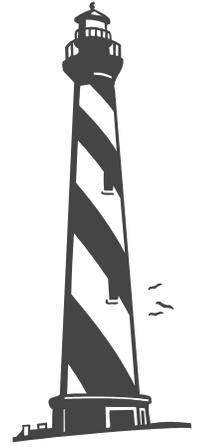


THE BEACON BEAM



May 2020

REDEEMING THE TIME

8 REMINDERS IN THE FACE OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

by Dane C. Ortlund

The Cure for Latent Anxiety

These are strange days, days of fear, days of hysteria. In other words, days that simply bring all our latent anxieties up to the surface; anxieties that were there all along but are now made visible to others.

What do we need to remember in these days of alarm?

1. The World of the Bible

Now we know how the people of God felt throughout the Bible, especially in the Old Testament. The Prophets and many of the Psalms speak to people who are caught up in mass hysteria or subject to pandemics. Maybe the current cultural moment is precisely the hermeneutic we need to read the Old Testament, which can otherwise feel so foreign, deeply for the first time.

2. Our True Trust

Times of public panic force us to

align our professed belief with our actual belief. We all say we believe God is sovereign and he is taking care of us. But we reveal our true trust when the world goes into meltdown. What's really our heart's deepest loyalty? The answer

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is forced to the surface in times of public alarm, such as we're wading into now.

3. Neighborly Love

When the economy is tanking, opportunities to surprise our neighbors with our confidence and joy because of the gospel surge forward. Now is the time to be outside more, to be loving more, to be hospitable more. Love stands out strongest when it is least expected, rarest, but needed most.

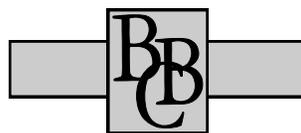
4. Family Discipleship

Our kids' teachers are telling them to wash their hands longer. Why? Their teachers won't tell them, but it's because there is a dangerous virus infecting thousands of people around the world right now—both young and old—and some of those people will die. Heaven and hell are staring every fourth-grader in the face. That's why they're being told to wash their hands for twenty

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Beacon Baptist Church

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Gregory N. Barkman, *Senior Pastor*
Michael R. Karns, *Minister of Christian Education*
Robert F. LaTour, *Minister of Families*
Gregory L. Phillips, *Minister of Music*

Sunday

Morning Worship...9:30 AM
Sunday School.....11:10 AM
Evening Worship.....6:00 PM

Wednesday

Prayer Meeting.....7:00 PM
IMPACT Clubs.....7:00 PM
Teen Ministry.....7:00 PM

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seconds. We have an opportunity to instill in our kids a deeper awareness of eternity than they have ever known. There is a salutary effect to all of this because either heaven or hell awaits every fourth-grader, either taken out by a virus next month or taken out by old age decades from now. Ten thousand years from now, the difference between dying at age ten or age eighty will seem trivial. This is an opportunity to disciple our families into the bracing reality of eternity.

5. Eschatological Hope

Maybe this is the end. I doubt it, but maybe. Jesus said no one knows the day or the hour (Matthew 24:36). Maybe the sight of Jesus descending from heaven, robed in glory, surrounded by angels, is right around the corner. If so, hallelujah. If not, hallelujah. We're being reminded that he will indeed return one day. Either way, let us rejoice our way through the chaos.

*From heaven's shore we will see
how eternally safe we were
all along.*

6. Invincible Providence

No infected molecule can enter your lungs, or your three-year-old's lungs, unless sent by the hand of a heavenly Father. The Heidelberg Catechism defines God's providence as, "The almighty and ever-present power of God by which God upholds, as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures, and so rules them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful

and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty—all things, in fact, come to us not by chance but by his fatherly hand." That truth is like an asthmat-

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ic's inhaler to our soul—it calms us down, allows us to breathe again.

7. Christ's Heart

In times of turmoil, in seasons of distress, Jesus is more feelingly with his people than ever. Hebrews tells us that Jesus experienced all the horror of this world that we do, minus sin (Hebrews 4:15). So apparently he knows—he himself knows—way down deep, what it feels like for life to close in on you and for your world to go into meltdown. We can go to him. We can sit with him. His arm is around us—stronger than ever—right now. His tears are larger than ours.

