



132
PRACTICAL
TIPS

Survival manual in times of crisis



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Let's catch our breath...

We're in the midst of an unprecedented crisis. Everything around us is generating chaos, sadness, sickness, and death. Information overload and misinformation aren't helping at all, and sometimes even among ourselves we're not capable of saying the right words at the right time. We seem to be too superficial and lacking in discernment to know how to walk with others during this time.

As human beings, we Christians are not exempt from experiencing all these things as well as a certain level of frustration, doubt, or fear. The shadow of death has become more tangible and closer than ever, and it scares us. Jesus Himself experienced many of these terrible feelings during His time on earth. Nevertheless, He Himself shows us that we can and should learn to live differently in the middle of a crisis: in a way that allows us to grow and go deeper in our faith in God, in whom we trust for salvation and who is in control of every situation (even this one!) and who, moreover, helps us show the world that this different lifestyle is due to Christ in us.

As you can see, this is a supernatural work that only the Holy Spirit is able to do. But in His mercy He helps us to care for each other, to comfort each other when we are hurting, to be with each other in difficulty, and walk with each other as we press on toward the goal.

From the Group of Evangelical Psychologists (GPE), we've had the privilege of reflecting together on some practical ways to do these things based on the Word of God and the knowledge supplied to us by our professional field. This guide is NOT an addendum to the Word of God nor is it an essential complement to it. It simply gives some practical suggestions for how to put into action what the Word itself shows us, whilst keeping in mind what the study of human behavior suggests for us today. None of these recommendations is a substitute for a close, intimate relationship with the Lord or for the guidance of His Word. As in all things, and as every Christian always ought to do with anything they read, we propose that you examine everything and keep what is good, reflect on what is happening around you, and seek the Lord in everything.

As a result, the material you have in your hands is intended to be a tool to help you in complex situations. Nothing more, but nothing less. Right now, we're going through this terrible crisis unleashed by COVID-19, but tomorrow we could be in any situation terrifying enough to awaken even darker fears and feelings. In the end, life is a succession of crises that is beautiful but painful. We believe what you will find in these pages will help you to stay strong in the hardest moments, no matter the cause.

It's time to take a step back, to think, to remember, to meditate, to understand and strengthen our faith in the God who rules the times. It's time to appropriately use each and every one of the resources that God Himself has put within our reach: from the fields of medicine, engineering, education, journalism, or politics, even the study of human behavior implied by psychology—all of it linked with and subject to the Word that brings light to our lives and shows us the path to follow in the darkest moments.

God is in control, and He is good all the time.

Understanding the crisis, growing in it.

1

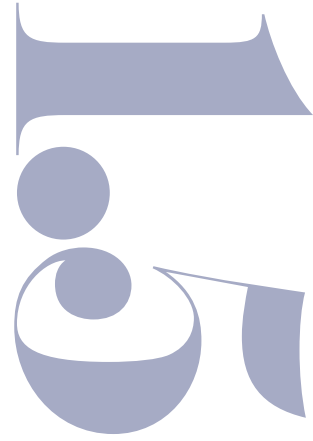
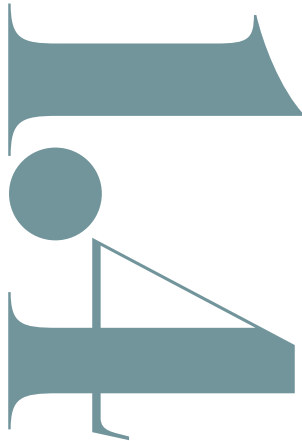
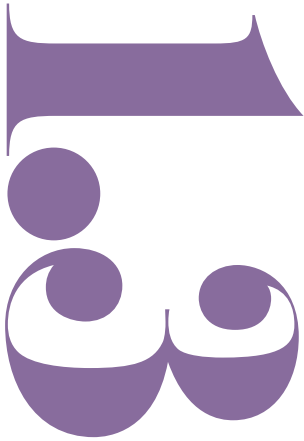
Did you know that a good portion of crisis management relies on an adequate interpretation of the situation and appropriate positioning yourself within the crisis?



