

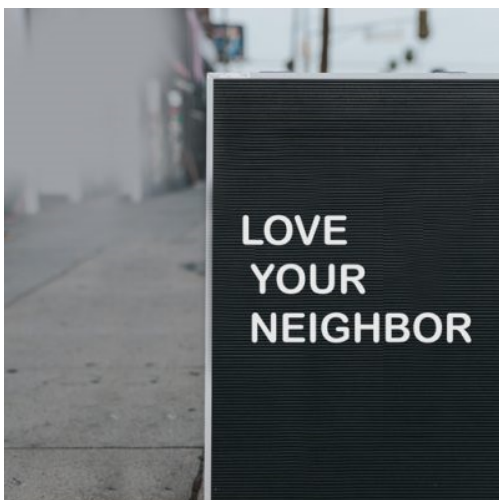
# Caring and Connecting during Crisis

I'm delaying the post I planned as a follow-up to the last series about The Biggest Challenges Men Face for a special post during the growing concerns about the coronavirus pandemic. This post includes a reminder to not be anxious or fearful but trust in God's plans. I also include some examples of how we should care for each other when things are outside of our control.

I will return soon with more about what I believe is the toughest of all the challenges for men but thought the current situation deserves a higher priority.

First, some encouragement and then examples from this past week.

## Responding to Fear with Wisdom and Faith



FamilyLife Today podcast

## The Coronavirus: Responding to Fear with Wisdom and Faith

This morning, I listened to a very good podcast from FamilyLife Today that contained several Bible verses and quotes about how we can respond given the COVID-19 fears:

I thought two specifically contained wisdom that is pertinent today:

*“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*

*–Philippians 4:6-7*

*“We are used to having our lives under control in North America, but a small bug is humbling the most powerful nations of the world. COVID-19 has exposed our illusion of control, and the loss of control sparks fear.”*

*– Dr. Mitch Kim (Wheaton, IL Pastor)*

These encourage us to give us our fears to God...always a good reminder when we worry.

Here are also a few examples of how we care for each other in times of stress and uncertainty.

## Caring for the “Least of These”

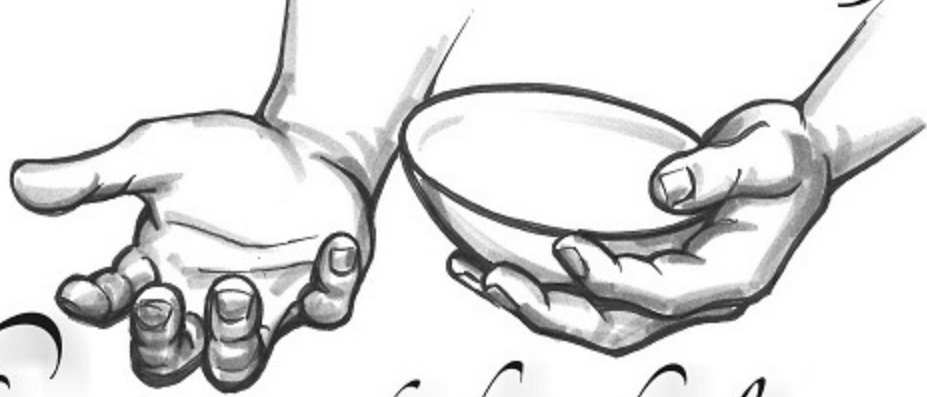
This past week, I had a business trip to an area normally just outside the threshold for the drive-vs-fly decision. Given concerns with airport travel due to COVID-19, I decided to drive, which required 15+ hours over 2-1/2 days.

It was a very productive trip and I'm glad I did not cancel for several reasons:

1. I had plenty of windshield time to reflect on my relationship with God, pray about the coronavirus, and to listen to an audiobook.
2. I met with a new customer and attended an important meeting at one of our manufacturing plants in the area.
3. I met with a leader in the manhood/fathering space to learn more about his organization and to discuss God Buddies.
4. He and I also had an opportunity to buy lunch for and minister to a homeless man.

All this reminded me of how we are called to be aware of those around us: the less fortunate, the homeless, the elderly, our neighbors, and of course, our family.

# MATTHEW 25



*Whatever you do for the least ...*

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ – **Matthew 25:40**

But it is also a reminder we should come close to those in our circle of God Buddies to support.

Another situation occurred the morning I was heading back after this business trip. I received a few unexpected texts from people asking how I was doing. The texts were quickly followed by a couple of phone calls before I realized my Facebook account was hacked and showed I was feeling sad that day.



As soon as I had the opportunity to pull over, I changed my Facebook password and saw the flood of comments with words of encouragement, Bible verses, and offers to talk if I needed from both men and women in my circle.

Fortunately, I was NOT feeling sad at all that day but came away feeling very blessed that people cared about my well-being.

This also reminded me of the importance of God Buddies being in tune with each other.

- So how are you in tune with your closest friends?
- How do you care for family and neighbors?
- What are you doing for the “least of these brothers and sisters of mine (as all are God’s children)?”

**So “How you doin’?”**

Occasionally, our men's group at my church holds a "Guy Talk" session about useful (and sometimes silly) topics like how to use technology for personal productivity, operating as the sandwich generation, and how to manage our crazy-busy life.



Years ago, one particular Guy Talk was called "How You Doin'?" based on what has become a standard greeting as demonstrated by the famous saying from the TV show Friends.

In that Guy Talk session, I also used this funny beer commercial to give a sense of how people typically use this greeting and how many people react.

## Your Call to Action

So ***how do you respond*** when someone responds to your question of "How you doing?"

When you really pay attention, most people respond with an "Oh, OK".

Do you follow-up with the next question... "Just OK? How are you *really* doing?"

So use the unprecedented time of concern to slow down your life and care for each other.

Take just a few extra minutes to call someone you know who may be on the fringe or feeling anxious about COVID-19. It is especially important right now. Ask how you can help, even if it's simply with prayer over the phone.

As the verse in Philippians reminds us, we do not need to be anxious as our future is secure with Christ. To ease those fears, we should present our concerns in prayer. Let's strengthen our faith and trust that God is in control but do our part to be the calm people among the worriers.