
FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES



COVID-19 GOOD NEWS

The COVID-19 panic-demic continues, with about 7,000 fatalities globally and 85 in America. There is plenty of good news in the midst of the COVID-19 panic-demic, and had governments not overreacted, the good news would be much greater.

* COVID-19 is still a small thing compared to influenza, which has infected 36 to 51 million, hospitalized about one-half million, and killed 22,000 and 55,000 *in America alone* since October (“Influenza Preliminary In-Season 2019-2020,” Centers for Disease Control).

* The Wuhan district of China, ground zero for COVID-19, is getting back to work, temporary hospitals are closing, and travel restrictions are being lifted. All of China had only four new (non-imported) infections on March 15.

* The fatality rate for COVID-19 is much smaller than WHO reports are showing. Large numbers of those who have contracted the respiratory virus are not part of the statistics because the symptoms are often so mild. Even *Time* magazine says, “That means the total number of reported cases is very likely an underestimate—and by not counting many mild or asymptomatic cases, we’re likely overestimating the disease’s overall mortality rate. ... COVID-19 LOOKS A LOT CLOSER TO THE SEASONAL FLU THAN TO PREVIOUS CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAKS. A more complete—and, hopefully, less severe—picture of COVID-19 will likely emerge as the outbreak continues, testing capacity increases and data are refined” (“The WHO estimated COVID-19 Mortality,” *Time*, Mar. 9, 2020).

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COVID-19 PRAYER

For God’s people, difficult times call for prayer rather than panic. We have *glorious* promises, such as Romans 5:3-11 and 8:28. That’s why Proverbs says, “The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.” We aren’t foolish, but we are bold, because “God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7). Prayer in God’s will changes things. It’s God’s eternal plan that it be so. The God who answered Hezekiah’s prayer for deliverance from the fearful might of Assyria is still alive and still

in the prayer answering business. I would urge each born again child of God to take some special time to pray about this situation, and to keep praying day-by-day until we have deliverance. God has told us to pray for those who are in authority, “that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (1 Timothy 2:1-2). That is exactly what we need! If God has specifically instructed His people to pray for this, is He not ready to answer? President Trump called for a national day of prayer last week. I wonder how many Bible-believing

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COVID-19 GOOD NEWS

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* In a study of 72,000 COVID-19 cases in China, 81% were of the mild variety, while 5% were critical. The overall reported fatality rate was 2.3%, but again that doesn't take into account the fact that a great many cases are undiagnosed. The fatality rate for those 80 years old and older was 14.8%, which means that 85% of even the oldest people who contract COVID-19 survive. There were 5 deaths among health workers (for 1700 cases), and no deaths for ages 9 and younger ("Summary of a Report of 72,314 Cases," JAMA Network, Feb. 24, 2020).

* Contrary to the World Health Organization's demands, the United Kingdom has not taken the drastic measures that many countries have taken, such as banning large gatherings and forcing school closures. Mark Woolhouse of the University of Edinburgh, says he supports the UK plan "because it is more sustainable over time than that of WHO" ("Why is the UK approach to coronavirus so different?" *New Scientist*, Mar. 13, 2020). Sustainability is a common sense type of thing that WHO-driven panic-mongers aren't talking about.

* Iran has scaled back its terrorist activity across the Middle East because of the coronavirus ("IDF indicates Iran scaling back," *The Times of Israel*, Mar. 17, 2020).

* The first COVID-19 vaccine (by the company Moderna) has begun human testing in Washington state ("Biotech company ships first batches of vaccine," *Fox News*, Mar. 16, 2020).

* Israel's Ministry of Science and Technology branch at Galilee (MIGAL) has a vaccine that it hopes will achieve safety approval in a short time through expedited trials and fast-track approvals ("Israeli breakthrough in coronavirus vaccine imminent," *Israel Today*, Mar. 16, 2020). MIGAL's vaccine is a by-product of the development of a vaccine against Avian coronavirus.

* Other companies have vaccines ready for testing. The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) is backing a vaccine developed by Oxford University and one by the US company Inovio, which had a vaccine ready three hours after the gene sequence was published in January. "It plans clinical trials in April and to have a million doses by December, if the approach works" ("The race to test coronavirus antiviral drugs and vaccines," *New Scientist*, Mar. 11, 2020).

* The French company Sanofi Pasteur is hybridizing the COVID-19 virus with a baculovirus already approved for its flu vaccine as a possible fast track to a vaccine that could be quickly mass produced.

* Remdesivir, an experimental antiviral drug that holds out hope as a COVID-19 blocker, is undergoing large human trials in China and the US.

* Kaletra, a combination of anti-HIV drugs that stops viral replication, has also shown some effectiveness in trials in China.

* The best news is that any individual infected by the deadly virus of sin can be healed through saving faith in the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, and escape certain eternal death. Sin has a 100% mortality rate, but Dr. Jesus has a 100% success rate for those who come to Him by the door of saving faith. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).