**This is a difficult time.
Remember that your Rock is the
Lord and that He is unmovable.**
(Psalms 46)
(Matthew 7:24-27)

**This crisis has a purpose that
you can't see right now.
Don't let the present keep you
from seeing that God has a
much bigger plan for you and
those around you. May you have
an eternal perspective and
not merely a human one.**
(Isaiah 55:8-9)





In the meantime,
look at your hands
and ask God
the following
question:
What do you
want me to know,
remember,
or do
in this situation?
(Matthew 14:13-21)

Maybe this crisis
has “caught you
by surprise,”
as it has everyone.
The Lord, however,
knows everything
and, even better,
has everything
under His control.
(John 21:15-19)

The uncertainty
you’re feeling
loses its power
when you think
about the God
who knows your
future and holds
your present, who
rules the ages and
also the Universe.
Jesus told us, “But
take heart! I have
overcome the
world”.
(John 16:33)

1.6

Perhaps you see Jesus sleeping in the boat and think He's not doing anything about the storm. Remember His voice calming the sea, however, and that He isn't in a hurry, because He's never late.
(Mark 4:35-41)

1.7

There are no surprises for God. He numbers the hairs on your head, he cares for the flowers of the field, and the birds. You are worth more to God than all of these and He holds you in the palm of His hand.
(Matthew 10:29-31)

1.8

He who looks after you doesn't sleep. He's watching over you. While you sleep, He keeps working in your life. That's the way things happen in the Kingdom of God, without our knowing how.
(Mark 4:27)
Wait on Him and ask to be able to rest in Him in the midst of this situation.
(Psalms 4:8)

If the love of God
is with you, who can
stand against you,
even in this crisis?
(Romans 8:31)

1.9

1.5

Crises are a great
time to prioritize
what's important.
Seek God, count
His blessings, and find
your refuge in Him.
All the rest will
come afterward.
(Deuteronomy 4:29)
(Amos 5:4)
(Matthew 6:33)

Our role model, Jesus,
while going through
pain and suffering,
learned obedience.
His example inspires us
especially in these days.
Keep that in mind..
(Hebrews 5:8)

1.3



Whatever
happens in
this crisis,
it will be a plan
to do you good,
because
He loves you.
(Jeremiah 29:11)

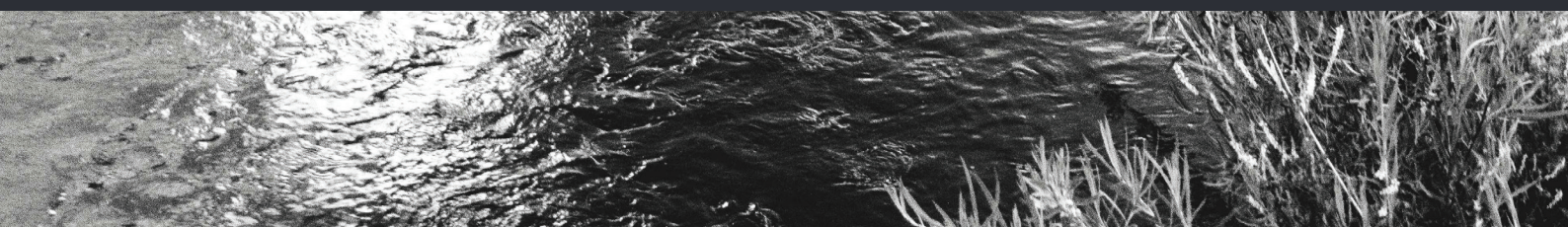
You'll be able
to know God
in a different way,
more personally,
and more closely
in this crisis.
You've heard of
Him with
your ears,
but perhaps
during this time
your eyes
will see Him.
(Job 42:5)

He will not let
you face anything
more than you
can handle,
even though it
can be painful.
You'll find the way
out in His timing,
so that you
can bear it.
(1 Corinthians 10:13)



“Give ear and
come to Me; listen,
that you live.”

Isaiah 53:3



Taking care of our mind.



*Our mind, just like the rest of creation,
finds itself in a fallen state.
What you do with your mind in this time
will be fundamental for the outcome of the crisis.*

2.1

It's entirely possible that you may experience fear, even panic at this time. When we see Jesus in Gethsemane, we know that He understands us and that He was tempted in everything, like us. Don't give room to anxiety, because it will take up all the space you give it. Be quick in bringing your burden to the Lord and telling Him, "I can't, help me."

(1 Peter 5:7)
(Hebrews 4:15)

2.2

A state of disquiet is normal when facing an abnormal situation like this. It keeps you alert; it reminds you that you're vulnerable, and it also encourages you to seek the necessary help. Use it as a reminder that you need the Lord more than ever.