8. Heaven

From heaven's shore we will see how eternally safe we were all along, even amid the global upheaval and anxieties that loom so large as we walk through them. The dangers out there are real. The cautions are wise. Our bodies are mortal, vulnerable. But our souls, for those united to a resurrected Christ, are beyond the reach of all eternal danger. How un-harm-able we are, we who are in Christ. Be at peace. All is assured.

Dane C. Ortlund (PhD, Wheaton College) is chief publishing officer and Bible publisher at Crossway. He serves as an editor for the Knowing the Bible series and the Short Studies in Biblical Theology series, and is the author of several books, including *Gentle and Lowly* and *Edwards on the Christian Life*. He is an elder at Naperville Presbyterian Church in Naperville, Illinois. Dane lives with his wife, Stacey, and their five children in Wheaton, Illinois.

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore, come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:15-16).

TRIBUTE TO A FAITHFUL MISSIONARY

by Greg Barkman

It was the Summer of 1969, and I found myself in Memphis, Tennessee, pursuing some practical aspects of training for ministry. For two years, I had served as week-end Youth Pastor and Music Director for Faith Baptist church in Chester, South Carolina. I traveled the eighty miles from Greenville to Chester on Saturday afternoons, conducted a Teen meeting Saturday Evening, and slept on a pull-out bed in the church office Saturday night. Sunday mornings found me sponge bathing in the church bathroom, teaching a Teen Sunday School class, leading congregational singing and directing the choir for morning worship. Afternoons involved choir rehearsal, another Teen meeting, and music for evening worship. Exhausted, I would drive home Sunday night, tumble into bed, and arise at 5:00 a.m., to deliver newspapers before my first university class at eight.

I cherished the opportunities in Chester, as they taught me much about pastoral ministry. But I also sensed a need for additional experiences, so I accepted an invitation to Interstate Baptist Church in Memphis to serve during the summer. My primary work was door to door visitation. Every day from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., I knocked on doors of homes within reasonable distance from the church. Memphis is hot and humid in the summer, but the experience I gained talking to hundreds of people about the gospel was more than worth the uncomfortable weather. In addition, I worked with the Teens and supplied the pulpit for the three or four Sundays that the pastor was on vacation.

That is how I met Rev. W. C. Standridge, founder of Interstate Baptist Church, and still going strong into his senior years. He and his wife hosted me in their home, and I had ample opportunity to observe their lives, both private and public at close range. They were the real deal. They spoke frequently about their son, Bill, Jr., a missionary in Italy, and the day came when Bill and his family arrived in Memphis. I was placed with another church family so that Bill and Maria Theresa (MT) along with their four children could stay with Bill's parents for a couple of weeks. Bill Standridge was an outstanding

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missionary. He was single when he first went to Italy immediately upon graduation from Wheaton College. He served for several years alone until the Lord brought MT into his life, a single Italian Christian who was as committed to ministry as Bill. They were an amazing couple. Gifted in writing, they authored several books and began a monthly magazine that

soon had extensive impact throughout the nation. God blessed their home with three boys and a girl, and God prospered their tireless labors in one of the most challenging countries in the world. During his time in Memphis, Bill urged me to come to Italy to labor alongside them. I felt honored to be asked, but did not sense God's leading in that direction. We parted friends and went our separate ways. I didn't imagine that we would cross paths again.

About ten years later, I was invited to serve on the board of Independent Faith Mission, which had recently relocated their office from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Greensboro, North Carolina. W. C. Standridge was still active on the board, having founded the mission in the early 1950's to undergird the ministry of his son, Bill, who had gone to Italy without the backing of a board. IFM added many missionaries over the years, and here I was, face to face with the pastor I had served in Memphis, participating in the work of his son Bill in Italy. Through that connection, we invited Bill and his family to visit Beacon when they scheduled their next furlough, and I was thankful that our church was able to add them to our missionary budget. I hadn't expected to connect with them again, but God had other plans, and I was now delighted to be partnering with their work in Italy.

