

Recap of 3/22/20 (1 Thessalonians 2:13):

1. Some thoughts on responding to the current crisis:

-Do what Nehemiah and the people of Israel did when they were threatened in the rebuilding of the wall around Jerusalem: Trust God and take prudent precautions. “But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat” (Nehemiah 4:9). They responded with faith (prayer) and prudent action (posted a guard). It’s not right to say that all we have to do is pray...or trust...or have faith. It isn’t lack of faith to take reasonable precautions.

- Respect each other’s decisions about “social distancing” and response to this virus, without judging them. In Paul’s admonition in Philippians 4:9, he says, “Do not be anxious about anything, ...” the Greek word for anxiety there has the meaning of “being unduly concerned,” “having a distracting care.” The issue is undue, distracting, debilitating anxiety. It does not call us to ignore the realities and cares of life, but to take them to the Lord in prayer.

-Pray: for other believers (spiritually, emotionally, physically); for our children and grandchildren and the fears they may be feeling; for first responders, for Doctors, Nurses, and other medical personnel; for local, state, and national leaders for wisdom and right decisions; for unbelievers to come to faith in Christ, share with them as opportunities arise. In 2 Timothy 1:7, Paul tells Timothy, “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.” The timidity (“fear, cowardice”) had to do with Timothy’s use of his spiritual gift(s) and his ministry of preaching the gospel. Paul wasn’t warning against all fear or generic fear, but specifically Timothy’s fear to share his faith.

-Minister as you can to those who are affected in any way by the current situation.

-Remember that God is still in control (Read the Book of Esther for a refresher in God’s sovereignty and providence.

-Psalm 31:14,15 (NLT): “But I am trusting you, O LORD, saying, ‘You are my God!’ My future is in Your hands.”

2. Continuing in our study of the acronym U.F.A.C.T.S. which covers the six lines of evidence for the reliability of the Bible: Unity & consistency, Fulfilled prophecy, Archaeology, Canonicity, Transmission, & Self-testimony; the fourth evidence is canonicity.

3. The issue can be expressed this way: “Why are there only these 66 books in the Bible? Because God is the ultimate author of the Bible, and He inspired only these 66....God determined which books would be in the Bible, and the people of God merely discovered which books these were. Believers did not bestow authority on them; God did.” (Norman L. Geisler)

4. The test applied to the Books included: the authority of the writer; the internal evidence of the book itself (does its’ unique character as inspired and authoritative show through its contents; and its’ universality (was it received, collected, read and used by the early church. (Charles Ryrie)