

5 Ways the COVID-19 Pandemic Points Us to the Gospel

April 04, 2020 by: [Paul David Tripp](#)



Remember the Gospel

Like most of you, I'm hunkered down here in my loft, not going outside, distancing myself from people. It's particularly important for me because I have a compromised immune system, and I am in the high-risk category for this pandemic that has spread across the globe. Here are five ways I've been encouraged to reflect upon how this pandemic points us to the gospel.

1. It is good to be confronted with the delusion of human independence and self-sufficiency.

It's only taken a single virus to shut us down. I live in Center City, Philadelphia. It has become a ghost town: churches have been shut down, businesses have been shut down, restaurants are closed, families are separated from one another, friends can't gather anymore. It's an amazing thing, and it reminds us that we were created to be dependent—dependent on the Creator.

There is no such thing as human independence or human self-sufficiency. In fact, it reminds me that the progress, the move of grace in our hearts and lives, is not from dependence to independence but from independence to greater

dependence on God. The more you grow in grace, the more you understand the wisdom of the word; the more you understand your own heart; the more you understand the folly of this world; the more you run in joyful, submissive dependency on God.

Best-selling author Paul David Tripp weaves together his personal story, years of counseling experience, and biblical insights to help us in the midst of suffering, identifying 6 traps to avoid and 6 comforts to embrace.

2. God's sovereign power and glory shine brighter when we are weak and life seems out of control.

Isn't it amazing that although things, to us, seem out of control—and in many ways, humanly, are out of control—there is one who sits on the throne of the universe? He is the definition of everything that's wise, good, true, holy, righteous, and almighty, and he is in careful control of his world. We don't always comprehend what that means, but there is one who rules the world, who is not afraid at this moment, who is not weak, who is not confused, who has no mystery, and who never experiences surprises. We don't always know why he does what he does, but we know who he is and we know what he has promised his children.

3. The greater global pandemic is not COVID-19. It's sin.

As this pandemic has spread from country to country until the entire globe is affected and is shutting down in an attempt to squash its power and its spread, we're reminded that there is an even greater, darker, more dangerous pandemic. It gets everyone—it gets everyone from birth. It is the deepest, darkest infection. It is the ultimate disease. It's called sin. It's more dangerous and more destructive than COVID-19 will ever be.

But this is what's amazing: there is a cure. God looked at his world in awesome mercy and love and decided he would not let us die from this disease. He sent his son to live as we could not live, to die an acceptable death, and to rise again—conquering sin and death so that there would be a cure for the ultimate disease. The cure is found in the person and work of the Lord Jesus, through his amazing grace. Celebrate grace. Celebrate that something more dangerous and more deadly than this pandemic will ever be has been cured by the power of the grace of Jesus. What a good thing.

There is a sure promise that there will be a day when all such things will end forever and we will be in a place where there will be no more sickness and no more suffering.

4. Though we are separated from others, nothing can separate us from the love of God.

We are all practicing social distancing now and sadly, we have to be separate from one another on Sundays as well. As I sat with Luella in our little television room and watched our church services online, it was not the same—it's not the same as meeting with brothers and sisters, hugging them warmly, shaking hands, singing together, hearing the voice of others into our ears, people singing to one another, reminding one another of the grace of the gospel. It's not the same. And we're all feeling the remorse of our separation.

It's wonderful to remember that no pandemic—that nothing in all of creation—is able to separate us from God and his boundless love. In fact, in these moments God doesn't separate himself from us. He doesn't turn his back on us, but he draws near. He draws near to the weak. He draws near to the brokenhearted. He draws near in love and grace, empowering us to face what we could not face without him. Your greatest friend, your deepest lover, your sweetest companion has no distance between him and you. What a beautiful thing that is.

5. We are not alone.

Scripture reminds us that in these moments we don't have to shoulder these burdens alone by ourselves. When we are weary and we are distraught, we have a place to go. Jesus welcomes us when we're weary to come to him and cast our cares on him. He will shoulder our burdens because he really does care for us. In these moments, it's tempting to doubt God's goodness, to doubt his wisdom, to doubt his power, to doubt his ability to control. And you see, what's deadly about that is when you doubt God's goodness, you quit running to him for help because you don't tend to go for help to someone you no longer trust.

Fight the lies of the enemy that would whisper into your ear, *Where is your God now? What is he doing now? Why isn't he here? Why doesn't he answer?* The Bible says, *God's near. He cares. He hears. He answers. Do not run away from him. Run to him.* Sure, we're going to wonder, *Why?* And maybe those questions won't be fully answered here and now; but again, we know who God is, we

know what he promised us, and we know that this moment points us to how much we need one who is greater than us, who has greater power than us, who has greater control than us, who directs things we can't direct, who is never weak, who is never tired, and who is never weary. Run to him with your burdens.

Gratitude Is a Defense

One of the most powerful defenses against fear is gratitude. The more your heart is directed toward gratitude, the more you're counting your blessings; the less, at those moments, your mind is running to fear and rehearsing the what-ifs. How about intentionally looking around at all the things for which, today, you can give thanks—all the evidences of God's provision, all the evidences of his care, all the people that love you, all those things that you would take for granted—how about counting your blessings? How about letting praise overwhelm complaint and gratitude silence grumbling? The final promise of the gospel is this: that in this present world, we will face trouble—troubles of various kinds ([John 16:33](#)).

This moment is a physical trouble, a trouble that can infect, weaken, and for some of us, destroy the body. But there is a sure promise that there will be a day when all such things will end forever and we will be in a place where there will be no more sickness and no more suffering. Hope in this promise is not some faint, dreamy wish for those who are embracing some kind of religious delusion. Hope in God's promise is a confident expectation in a guaranteed result. It's coming—paradise is coming—and it is yours by grace.

There will be a time—it's hard to imagine—where we will look back on this as a brief moment of trouble as we are experiencing a perfect world, perfect bodies, perfect hearts, and perfect relationship with God. Everything will be as it's supposed to be and function as it was meant to function—in peace and righteousness forever and ever. This scary moment reminds us of the most precious truths of the gospel. Instead of focusing on the what-ifs, how about meditating on those promises of future glory? God bless you as you do that. Stay safe, hunker down, and remember Jesus and the glories of his gospel of grace.

Paul Tripp is the author of [Suffering: Gospel Hope When Life Doesn't Make Sense](#). This article originally appeared on [paultripp.com](#) along with other COVID-19 content.



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