In 1982, Marti and I visited three or four missionaries serving in Europe who were supported by our church. We spent several delightful days in Rome with Bill and MT, and were able to see their church in opera-

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tion, as well as their publishing ministry. The ministry I had only known through reports had now become a living reality before my eyes. The blessing of God upon their labors was obvious, and my appreciation for these dedicated servants of God grew stronger.

We had several delightful visits with Bill and his family as they came to the USA for occasional furloughs. It was encouraging to see their children maturing in their commitment to Christ over the years. The last time we saw Bill Standridge was in 2018 during a wonderful vacation to Tuscany to celebrate my seventieth birthday. Our itinerary utilized the airport in Milan, and we were able to arrange for Bill and his son Daniel and wife, Donna, to meet us at our hotel restaurant for dinner the evening before departure. Bill was now in his early nineties, and battling cancer. He had moved from Rome to Milan to live with Daniel and benefit from

superior medical care. He was still sharp mentally, and continued his work of writing and publishing in spite of growing limitations. It was an honor to be with this noble servant of Christ once again, and I will ever be grateful that God granted that special visit before He called Bill home in April of this year.

Bill Standridge leaves a solid legacy. Having served in Italy for more than seventy years, the church he established in Rome continues strong, and has fostered the establishment of a second church in the same city. His three sons have followed their father into ministry, David in Rome, Daniel in Milan, and Stephen in Florence. They each pastor churches while engaged in various gospel enterprises. Some of Bill's grandchildren are also active in ministry. Books written by Bill and MT are still being circulated, along with several John MacArthur commentaries translated into Italian. Their evangelistic magazine continues to flourish. More

than anything, Bill Standridge leaves behind a record of faithful, dedicated gospel labors until his dying breath. That is truly heaven's highest honor. "Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." Such a man was my dear friend, Bill Standridge. I look forward to seeing him again in the presence of the Lord.

THE GOD WHO REIGNS OVER THE CORONAVIRUS

Even if Satan, on his divine leash, has a hand in our suffering and death, he is not ultimate. He cannot hurt us without God's permission and limitation (Job 1:12; Luke 22:31; 2 Cor. 12:7). And in the end, it is right for us to say to Satan what Joseph said to his brothers who had sold him into slavery: "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (Gen. 50:20).

Be careful not to water this down. It does not say, "God used it for good" or "God turned it for good." It says, "God meant it for good." They had an evil purpose. God had a good purpose. God didn't start cleaning up halfway through this sinful affair. He had a purpose, a meaning, from the beginning. From the start, he meant it for good.

Not one sparrow falls but by God's plan. Not one virus moves but by God's plan. This is meticulous sovereignty. And what does Jesus say next? Three things: You are of more value than many sparrows. The hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not.

Why not? Because God's meticulous sovereignty—whether we live or die—serves his holiness and righteousness and goodness and wisdom. In Christ we are not his dispensable pawns. We are his valued children. "You are of more value than many sparrows."

This is the secret mentioned earlier: knowing that the same sovereignty that could stop the coronavirus, yet doesn't, is the very sovereignty that sustains the soul in it. And not only sustains, but sees to it that everything, bitter and sweet, works together for our good—the good of those who love God and are called in Christ (Rom. 8:28–30).

—John Piper, *Coronavirus and Christ*

On The Feminine Side

by Marti Barkman



My Dear Beacon Sisters,

I'd love to look across the room and be greeted by your sweet smile. How about a cup of tea and a catch up? How did we become, so suddenly, long-distance friends? We live not all that many miles apart but I write as if we live in different time zones. I've heard your voices, and read your words, but it's just not the same, is it? Even six feet is a long distance in a pandemic. I think of you often, wonder what and how you are doing, and pray for you.

One thing most of us are doing more of these days is cooking! For some of us that is an old activity revived. If you need something new, check out this website: everylastbite.com has some wonderful family- friendly recipes. This past Sunday I fixed "Greek Chicken Tray-bake"...took 15 minutes to assemble and it was delicious. The combination of flavors was superb and we enjoyed it 3 days in a row! BTW I used 12 chicken thighs and increased the tomatoes so we'd have leftovers. And I baked mine in a large cast iron pan at 400 degrees. but the pan just needs to be large enough for the veggies to spread out in a thin layer. ENJOY! (Paleo and Whole 30 compatible too!)

