

"IT IS GOOD FOR ME..."

Ps. 119:71-73

INTRODUCTION

1. Our title: ***"It is good for me..."*** but, with the ellipsis. We are filling in the rest – ***"that I was afflicted."***
2. If that was it, we would be puzzled. Affliction is good? Let's look just a bit more.
 - a. The word "afflicted" has a meaning of "humbled." When the things of life "humble" us and bring us down, we look up. Then, see the rest of the verse.
 - b. "...that I might learn thy statutes."***
3. Learning from God—better than gold and silver. God has made us and He wants us to know and understand His will.
4. Our lesson text instructs us in our approach—turn to God. "Father, what can I learn from the things that happen in life? Will they draw me closer to You?" God says, "Yes, they should. I made it possible."
5. Needless to say, the past twelve months have been a doozy have they not? Who would have thought it, but you know—did we not lean more on our Lord and His word?
 - a. A virus can bring victory!
 - b. A pandemic can bring promises!
 - c. When we are stricken, there is the Savior!
6. And, we have learned new phrases that became part of our language.
- 7. PANDEMIC.**
 - a. Defined: (of a disease) prevalent throughout an entire country, continent, or the whole world; epidemic over a large area" (dictionary.com).
 - b. Something worse than this pandemic, is a spiritual pandemic that is prevalent throughout the whole world—sin.
 - 1. Isa 59:2, "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."***
 - 2. 1 Pet. 3:12, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."***
 - 3. Rom. 14:23, "... for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."***
 - 4. Jam. 4:17, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."***
 - 5. 1 John 3:4, "...sin is the transgression of the law."***
 - 6. 1 Jn. 5:17, "All unrighteousness is sin..."***
 - c. In dealing with this spiritual pandemic of sin, what are we to do?
8. Please allow me to use these "new phrases" from the past year so that we may learn His statutes and deal with the affliction of sin.

Thesis: For each listener to draw closer to God regardless of what we face and to deal with sin.

BODY

- I. SOCIAL DISTANCING.** "A set of actions taken to stop or slow the spread of a highly contagious disease."
 - a. Mk. 16:15, "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."***
 - b. Rom. 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."***
 - c. 1 Cor. 15:1-4, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."***
 - d. APP:** The set of action is clear to distance us from sin—God's plan of salvation through faith, repentance, confession, baptism, a faithful walk in serving our Lord.

II. **SHELTER IN PLACE.** “Shelter-in-place is to seek safety within the building one already occupies, rather than to evacuate...stay there until you are given an “all clear” or told to evacuate.”

- a. Have you ever considered a shelter in place was Noah and the Ark (**Gen. 6-8**)?
- b. Added to the church (**Acts 2:47**) and stay **in** the body—in the house, the church (**1 Tim. 3:15**).
- c. **APP:** And one day, we will be told to evacuate. Amen! **1 Thess. 4:16-18:** *“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort (encourage) one another with these words.*

III. **FLATTENING THE CURVE.** “Flattening the curve refers to using **protective practices** to slow the rate of COVID-19 infection so hospitals have room, supplies and doctors for all of the patients who need care.”

- a. Oh, the provisions God grants us as we walk faithful!
 1. **Gal. 2:20,** *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”*
 2. **Eph. 6:11-19: The Armor of God.**
 3. Evangelism...teaching others the gospel as Philip in **Acts 8**—to a group and an individual.
- b. **APP:** Faithful living (**Rev. 2:10; 1 Jn. 1:7**); serving (**Rom. 6:17-18**).

IV. **WEAR A MASK.** “CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), **especially** in areas of significant community-based transmission.”

- a. There are moments out and about of trials and challenges—among the world. We keep our distance from sin, but there are times it comes at us!
 1. **1 Cor. 16:13,** *“Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.”*
 2. **1 Tim. 4:12-13,** *“Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 13 Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”*
 3. **Eph. 4:31-32,** *“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”*
- b. **APP:** Got to read **Phil. 2:15-16.** What an application!

V. **ESSENTIAL WORKERS.** “The meaning generally applies to workers in law enforcement and public safety, food production, health care providers and emergency personnel, among others.”

- a. Indeed, how thankful we are for each and every one.
- b. As the child of God has distanced himself from sin and is in place in the church, he is walking faithfully and working faithfully. His faith expressed by his works as in **Jas. 2**.
- c. From **Acts 2** of seeing needs of others to serving the widows in **Acts 6**, we are about the work of our Lord.
- d. **Jas. 1:27,** *“Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”*
- e. *“For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10).* God sees our use!
- f. *“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ” (Col. 3:23-24).* We see our use!
- g. **APP:** There is something about the verse that follows **2 Tim. 3:16** about scripture that refreshes, renews and allows us to see growth as a Christian: *“That the man of God may be perfect (complete); thoroughly furnished unto every good work” (2 Tim. 3:17).*

CONCLUSION

1. We deal with this pandemic of sin in obedience to the will of God as Jesus dealt with it through His obedience—even the death of the cross!
2. P of S and pleas.