There is truly nothing new under the sun (Ecclesiastes 1:9-11) and we have a bad habit of not looking back at times where we were informed by "experts" and "sources that "certain clouds of doom, destruction, plague, and approaching death" would come upon this country and the world if we did not take certain actions or precautions. Despite all of the "absolute, undeniable" facts thrown at us that said we were either going to freeze to death or bubble and broil depending on the time of year, or man-made disasters that would see us extinct by 1975, 1988, 2000, 2010, 2012 and pretty much every year since then, hey...we're still here, alive and kicking by the grace, mercy, and sovereign guidance of the LORD God Almighty who will not let this world or anything else operate apart from His will and direction. It seems that in the sixty plus years I have lived, there has always been some kind of "disease" or "crisis" that got the world's attention, but not often to the point where we got on our faces before God in fear and repentance for our sins and wickedness.

Allow me for a moment to go on a tangent. We love to quote and confess 2 Chronicles 7:14 when it looks as if we are at the end of all we hold dear, but once we see that all is clear, we gleefully and unashamedly spiral back down into the paganism we love and wish would never end. We were hit in the 1980's with the AIDS epidemic that affected and ended the lives of thousands of sexually active men and women either attracted to the same sex or were just plain bed-hopping with anyone who looked decent at 2:00 AM in the light of the lounge. Condoms were easier to find than upholding the character it took to say "NO" and keep one's respective clothing on. Schools were teaching incorrect anatomical lessons in that the young generation were somehow persuaded to accept the idea that their brains were located in the organs between their legs and to either ignore or deny the consequences of their actions. That's what the Planned Parenthood clinic is for now, isn't it? The gift of intimacy with your spouse (of the opposite sex) in the bonds of marriage designed by God for both pleasure and procreation has ended up in the hands of the world, becoming a tool for mere gratification and nothing else.

This blatant and inexcusable behavior is not what I was originally going to write about, although it needs to be addressed by godly men in the pulpits of Bible-believing churches and by responsible, mature parents who are not afraid to be blunt when discussing this with their children. That topic is for another time. I want to bring your attention to another issue where the true church of Jesus Christ can do the most good in this increasingly godless society and be the witness He told us to be before He went back to heaven (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8, 4:12). The church has largely been an example of charity and love when it comes to health and the need for effective care of the saints and those who are on the edge of eternity. The disciples of the Lord Jesus have tended to serve on the front line when crises and concerns were and are still bombarding us and the world. Christians were the first people to originate and develop the first hospitals in the early Middle Ages. There were believers such as Alexander Fleming, who discovered penicillin, Edward Jenner, who developed the smallpox vaccine, Louis Pasteur, who pioneered in the field of bacterial research and hygiene, and who gave us the vaccine for rabies. There were physicians and explorers like Albert Schweitzer and David Livingstone, both of whom served the LORD as medical missionaries. We know of the work of Clara Barton, the Civil War nurse who founded the organization known today as the Red Cross. Medical history also records for us the work of the nurse who developed medical care procedures in wartime situations, Florence Nightingale. We have men and women in medical practice today who serve the Lord Jesus Christ in specialties such as pediatrics, oncology, nephrology, psychiatry, neurology, general surgery, obstetrics, and family practice. If you have a doctor who prays before he treats your symptoms, then take the time to praise God for this blessing He has given to you.

The point is that this fallen world has been inundated with epidemics, plagues, pandemics, influenza outbreaks, cholera, and diseases that have yet to be conquered through medical research and testing of trial medications going on around the world and in America now. We are now seeing the end of the tunnel, so to speak, concerning the spread and prevention of the COVID-19 virus which originated in China, a nation not known for its compassion towards its citizenry and has been deceptive at the least towards its neighbors and foes. I am, as are many of my fellow Americans, convinced that the "Coronavirus" is a deliberate biological weapon that was conveniently used by the world's governments as a kind of "test run" for global conformity and a pure power grab on the parts of many governors and mayors in the USA, and has been a means of isolating and frightening the public with a myriad of "facts" from a government currently in power who could really care less about the welfare of its people.

The virus is life threatening to be sure, and it does not hurt to take some common sense precautions around those prone to either have it or are at risk, but that is the procedure to follow when dealing with any familiar or unfamiliar communicable disease. I spent nearly twenty years as a hospital chaplain and know what procedures to take when approaching a highly contagious patient when they requested prayer or had other spiritual needs. I do not recall some faceless government "bean counter" stopping me from doing my duty then, and it should not be that way now when it comes to pastoral care in crisis situations, especially in hospitals and other care centers. The souls of people and their eternal destiny are in the balance.

At the time of this writing, citizens and state governments have openly declared that they have had enough of the indecisions and fear mongering they perceive in the Federal government. Conservative governors in the states of Texas, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama and others are issuing executive orders freeing their citizens from having to wear masks, or what I refer to as "machine washable petri dishes". Orders and legal actions have abolished "social distancing", and other burdens. Churches, which have been the hardest hit and most harassed of all the public gathering places, are now attempting to get their members back together for the personal worship and fellowship which we need as a family in Christ (Hebrews 10:25). We are tired of having our lives micromanaged by policy wonks, and the church of Jesus Christ should be the leading voice for the rights of the people to gather, to talk without fear, to embrace their loved ones, to visit the aged in the nursing homes who have lived under a shadow of cruel and unnecessary fear and isolation, and to enjoy the freedom to gather together as a family in the first place, holidays and all.

All authentic followers of Jesus Christ are without excuse and should now be telling everyone that these crises have not caught the LORD by surprise and that we do not need to place our faith and trust in fallible people who have devious natures, but to turn to the living and true Lord and God for peace, real answers, assurance, and salvation through the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ, who is the ONLY way to God (John 14:6). He said it, I didn't. If God Almighty told you that Jesus is and will always be the ONLY way to have mercy, grace, and forgiveness and there is no other way, who are you to say or disagree otherwise? He did not consult any one of us, nor did He put it within us to have the ability to save ourselves apart from Him (Ephesians 2:8-9). Dedicated pastors, Christian doctors, nurses, dentists, and public servants throughout the course of civilization have risked their lives at times to stay with the sick and dying regardless of how advanced the diseases were or their lethality, knowing full well that they could die as well. We honor and salute the men and women of law enforcement, animal rescue workers, and first responders who stay behind when natural disasters hit the country and who trust that their faith that the LORD will either see them through or welcome them into glory. The Lord Jesus never distanced Himself from anybody who sought Him or needed His compassionate presence. He charged headlong into the fray of our sins, bearing them all on the cross without complaint or argument, and freely did so out of His love and mercy towards us (Romans 5:6-11). It is a gift we do not deserve nor can we earn. Even now He is reaching out to all of you who are reading this message. Be certain and assured that He does love and care for you in these last days of history (1 Peter 5:6-7). There is no distance between you and Jesus. Call on Him to forgive and save you. He will never turn you away or leave you (Hebrews 13:5). He is ready to welcome you home with not just a touch, but a loving embrace. Glory to His name.