

Keeping your head during the coronavirus crisis



By **Jerry Newcombe**

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Some wag once changed the opening line of Rudyard Kipling's classic poem, "**If**," this way: "If you can keep your head while all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you...*you haven't understood the gravity of the situation.*"

And so it seems to be with the coronavirus crisis.

I can't remember the last time church was canceled. (I think it was during one of the hurricanes we frequently experience in Florida.) We as a family ended up having a mini-service in our own home.

On the other hand, one can't help but feel that fears surrounding the virus are being exaggerated. We are taking all due precautions because of the coronavirus.

Every morning when I arise, coronavirus or not, I try and repeat a number of Scriptural truths to put me in the right frame of mind. It keeps me positive and focused. I go through them in the night as well.

I recommend this practice because this is such a negative world. I cannot imagine what life would be like if all we did was watch cable news. To watch that news all the time, we could easily lose perspective on life.

Here are several Biblical truths I try to bathe my mind with. My goal is the renewal of my mind:

1. All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purposes. [Rom 8:28]

2. I give thanks in all circumstances.

- 3. If God is for us, who can be against us?**
- 4. He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also, along with Him, freely give us all things?**
- 5. Because of Jesus, I am righteous in God's sight.**
- 6. God is pleased with me.**
- 7. God approves of me.**
- 8. I have been forgiven. I forgive those who have sinned against me. I walk in forgiveness. I don't hold any grudges.**
- 9. I am a son of God.**
- 10. I am a friend of God.**
- 11. I was chosen before the foundation of the earth.**
- 12. My past is forgiven.**
- 13. My present is abundant life in Christ.**
- 14. My future is eternal life with Christ.**
- 15. I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.**
- 16. And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.**
- 17. The Lord will fulfill His purpose for me.**
- 18. By His grace I will fulfill my God-given destiny.**
- 19. God promises to give us wisdom when we ask for it, believing.**
- 20. I am more than a conqueror through Him who loves us.**

21. God is leading me, and I follow His lead.

22. Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. (This means: God is greater than Satan.)

23. Look to others, and be distressed. Look to self, and be depressed. Look to Jesus, and be blessed.

24. By God's grace, I am generous, and I look out for the interests of others.

25. He who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus.

26. Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.

27. In all your ways, acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.

28. God says, "No good thing will I withhold from those who walk uprightly."

29. With God, all things are possible.

30. To live is Christ. To die is gain.

While taking all common-sense precautions – including getting plenty of sleep and exercise and, of course, washing, washing, washing – focus on God to stay positive in a negative world.

This piece is being written around the time of St. Patrick's Day. I'm reminded how the great saint, who brought Christianity to Ireland, used to pray regularly for God's safety in very dangerous times. He developed (or perhaps it was developed later, based on his teachings) a prayer called "The Breastplate of St. Patrick."

Tradition tells us St. Patrick prayed: "I arise today / Through God's strength to pilot me: / God's might to uphold me, / God's wisdom to guide me, /

God's eye to look before me, / God's ear to hear me, / God's word to speak for me, / God's hand to guard me, / God's way to lie before me, / God's shield to protect me.../ Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, / Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, / Christ on my right, Christ on my left, / Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise." Amen.

May God help us to keep our head during the coronavirus. Try to stay safe. This too shall pass.

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