

“Social Distancing”

by Wayne Goff

“*Social distancing*” – *stay away from one another!*

Avoiding Contact

I hope it is an effective way to stop the spread of disease, but it is **contrary** to God’s plan for mankind on this planet. You see, man is a social creature. In the beginning when God created Adam and placed him in a beautiful garden with all the wonderful creatures He had created, it was still “*not good that man should be alone*” (**Genesis 2:18**). God made a social creature – in order to have a **relationship** with Him and with others made in His image. So for people to “stay away” from one another is both *unnatural*, and *unhealthy*, over a long period of time.

The Standard

The two great laws of true religion: (1) love God with all your heart; and (2) love your neighbor as yourself (**Matthew 22:36-40**), reflect both the **need** for social interaction, and the **cardinal rule** supporting it. We *need* one another.

When Jesus Christ instituted His church, **Matthew 16:18**, He made it a “safe haven” for the saved. He added each one of us to His church (**Acts 2:47**), and we **come together** to **do together** what God has **commanded us** to do together – sing, pray, study – and on the Lord’s Day partake of communion and give of our financial means. Every one of these acts of worship has a *social connection* – we sing to “*one another*” (**Ephesians 5:19**), we pray with “*one another*” (**Acts 2:42, 44**), we study and learn together (**Acts 2:42, 44**), and our communion is a joint-participation in the elements representing the body and blood of our Lord. We **ARE** “*one bread*” and “*one body*” as Paul said in **1 Corinthians 10:17**. Never is this more true than we come together to commune with Christ and each other in the Lord’s Supper!

“One Another”

Seventy-nine times the phrase “*one another*” appears in the New Testament, and often it is found describing the relationship of Christians together. “*So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another*” (**Romans 12:5**). “*Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another*” (**Romans 12:10**). “*Be of the same mind toward one another...*” (**Romans 12:16**). God commands us to come together to love one another, to support one another, and to encourage one another in our Christian walk. We cannot get to heaven alone! We are social creatures and we need the fellowship of men and of God!

What To Do?

So what are we to do when our government tells us to practice “social distancing” for the health and well-being of our fellow Americans? We are to obey the government (Romans 13) while trying to function as best we can without the spiritual connection we call “*fellowship*.” It can only be done for **a limited period of time**. So it is your job and mine to be as **connected** to one another as is humanly possible. We can call, text, e-mail each other. We can look out for those especially in need by running errands for them, buying groceries, taking care of things around the house or yard.

Our elders **need** to keep in contact with every member – especially those who might be more spiritually vulnerable – because it’s easy in this present environment to decide we don’t need the Lord’s church and His people anymore! Don’t get in the habit of thinking “I can do just as well spiritually all by myself!” Because that just isn’t so. That is not the Lord’s way! Therefore do what you can to be as connected as legally possible. With God’s help, this “pandemic” can be over in a few weeks and we can get back to “normal.” Perhaps *learning* the **value** of coming together to worship will be one good result!

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