Judging from the packed parking lots at home improvement stores, it's going to be a great year for lawns! Not much social distancing going on at Lowes these days! But then, the time spent in the fresh air when we get home with our purchases should heal whatever ails us. Yard projects were my plan for these days at home...but...the timing of the lockdown coincided with the need to prepare my mother-in-law's Burlington house for sale, so that's where I've spent the last 5+ weeks. Though my in-laws lived there for only about 15 years, it was as full as if it had been 50. When they purchased the house, I spent weeks preparing the house for their move from Massachusetts. And now I've emptied it. Many boxes, filled with chapters of their lives, dating back as early as 1941 and letters written during World War II, sit in the garage, awaiting the family's final review. And this chapter will close.

Life has changed for all of us...even for those who were already home-bound before the pandemic. We have not appeared at your door as often as before. And for some, possibly life's most profound change has taken place as three of you have said goodbye to your mate of many decades. All the years combined, there must have been a total of well over 150 years of marriage. What a beautiful record of faithfulness and perseverance in good times and bad, as all three of you stayed by your husband's side during many long months of suffering. We grieved that we could not be there to grieve with you.

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Well, dear friends, have we been learning anything in these past weeks? I know I have...some rather silly and mundane items, others, thought-provoking.

While emptying the home on Shirley Drive...

#1: Strange times give new value to insignificant items. When selling the contents, the most sought-after item was a plastic grocery bag. NONE were to be found. Neighbors arms filled to overflowing, went home for bags. At one point I was offered \$100 for a roll of toilet paper. It was NOT for sale! Desperate times call for desperate measures!

#2: You can save too much of a good thing. We found the grocery bags. So many there were, they would not fit in a 36 gallon leaf bag.

#3: Don't stock pile rubber bands, ink pens, and safety pins. The bands and pens will dry up and nobody needs that many pins!

#4. Don't stockpile much of anything...you'll forget you did and buy more.

#5: Books are great. Books are very heavy.

#6: Hire someone younger than you to help!

I've heard it said that we will talk about this time for the rest of our lives; that our children will tell their grandchildren, as our grandparents talked of the great depression. When we tell someone who didn't experience it, it will be in hopes of a teachable moment. But I remember hearing about the depression, seeing pictures of people in the most dismal circumstances, women holding their hungry children, hollow-eyed men in bread lines. In today's world? A bread line? Which is the gluten free? It's hard to learn from the experiences of others and we must intentionally learn from our own, not letting the important lessons slip by us as we wait for normalcy to return. I keep thinking about the quotation I included on this page last month: "Carefully constructed futures that work out as planned don't teach anything but what we already knew." My prayer is that you and I will come through this having been in complete cooperation with what God intends to accomplish through this pandemic. It will be good.

Fondly, and with joy,

Marti



OUR PRAYER IS THAT CHRISTIAN REVIVAL WILL SPREAD FASTER THAN COVID-19

by Rosaria Butterfield

Practicing the Christian ethic of hospitality under COVID-19 means obeying the civil magistrate’s efforts to “flatten the curve” and honoring the sixth commandment.

The sixth commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” reminds Christians of both our positive and negative duties in times of plague. Faced with COVID-19, there are things we should do, and there are things we should not do. In all things, we seek the glory of God and the good of our neighbors.

The Westminster Larger Catechism, one of the historic confessions of the Reformed church, helpfully illuminates this commandment. The sixth commandment, the Catechism says, requires us to “to preserve the life of ourselves and others.”¹

We do this in many ways: “by . . . avoiding all occasions, temptations, and practices, which tend to the unjust taking away the life of any, [by] patient bearing of the hand of God, quietness of mind, cheerfulness of spirit, a sober use of meat, drink, medicine, sleep, labor, and

recreations, [and by] comforting and succoring the distressed, and protecting and defending the innocent.” By generally avoiding gatherings and close contact, by taking care of our own bodies, and by giving help to others, we uphold the sixth commandment.