(Psalms 37:24)
(Psalms 22:5)

2.3

Anxiety is disproportionate fear.
It makes you believe the lie that,
if you worry,
you can change things.
That's not how it works.
(Matthew 6:27)
Jesus tells you instead,
"Do not let your hearts
be troubled and
do not be afraid."
(John 14:27)

2.4

Some types of anxiety can make
you believe that you're going
crazy or you're going to die.
Your body is reacting
to the chaos.
Confront these feelings without
running away from them. Sit down,
fill your mind with the Lord in
that moment, cup your hands,
and breathe for a few minutes.
This will help your body to
regain its breath and
your mind to reorient itself.
(Psalms 31:13-15)

2.5

Negative, distorted, or irrational
thoughts, your own voice
and that of the enemy,
sowing doubt, have to be kicked
out by the message
of encouragement and
hope that God gives us
in His Word, through faith
in His promises.
Remind yourself of them
and apply them,
because they're for you!
(James 4:7)

Substitute worry with active thought. Identify what you're thinking, what you're feeling, and bring it before the Lord with fervent prayer.
(Ephesians 6:10, 18)

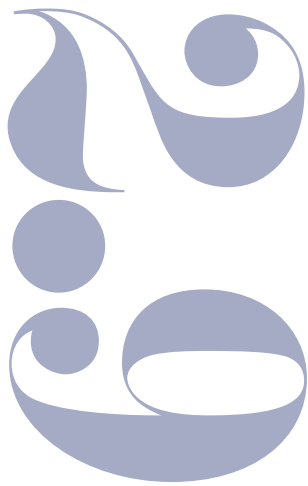
2.6

2.7

To meditate, some people empty their mind. Instead, it's time to fill it with the beliefs that invigorate your thinking. Seek the Lord and let Him permeate your mind in this difficult time.
(Psalms 119:50)

Your mind needs peace at this time, so ask the Lord to help you to think about whatever is good, whatever builds up and edifies, whatever gives you a better perspective.
(Philippians 4:8-9)

2.8



The lockdown
we're experiencing
is temporary.
It started and
it will end
at the right time.
Don't despair, and
think of
the lockdown
as something
that is hiding
blessings
from God for you
and yours.
(Romans 8:28)

The experiences
of others
who suffered
before us
help us to look
in the
right direction:
David, Daniel,
Isaiah, Jeremiah,
Peter, Paul...
and most of all,
Jesus,
looking to God
before
anyone else,
inspire us
and challenge us
not to let
our minds
and spirits drift.
(1 Corinthians 11:1)

Remember that
you are still free
and that
consenting to
this time
of confinement
right now
is an act
of worship
and obedience
that you do
out of the
freedom
with which
Christ has set
you free.
(Romans 13:1)



Taking care of your mind
is also taking care of
the temple of God that you are.
As fallen beings, our minds
can often play dirty tricks on us.
As a believer, however,
you now have the mind of Christ
and you are able to
think differently.
Ask the Lord to
help you to do so.
(1 Corinthians 2:16)
(John 20:27)



The Lord is with you among
those who help you.
(Psalms 118:7)
Stay in contact with and
in the care of other people.
God puts them in your path
to hold you up and
to strengthen your spirit.



Be intentional and
choose one or two people
you trust with whom
you can share
your burden during
this difficult time.
(Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)



“Be made new
in the attitude
of your minds.”

Ephesians 4:23

Taking care of our spiritual life.

3

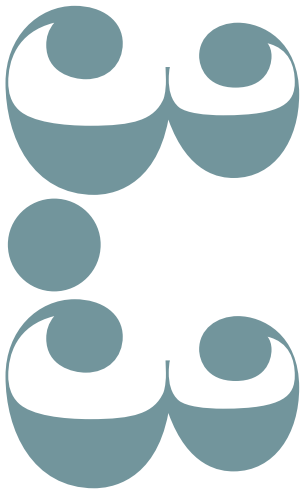
*Crises have the potential to destroy us or,
if we put ourselves in the Lord's hands,
to transform us more and more into the image of Christ.*



The Christian life isn't easy.
And even less so when the
circumstances are against us. This
is a time and an important space
to recover and to reactivate, to
go deeper and to intensely live
out the many spiritual disciplines
with which the Lord comforts us
and makes us more like Him. Put on
the full armour of God and don't
forget any of its parts. You will
need it on this day of evil.
(Ephesians 6: 10-18)

