

**Wednesday, March 18, 2020**  
**Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...**

God's peace to all of you as we weather this "storm" and deal with something that most of us have never experienced. A pandemic like this can create a feeling of paranoia and helplessness for all of us. A situation like this might be very lightly compared to the much worse situation of military men and women who walk in the line of fire during wartime.

These men and women live with a very real threat that the next bullet might find its way to them! They want to be sure to be well-protected, well-trained, and well-prepared for the worst. They also want to stop the enemy that is opposing them.

Many of us (not all, but many) are living with a similar (though, likely with less intensity) outlook on life and the world right now. "If I go out into the world: to the store, to work, or wherever I need to go. . .it is on my mind that the person standing next to me, or who is cashiering, or whatever, could be armed with the weapon that is threatening my peace: namely, the Coronavirus.

It is likely that the time will come when this pandemic will eventually fade into our memories much like 9/11 has, or WWII, etc. In other words, the time will likely come when the Coronavirus Pandemic will be a thing of the past. We will remember it, but it will no longer be a daily threat or concern. And, God-willing, none of us will have lost a loved one in the wake of this global catastrophe.

As Christians, we know Who is in control! We know Who is reigning! It is Jesus Christ, the One who died and ROSE FROM THE DEAD! Even death and the grave were not enough to stop His position of authority in the universe! He is alive! Our celebration of Easter is coming in a few weeks whether or not we will gather that Day for worship. It is not our church service on Easter that gives Easter its power and joy. It is the fact that Jesus rose from the dead!

It helps me to know that to that the Coronavirus is submissive to the authority of Jesus! It will stop being a concern or a threat the very moment that Jesus tells it to STOP! And you and I, as those who have placed our trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior, are always in the Hands of God, even when His Hands are in the midst of the storm! His Hands are always in the midst of the storm when we are in the midst of the storm. This concern that has changed how we are currently living our lives is under the authority of God.

I find great comfort in the account in the Gospels when Jesus calmed the storm. It reads as follows:

"One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, 'Let us go across to the other side of the lake.' So they set out, and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. And they went and woke him, saying, 'Master, Master, we are perishing!' And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. He said to them, 'Where is your faith?' And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, 'Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the waters, and they obey him?'" *(Luke 8: 22-25)*

It is my belief that even "viruses" obey His commands!

God's peace.  
Pastor Jim