COVID-19 PRAYER

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churches prayed? God doesn't hear the prayers of those who come to Him in any other way than through the blood atonement of Jesus Christ. "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Timothy 2:5-6). Personally, I pray that panic will subside, that good reason will reign, that government leaders will have wisdom and not be driven by panic-mongers, that God will be merciful to an undeserving people, and that people will be confronted with their mortality and turn to Jesus Christ. The day of the Lord has not yet come. It will come soon enough and the pestilences and other judgments will be unprecedented (Matthew 24:3-31). As for prayer for leaders, the Bible teaches us that the governments are in God's hands and that He can and does lead unsaved men. The prophet Daniel said, "... he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding" (Da. 2:21). Let's do some real praying, brethren, in these panic times. How is your prayer life? Let's use this occasion to raise the temperature of our prayer lives to a higher level. Do you have a daily prayer closet when you do some real intercessory prayer before the throne of grace? Do you have family altars when the family really prays together? Do you have active prayer partners? Does your church have real prayer meetings when the people actually pray together? This has become a rarity, and it is high time to get back to prayer.

THE TALKING EAR

The following is from creationmoments.com, February 12, 2020: "Can your ear talk to you? New research seems to show that your ear actually generates sound that echoes whatever you hear. Startled scientists are making new discoveries that appear to show that we have hearing aids built into our ears. Yes, our ears do produce sounds. When sound hits the eardrums, the vibrations move bones within the ear, causing a bone called the stapes to vibrate. These vibrations are translated to pneumatic pressure within the cochlea. The oscillating pressure is picked up by tiny inner hairs in the cochlea that vibrate with the sound. These vibrations generate an electrical signal that is sent to the brain. Researchers have learned that outer hair cells within the cochlea respond to the incoming signals by generating audible sounds that can be picked up by tiny microphones. The sounds are generated as the hairs dance up and down in time with the incoming sound, just like the cone of a loudspeaker. The effect is that the ear echoes the incoming sound a few thousandths of a second after it enters the ear. The echo generated within the cochlea is not necessary for hearing. However, scientists suspect that this feedback system helps people smoothly hear sounds that range from soft to loud. Some scientists have voiced their skepticism about these astonishing findings. Our ability to hear sound is much more elegant in design than scientists ever expected. The technically precise details of the ear's design discredit all claims that the ear could have evolved."



SMARTPHONE/SOCIAL MEDIA DANGERS: THE TIME IN WHICH WE LIVE

It is a time when

- * the average teen spends almost 11 hours per day in consuming electronic media (TV, radio, internet, etc.)
- * 53% of children go online with no parental supervision
- * 38% of teens have received sexually suggestive content via a device
- * very young children are becoming addicted to online pornography, with their first exposure as young as 8 years old
- * 56% of children 8-11 and 69% of 12-year-olds in America have a smartphone
- * the average smartphone user touches his phone 2,600+ times every day
- * 66% admit to *nomophobia* (no-mobile-phone-phobia), the fear of not having your phone
- * 40% of smartphone users check their phones in the middle of the night
- * 52% of teens sit around in silence, staring at their smartphones when together with friends
- * 88% of American youth 18-29 use social media and 45% say they are online “on a near-constant basis”
- * there are 2.5 billion monthly Facebook users (one-third of the global population)
- * 90% of teens use Snapchat and 72% use Instagram
- * “If you walk into any middle school in the United States and stop a random 13-year-old girl and ask her how many followers she has on Instagram, she will tell the exact number as of 5 minutes ago” (Jesse Weinberge, *The Boogeyman Exists*, p. 138).
- * new apps like TikTok can explode in popularity from zero to half a billion users in a matter of months
- * 95% of the most watched YouTube videos are highly sexualized music videos
- * the top YouTube celebrity is a video gamer nicknamed PewDiePie with 102 million subscribers, a young man who has made about \$90 million through the social currency of his YouTube channel
- * one very liberal-minded company (Google) controls 73% of all internet searches (on all devices) and 93% of smartphone searches
- * six very liberal-minded corporations own most of the news and broadcast media in America, controlling 90% of what people read, watch, and listen to.

INFORMATION

The Friday Church News Notes is designed for use in churches and is published by Way of Life Literature's Fundamental Baptist Information Service. Unless otherwise stated, the Notes are written by David Cloud. Of necessity we quote from a wide variety of sources, but this obviously does not imply an endorsement. We trust that our readers will not be discouraged. It is God's will that we know the times (1 Ch. 12:32; Mat. 16:3) and that we be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. The News Notes remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the Lord's coming. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ? "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:11-14). This material is sent only to those who personally subscribe to the Fundamental Baptist Information Service mailing list. To SUBSCRIBE, go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/wayoflife/subscribe.html>. TO UNSUBSCRIBE OR CHANGE ADDRESSES, go to the very bottom of any email received from us and click "Manage My Subscription." Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org.
