

1 - "YOU CAN'T QUARANTINE THE GOSPEL"

"Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!" -- John 4:34-36 (NKJV)



Without question we are living in uncertain times. A lot has happened over a few short months, and everyone seems to be living in a state of fear and confusion regarding the spread of Covid-19. **The question has arisen ... What can we as Christians do to remain faithful ambassadors of King Jesus?**

If Jesus were in our living room, He might point to the very screen you are looking at now and say, *"Look! The harvest is indeed plentiful, but the workers are few. Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers in His harvest field."* (Matthew 9:37-38)

Jesus would see the many, many people behind the screens of their phones and computers and see a field ripe for harvest. Perhaps we should as well. Many people in our country (and your neighborhood) are working and schooling from home. The reality is ... we have an audience for gospel conversations!

"Unbelievers have probably never been more willing both to listen and to consider the gospel of our Lord Jesus in their lifetimes than during this health crisis."

SHARING THE GOSPEL IN A COVID-19 WORLD

Perhaps during the COVID-19 pandemic you've heard someone declare, ***"You can't quarantine the gospel!"*** ***"But how,"*** you ask, ***"Can I share the gospel when my local, state, and federal authorities have ordered my family and me to stay at home and practice social distancing?"***

Although this might be the first time in our lifetimes we've been ordered to stay in our homes, it certainly isn't the first time that Christ-followers have sought to share the gospel while locked down in their houses because of disease or even locked up in prisons due to persecution. As you question whether you can share the gospel while you're ***sheltering-in-place***, don't forget the Apostle Paul evangelized while he was ***shackled-in-place*** (Acts 28:16-31).

The Romans permitted him to live under house arrest while he awaited his appeal to Caesar. Instead of using his supervised custody as an excuse not to evangelize, **Paul capitalized on the opportunities his being “shackled-in-place” provided him to evangelize his visiting guests, as well as his personal Roman guard.**

During this time Paul was under house arrest, chained to a Roman guard, waiting to bring his case before Nero. But he found a way around his forced “*quarantine.*”

According to Philippians 1:12–13:

“I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ.”

According to historical accounts, there were approximately 10,000 soldiers in the palace guard (also known as the Praetorian Guard). Paul was reaching the Roman soldiers he was chained to for Christ. In turn, they were leading other soldiers to Jesus. Soon, the whole Palace Guard had been exposed to the contagious good news!

- **A Key Point To Note ... is that Paul was “purposed in his heart” to share the gospel!**

In fact, for two years ... he preached the gospel and taught about Jesus to everyone who came to visit him in his quarters. Although we likely won't be entertaining strangers and visitors in our homes during these days the way Paul did during his imprisonment, we should remind ourselves and be encouraged ... **that we possess technological tools today that weren't available to Paul in his day.**

- These everyday devices and gadgets we own provide us an open door to share the gospel today, as well as create for our churches an effective launching pad to increase our evangelistic efforts whenever things return to normal.

WHY YOU SHOULD SHARE THE GOSPEL DURING THIS PANDEMIC

*Several factors should compel Christians to share the gospel during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, the nature of the gospel is such **that it doesn't shelter—it scatters!***

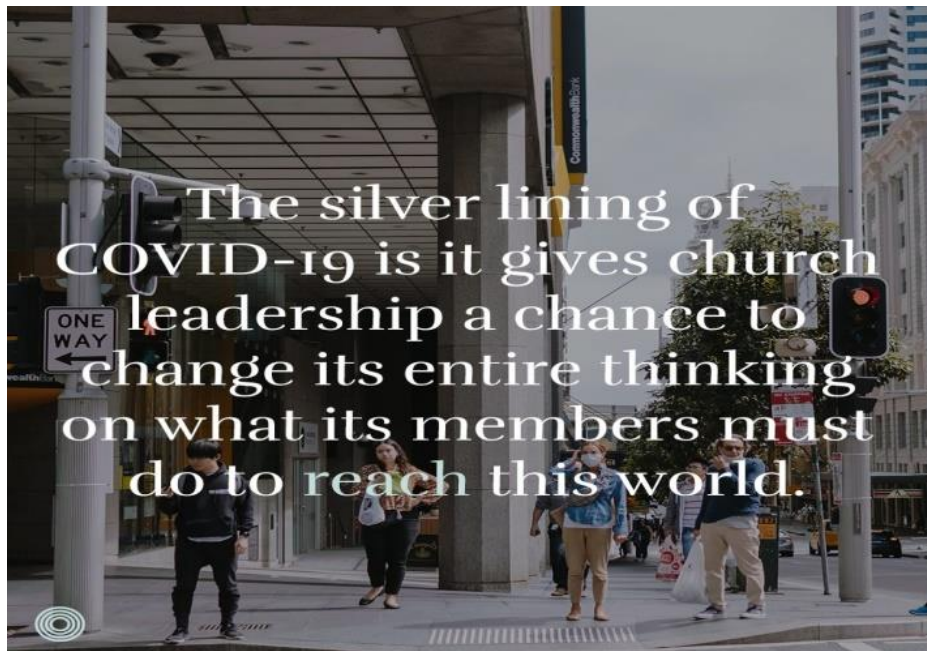
Read the book of Acts. Survey the history of the church. **Believers, by the power of the Holy Spirit, have faced every kind of obstacle, and their determination to evangelize despite them has resulted in greater gospel expansion.** Also, believers have probably never had a greater platform ... both to display and *to give a reason for their hope in the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ* than at this moment in time. (1Peter 3:15)

Why? Because unbelievers have probably never been more willing both to listen and to consider the gospel of our Lord Jesus in their lifetimes than during this health crisis.

- The spread of COVID-19 has convinced the world ... to consider the imminence of death and the purpose of their lives! The gospel provides the only satisfying answer to these contemplations concerning the body and the soul.

We have a great opportunity to reach people right now because they are searching for answers and hope; through social media, phone and text we have captive audience and/or we have an audience that will watch but won't come to church!

This might be the greatest good to come from this pandemic. The church has had to quit being spectators because the grandstands are closed ...



“Unprecedented times lead to unprecedented opportunities”

The lessons we learn now will help us in the future ... because we have been forced to change our methods, and we will have to continue adapting with technology. We must take the gospel to the world instead of waiting for them to come to the building.

IN THE NEXT CLASS ... WE WILL BEGIN DISCUSSING SPECIFIC SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR SHARING THE GOSPEL IN A COVID-19 WORLD.