Thinking Christians do not want to unintentionally cause the death of others by spreading a virus that spares some and kills others. Obeying the civil magistrate’s order to distance, isolation, or quarantine is obedience to God’s law.

In practical ways, in our neighborhood, this means that while our neighbors who are doctors and nurses are working long hours, we are serving them by walking their dogs and sharing our provisions with them. They have to go out (dogs and doctors); we don’t.

In the weeks and months ahead, our lives may change in ways we cannot even imagine at this moment. And our faith may grow in ways we could not have even imagined without the testing of COVID-19. Christian hospitality shines brightest in days of persecution and plague. During hard times—

dangerous times—when Christians demonstrate that real love takes courage, we model Christ to a watching world.

COVID-19 is not going to overcome the world. Christ is. “For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith” (1 John 5:4).

Note:

1. Larger Catechism, The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, <https://opc.org/lc.html>, (accessed March 23, 2020).

Rosaria Butterfield (PhD, Ohio State University) is an author, speaker, pastor’s wife, homeschool mom, and former professor of English and women’s studies at Syracuse University. She is the author of *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert*, *Openness Unhindered* and *The Gospel Comes with a House Key: Practicing Radically Ordinary Hospitality in a Post-Christian World*.

THE BEACON BROADCAST

Monday thru Friday

WITA 1490 AM (Knoxville, TN)	9:30 a.m.
WKBA 1550 AM (Roanoke, VA)	10:00 a.m.
WKPA 1390 AM (Lynchburg, VA)	10:00 a.m.
WBAG 1150 AM (Burlington, NC)	12:15 p.m.
WBAG 105.9 FM (Burlington, NC)	12:15 p.m.
WTRU 830 AM (Winston-Salem, NC)	2:00 p.m.
WDZY 1290 AM (Richmond, VA)	6:15 a.m.
	10:00 a.m.
WDZY 103.3 FM (Richmond, VA)	6:15 a.m.
	10:00 a.m.
WSKY 1230 AM (Asheville, NC)	7:15 a.m.
WYYC 1250 AM (York, PA)	5:00 p.m.
WYYC 98.1 FM (York, PA)	5:00 p.m.

Sunday

WCRU 960 AM (Charlotte, NC)	9:30 a.m.
WBAG 1150 AM (Burlington, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WTRU 830 AM (Winston-Salem, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WDRU 1030 AM (Raleigh, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WLES 590 AM (Richmond, VA)	10:30 a.m.
Harbour Light of the Windwards	9:30 p.m.
1400 AM/94.5 FM (Caribbean)	
WGNQ mixlr.com/wgng-radio (M-F)	8:45-9 a.m. & 4:45-5:00 p.m.
(Internet station based in Greenville/Washington, NC)	

Monday thru Sunday

WXTH-LP 101.7 FM (Richwood, WV)	10:05 a.m.
	10:05 p.m.

BEACON HIGHLIGHTS FOR MAY

CALENDAR

MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

MISSIONARY BIRTHDAYS

04 Becky Tow
06 Ruth Patterson
07 Bill Kephart
Zach Chavez
11 Sara Cardwell
13 Thomas Haizlip
15 Lesley Fannon
16 Anne Enoch
18 Michael Karns
19 Vickie Apple
Mary Shaw
22 Brandon Counts
23 Claudette Delorge
Eddie Driver
24 Melanie Lowe
25 Howard Beatty
Maddie Lowe
Nathan Phillips
27 Bernie Braley
30 Susan Mullis

07 Connie Chapman
09 Jesse Green
12 Tony Honeycutt
21 Isobel Cassells

*Due to the present COVID-19 crisis,
our calendar is subject to change.
We encourage you to follow our
announcements on our Beacon
website: www.beaconbaptist.com*

*We express our heartfelt
sympathy to the families of:*

Hugh Doss
Dave Fishel
Rev. Paul Hawkins
Mildred Hinshaw
Wayland Loftis
Bob Rose
Missionary Bill Standridge
George Zensen

The Beacon Beam
Beacon Baptist Church
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