

## The Effects of Social Distancing

Mark 14:54

54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

In my almost 55 years walking this earth, I have never quite seen a time when our country and our economy has shut itself down like it has these last several weeks. All because we want to “save” lives. There have been many people who have lost their lives due to the illness called COVID-19 and I do not make light of it. Please do not think that I am.

There have been numerous times in my lifetime that I have seen our country go into a “recession” just about every president in my lifetime has had to get our country and our economy through rough times. With the exception of THIS time, this rough patch that our country is going through is SELF-inflicted. Right, wrong, or indifferent is not for me to judge.

I was reading an article early this morning that some were saying they didn’t expect a return of sporting events and concerts until around Thanksgiving. If that is what they are going to do in the secular world; do you think they are going to allow us who are looking for a return to getting back to the house of God off the hook? We are hearing that our lives will never return to “normal”. Terms like shelter in place, and social distancing are going to be common bywords to the “new” normal. My question to you today is simply this, what are the effects of social distancing in the spirit world.

Peter was a man who said, “I will never deny you.” You have a real man’s man walking with you Jesus, these other guys, they may all hightail it and run, but NOT ME. Only to see in times of great trouble, Peter practiced social distancing. “Don’t want to get too close to Jesus now because if I do, I may end up in trouble like Him too.”

I’ll follow after Him, only I am going to keep my distance. It didn’t take long for the effects of social distancing to take effect on him. He was hanging out with sinners by a warm fire. It didn’t take long for someone to come along and say, you don’t look like you belong here. You were one of those guys who was with that Jesus. Peter answered her, who me, no, not me, in fact I can’t even understand what you’re saying. Peter left the light of the fire and instead of running back to God, he ran to the darkness of the porch. Again, he gets busted out, this is one of those guys, “No it’s not” he says. Distancing oneself from the Savior makes one forget the words of the Savior. He practiced such good social distancing from the Savior that he forgot what was spoken by Him several hours before. Finally, someone says, you HAVE to be one of those guys because you don’t TALK like us, so Peter so far removed from the Savior reverts back to his old fisherman ways and starts cussing like a sailor (notice the O and not an E in the spelling). How’s that social distancing working out for you now, tough guy?

2 Samuel 11:1-2

1 And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.

2 And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.

David practiced good social distancing skills here didn't he? He distanced himself from Joab, his army, and all Israel and decided to shelter in place in the palace. He "self-quarantined" if you please. He also distanced himself from God.

You can self-quarantine all you want, but when you self-quarantine from God, the effects are catastrophic. You can't self-quarantine from sin. You know the rest of the story. I don't need to rehash it for you.

The effects of social distancing in the spirit world are detrimental to the child of God. We have got to stay connected to the body of Christ. We have got to stay connected to God. We have got to stay connected to the man of God that He has placed in our lives. I have seen it far too many times, people social distance themselves from God, from the church, from their pastor. Sure they may hang around, but they are so far from the pack that they find themselves right in the devil's crosshairs. Look, we may be having good moves of God at the church "in our house," but I need the church, I miss having church. I need the fellowship of my brothers and sisters in Christ. I need to feel the hands of the man of God in my life on my head praying for me. There is no substitute to having, good old fashioned church, in the house of God. There very well may be a time that the church will have to go underground, but I want what is going on right now with online or teleconference services to be the exception, not the rule. We need to get back to the house of God, I am praying to get back to church the way that we know it. I want to see revival break out in Coalinga, I long to reach this lost and dying city that I reside in with the only saving gospel.

This generation will be able to say, "I remember the COVID-19 crisis of 2020." How are we going to respond? Only those who stay connected to God, their pastor, and their church are going to be able to say. "I may have had to shelter in place in my home, but I refused to shelter myself from God. I didn't social distance myself from God, I survived the shaking. I came forth as gold."

RPS