

# The Gospel Unashamed

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."

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~ All articles are written by Terry Carter unless otherwise stated ~

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## Spiritual Lessons from Covid

My wife and I, like so many other people in our nation and world, have had Covid. We both came down with it last fall. While it was tougher than we expected and lasted much longer than we expected, we made it through without needing to go to the hospital or receive any special treatments. There are many out there who have not been so fortunate.

After having had Covid, I can say that I would not wish it on anyone. I know that for some people it is very mild, but for many it is anything but mild. However, while the experience was rather unpleasant, there are some things that I learned from it. I thought I might share some of these lessons in hopes that others can learn them without having to go through that experience.

I am intentionally staying away from politics in this article. It is more than unfortunate that politics have played such a role in this whole situation.

While I was sick with Covid, I really didn't care about the politics of it at all. I wish that the politics could be taken from it even now, but I'm afraid that will not happen anytime soon. Nevertheless, I am sticking to spiritual lessons here.

**First**, I learned that life is fragile. You may be thinking, "of course,

everybody knows that already." It is true that we all know that intellectually, but it is different when your own life is involved. We have all had close calls from time to time, but this was different for me.

For some ten days or more, my condition did not seem to be changing at all. We were monitoring our oxygen levels in case we needed to go to the hospital. Fortunately, they never dropped to that point. But every time I checked it I knew that it was possible that things were (should this say, 'could turn') turning for the worse. Living with that possibility for so many days in a row made it crystal clear just how fragile our lives really are. Just a tiny little virus could put my very earthly existence at risk. I was reminded of the words of Job.

**"In whose hand is the life of every living thing, And the breath of all mankind?" Job 12:10 (NKJV)**

The truth is that our lives are always in God's hand but most days we never stop to think about that. We go to bed every night fully expecting to wake up the next day and go about our business. We leave the house in the morning fully expecting to return that evening.

Covid gave me reason to think carefully about just how unsure those thoughts really are. We need to serve the Lord to the best of our ability every day as it may be our last.

**Second**, the previous lesson has an immediate implication. It is that we are fully reliant on God. Again, we often realize this intellectually without living it out experientially.

My doctor's office did not want to see me at all. All they said was that I should go to the emergency room if my oxygen level dropped too low. I was hoping that I could do something to avoid that. I know that there are some treatments that may help but have been fought against by the media and some politicians. I had no way to get any of those as far as I knew. I felt completely abandoned by the medical community.

However, I knew that I had not been abandoned by God. I knew that whether I lived or died, I was completely in His hands.

I relied on Him completely as there was nowhere else to turn. I knew that I wanted to be in His hands whether I lived or died. I certainly have more faith in Him than in the medical community anyhow. I prayed for myself, my wife, and others.

More than that, there were many who were praying for me too. I am convinced that that is why we never had to go to the hospital. The Lord deserves all the praise and gratitude.

**"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;" Proverbs 3:5 (NKJV)**

**Third**, I realized that I had not been praying earnestly enough for others who had fought this disease. I had prayed for them of course. But unless they had health conditions that made them more vulnerable, I didn't take it as seriously as I should have. I really didn't realize how sick some of them had been unless they had been in the hospital.

Since I have had Covid, I have prayed much more earnestly and frequently for others. That is not just true for those with Covid. It is not the only thing that can be more serious than it seems from the "outside looking in". We have a duty to pray for one another earnestly.

"Moreover, as for me, **far be it from me that I should sin** against the LORD **in ceasing to pray for you...**" **I Samuel 12:23 (NKJV)**

**Fourth**, I learned just how important compassion for others can be to them. Needless to say, Lisa and I were isolated from the world for two solid weeks. For the next week after that, we tried to limit our contact with others as much as possible just to be extra careful. During that time, I got more text messages, phone calls, and cards, than I could really process. I did not have the energy to respond to all the texts in particular. I appreciated that people were concerned, but there were just too many with which to deal.

However, there are a couple of acts of kindness for which we are very grateful. One couple went to the store for us and left food outside our door. They made a point to bring things that they knew we liked. We had lost our sense of taste and smell and thus eating was more of a chore than a pleasure. We ate because we knew we needed to, not because we wanted to. We didn't even have much appetite. Still, the food was helpful and very much appreciated. The thought behind it meant a great deal to us.

Another woman called to ask if she could bring us a natural supplement that she had read might help. I was

happy to try it as nothing else had helped for over a week and a half by that time. She left it outside our door. As far as I can tell, it didn't help with Covid at all, but it greatly boosted our spirits. Her thoughtfulness and compassion were just what we needed at that time, and it was greatly appreciated.

This all makes me realize just how much a "small" act of kindness can mean to someone who is suffering and feeling alone.

Although Lisa and I were isolated together, neither of us was much company for the other. Still, I can't imagine how it would have been if we hadn't gone through it together. Covid is not the only thing that can make someone feel that way. It is important to consider others who might need some compassion and deliver it to them.

"And **whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water** in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, **he shall by no means lose his reward.**" **Matthew 10:42 (NKJV)**

**Fifth**, I realized how important it is to assemble with God's people. Obviously, we could not meet with the Church for a couple of weeks. I intentionally arrived late, left early, and stayed in the fellowship area the third week just to be careful. I could not teach my classes at Summit for two weeks, either. It was longer than that before I was able to teach again on Wednesday night.

Being away for that long made me realize just how important that fellowship is. I got a taste of that during the shutdowns in early 2020, but this was different. Then I was still able to talk on the phone, text, watch services online, write sermons and record them, etc. I didn't feel nearly as isolated from fellow Christians then as I did while fighting Covid.

I am an introvert by nature and generally don't mind being alone now and then. In fact, I enjoy some time alone every so often. But I can't imagine how people can make it

through life without the support and fellowship of other Christians.

Introvert or not, we need each other in our Christian walk. We need to be there for others, and we need others to be there for us. No wonder we are not to forsake the assembly but are to consider one another.

"24 And let **us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." **Hebrews 10:24-25 (NKJV)**

It is my prayer that we can all learn these lessons. Hopefully you can do that without being sick. If you have already had Covid you probably understand. If you haven't had it, I pray that you won't get it. Either way, I hope to remember these lessons for the rest of my life. Perhaps you will too.