

THE RADICAL US

Scripture used: [Psalm 46:1-2 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

At NBCC's online, live-streamed Gatherings this Sunday, Pastor Hurmon preached a message that addressed the coronavirus pandemic in the greater context of the human condition and the faith that binds us. These are times when our majestic mountain has been hit by a massive earthquake. Life can feel like it's become unglued, we're unmoored, and we live in a fallen world. Life is full of sudden reversals. We can go from grace one minute to life-threatening emergencies the next. This is why we need to find solid ground in reality of God's love, care and faithfulness, and this reassurance changes how we relate to each other and gives us the capacity to care for others and make a difference in this world. When we have the perspective of God as our refuge and strength, we are able to distinguish what matters most.

KEY POINTS

- 1) In a crisis, two groups of people emerge: opportunists and servants. We should make contact and check on family and friends we have not spoken to in a while. Per our Scripture, God's voice is thundering that we need each other. Dr King said we can learn to live together as brothers and sisters or perish as fools. Opportunists will revert back to an "all-important me" worldview. This is the wrong focus. Instead, we have to look at the diversity and inequality in our societies and realize everybody is affected. We have to pay special attention to the stranger, the widow and the orphan, the ones without resources - and act as a refuge to all -- just like God is a refuge to us.
- 2) We need each other. We must demonstrate special generosity and patience. The coronavirus adds to other on-going catastrophes, such as the locust plague in East Africa that could lead to lost crops and starvation for millions. How can we help? NBA player Zion Williamson offered to pay wages for all workers in the arena where he plays. The voice of God asks "How can I help?". Our transition to online, broadcast worship is not because of fear, but because of faith and care for others. Kids need to help their parents. Companies and organizations need to be generous and creative in coping. Smaller churches, the elderly, and those at-risk need extra help. We need to go from good intentions to implementation of the many practical ways we can assist and serve people in need.
- 3) Be bold in reaching out to others. Don't give in to dread, fear, isolation. Ask how you can tap into God. Visualize the Pool of Siloam, the Jerusalem reservoir fed by an underground spring. Remember Jesus who invited us to come to Him if & when we are thirsty. [John 7:37-38](#) reminds us to be still and experience the powerful presence of God. This is a time for revelation of the peace that we inherit from God, to share the good news, and to serve wholeheartedly. It's a time to be grateful for family and community; for technology that enables us to maintain contact, productivity, and flow of information. Above all, it's the right time to rejoice in the Holy Spirit. The Spirit guides, inspires, and sustains us to fight the invisible threat with grace and dignity, and come out triumphant.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Discern your heart. Times of crisis often cause us to feel more self-protective and isolated. How are you struggling with these feelings now? What does it look like to not let these "all-important me" feelings squeeze out joy, peace, gratitude, and the desire to care for others?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [Psalm 46](#). What are the major contrasting pictures in this psalm? When you read verses 2-3, how would you feel (or do you feel) when life is upended in an unimaginable way. What is the encouragement of this Psalm? How is it possible to "not fear" in the midst of crisis and cataclysm? If we don't give in to fear, what are we freed up to be able to do instead? Consider sharing about a time in your life when you were tempted to give into fear, and how God brought you through that time. Or, share how you are feeling now and how you would like others to pray for you.
- 3) **DO** - As we are in our 40 days of prayer, fasting, and consecration, consider praying two prayers this week. 1) God is my refuge and strength, help me to not fear. 2) God, allow me to see others in need and to ask the question, "How can I help?" Find one way each day to express care and love to someone in need. Join us next Sunday online at www.nbccbayarea.com for our Sunday Gathering!