," most people have been ordered to stay at home. The busy lives we have led for so long have come to a grinding halt. Perhaps now, we are beginning to gain a new perspective.

There is a constant awareness of the global pandemic. While we may try to distract ourselves, coronavirus is like a dark cloud hovering over us. Most people are unsettled with fear and uncertainty. We understandably rely on employment, supply chains, and the medical profession; yet, many of these foundations have been shaken. When these structures are proven vulnerable, where do we find stability?

First, we can find stability in our families. Most people have probably spent more time with their families in the last three weeks than they have in the last three months. Everyone in the family has a busy schedule. We get up in the morning and within about an hour, everyone in the family is off in a different direction. Maybe family members will collide for an hour or two at the end of the day, but maybe not.

Yes, so much time with the family can be difficult and frustrating. Everyone being under the same roof for so long is not easy. Yet, families have been given an opportunity to be together unlike any time in the past.

Recognizing being alone was not good for Adam, God gave Adam a helper; a wife (Gen. 2:18). United in marriage, Adam and Eve were to procreate and be wise stewards of God's good creation. Marriage and family served as the building block of society.

Adam and Eve could experience companionship and find strength in one another. Children born into their family could experience stability. Knowledge and love for God would be fostered among humanity through the family.

While there is a lot that has been changed in daily life, we have our families. Yes, being quarantined with our families can be long and noisy. However, when life returns to how it was, there will come a moment when we will wish we could be quarantined with our families again.

Secondly, as God's people, we can find stability in one another. During this difficult time, we have been social distancing. This has impacted our ability to physically be with each other. Yet, there are other ways we can communicate and stay present in each other's lives.

Thanks to technology, we can stay "in-touch." We can call, text, and video-chat. We can even send a card by snail mail. We can always pray for each other. These small acts seem to be especially valued today. We all need to be encouraged. We all need each other. If we do not proactively take steps to be strengthened, quarantine will get the better of us.

Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer (Rom. 12:10-12).

Third, we can find stability in our faith. There are some situations in life which are inescapable and unavoidable. During such times, what can we do? In Romans chapter five, Paul outlines steps the faithful are to take during difficult times.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Rom. 5:1-5).

As Christians, we have peace with God; yet, this peace must be nurtured. Even those who have peace with God can experience tribulation. In this passage, we are told to view suffering as an opportunity to endure like Jesus endured suffering. Endurance is for a purpose. Enduring is how character is produced. As character is produced, hope is realized and valued.

If we have faith in this approach to our present distress, we will not be disappointed with the end result. But, what is the end result? The end result is not the resolution to a specific problem or health crisis we may face. The end result is the culmination of God's plan for human redemption.

When we face a hardship of any kind, we have a tendency to narrowly focus on the hardship. This is understandable. We cannot ignore reality. However, we must not lose perspective of the future of God's people: "*Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power*" (1 Cor. 15:24).

Conclusion

Life in quarantine has not been easy. It doesn't look like it is going to end any time soon. Yet, there are some blessings to find in our time of need. We have been given time to share with our families. We are learning the value of human relationships. We have recognized the need

to maintain connections and encourage one another. We are learning to trust in God. In spite of the uncertainty in the world, God continues to sustain us.

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:31-39).