

## “Looking in the Right Direction”

When you first open your eyes in the morning after a good night’s sleep (hopefully), what do you see? I believe the answer to that question depends upon WHERE you are looking. Today, right now, WHERE we look could not be more important.

A long time ago, there was a flood. You know the story about Noah and his family, the animals, and the ark. The whole world was covered in water – no land, just water. Everyone was gone except Noah and his immediate relatives and, of course, “two of every sort of living thing on earth.” Noah, following God’s blueprints, built a colossal “zoo boat” which housed all of God’s living creatures on the “face of the waters” for forty days and forty nights. The Bible says in Genesis that there was one sizeable window and one massive door. No balconies. No decks. No screened-in porches. Imagine that! There was only one window to view the storm and stare at the flood waters. And that window, according to Genesis, was at the top of the ark. Needless to say, Noah and his kinfolk did not spend any time looking at the disaster which was all around them. They could only see INSIDE the ark. So, what did they do during those forty days and forty nights? Lovingly, they cared and supported each other and all of God’s creatures. They had WAY too much to do *inside* the ark to care or worry or even think about what was happening *outside* the ark.

Today, right now, our world has found itself smack dab in the middle of another “raging flood” called the Corona Virus Pandemic. People are sick. People are dying. People have died. And, with great sorrow, people will continue to die. All of us have been told to “stay home”, “shelter in place”, and “maintain a social distance between others.” Our way of life has dramatically changed. In a real sense, we are locked down and put away from family, church, community activities, and all social gatherings. We are told to remain in our personal “arks” for at least the next month...maybe forty days and forty nights.

Ok. That’s the hand we’ve all been dealt. How should we play this hand?

**NUMBER ONE:** IMMEDIATELY STOP LOOKING AT THE STORM! Unlike Noah and his clan, we have lots and lots of windows (TV, radio, internet, other media) to study this pandemic. The more time we spend analyzing this “storm” the more ***afraid*** we become. We become hypnotized by fear. After all it’s **really** scary! And its fury continues to explode all around us. But if we all choose to spend our time staring into this plague, we won’t have any time left to...

***NUMBER TWO:*** IMMEDIATELY START *LOOKING* AND *CARING* AND *SUPPORTING* AND, OF COURSE, ***LOVING*** ALL OF GOD’S CREATURES WHO ARE WITH US INSIDE THE ARK. A long time ago, God called Noah and his household to “watch over” (the very first caregivers?) His creation during the first global “pandemic”. Today, right now, God is calling *each* one of us to “watch over” His creation in the midst of another rampant pandemic.

*“But what exactly can I do?” “I am old, feeble, and stuck inside.”*

1. We can enjoy one another sharing, teaching, or playing (following social guidelines)
2. Pray for another; especially ALL of our courageous frontline health and security workers
3. Write a letter or draw a picture to/for someone hospitalized or confined.
4. Call or e-mail a stranger, neighbor, friend, or family member
5. Clean your home or room like it has never before been cleaned.
6. Plant a garden
7. Every morning, create a list of daily activities
8. Clean out that messy closet, dresser, garage, attic, or basement
9. Create a work of art or finish any ongoing project.
10. STAY AWAY FROM PROLONGED TELEVISION VIEWING (especially sometimes depressing cable news)

Soon, God’s time, the “waters will recede.” People will open the doors of their arks and cautiously walk out. This latest pandemic will be over. A vaccine will be available. Life as we have known it may have changed but life will go on.

But *today, right now*, let us all be *very* sure we are spending our time *looking* in the *right* direction. We don’t have to be afraid. We don’t have to live in fear. When we look and care and support each other, we look and live in ***love***...and *that* is where God is today, right now!

God bless you! Don’t forget to bless God. And stay safe in the arms of Christ who has never been required to practice “social distancing”.

***“Come to Me, all you who are hurting and in deep despair and I will give you rest...I will give you peace for your souls.”***  
Matthew 11: 28,29

Looking in your direction and praying for you,      Pastor Dave