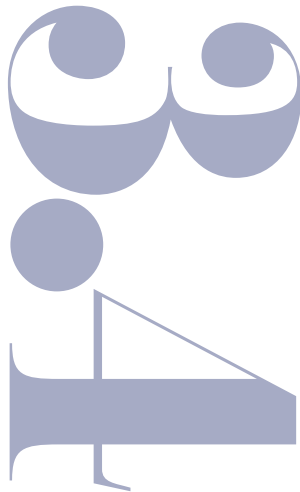
Give these aspects priority
as you organize your time.
Give to Caesar what belongs
Caesar, and to God
the things that are God's.
May that which is urgent
not keep you from what is
important. Paul's concern
was that the believers
may be sanctified
and remain in the Spirit.
(Philippians 1:9-11)
(Matthew 22:21)
(Matthew 6:33)





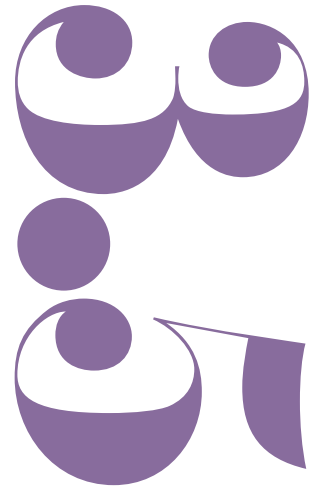
Each of these aspects will require your deliberate participation. If you didn't do it before, do not delay. There is no time to lose.

It will be in His strength alone, but based on a conscious decision on your part now. (Philippians 2:12-13)



No doubt you will get frustrated many times because it is not easy to grow in the midst of adversity. But remember: He does the work in you and you are never so strong as when you are weak.

(2 Corinthians 12:9-10)



Prioritise your relationship with the Lord. That will reorder your fears, your sense of identity, of belonging, of family, of future. It will make you see more clearly who you are in Christ and who God is Himself. (Isaiah 43)

3.6

This is not a time
for superficialities.
Go deeper into the Word,
distinguishing it from
“irreverent babble”,
or “Christian messages”
whose intention
may be good,
but that disorient your faith
and can lead you astray
from the actual message
God has for you.
(2 Timothy 2:15-16)

3.7

Do not enter
into vain debates,
or lose yourself
in what you do
not understand.
Rather, follow the Lord
and obey Him in what
you clearly understand,
which will be a lot.
(James 1:22)

3.8

Not all the information
that comes to you with
“Christian language”
comes from the Word of God.
Examine everything,
and hold fast to that
which is good, based on
the Lord’s message for you.
(1 Thessalonians 5:21)

Constantly read the Word to be able to distinguish between the truth and a lie. Retain the Word in your mind, so that you can respond faithfully in the most critical moments of temptation and discouragement.

(Luke 4:1-13)
(1 Chronicles 16:11)
(Joshua 1:8-10)

3.9

3.10

Speak to the Lord at all times. Use the calm moments, to delight yourself in Him and in His care. Seek Him in the darkest times, to cling to Him with all your strength, express to Him what worries you, and cast your anxiety on Him.

(Matthew 11:28-30)
(1 Thessalonians 5:17)

Praising the Lord with music and voice expels anxiety and helps to tune your spirit to the Lord's, in addition to being a witness. God deserves to be praised in the midst of all this darkness, because He does not change, He has not changed, and His mercies never fail.

(Hebrews 5:8)
(Psalms 25:6 and 27:13)

3.11



Count your blessings, as the psalmist did. Don't let your memory play tricks on you. Make a list of the experiences from which the Lord has rescued you or in which you have seen God at work. He is also doing it now and is putting fear and uncertainty in their right place.

(Psalms 77:10-11)
(1 Chronicles 16:12)
(Psalms 40:1-3)

Meditate, keep quiet, reflect, observe, contemplate the Lord and His character towards you, practice contentment, be grateful, delight yourself in Him, even if the situation does not invite you to do so. Disciplining oneself is much more than reading and praying. It is enjoying Him and allowing oneself to be drawn unto God, imitating Him, both alone and in community (Whenever possible, of course!).

(2 Chronicles 20:17)
(Psalms 46:10)

As you grow in the Lord, this will bring you near to others and deepen your sense of community and love for them (even if it's digitally these days).
(1 John 4:20)



“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me to heavenward in Crist Jesus”.

Philippians 3:13-14

Taking care of relationships.

4

*Even in the midst of confinement,
we are responsible for each other.
Yes: we are our brother's keeper.*

4.1

The Lord is our life raft and it is time to cling to Him. Moreover, we can be a living testimony of His love and accompany our faith with works that may reach and positively impact our relationships.
(James 2:18)

4.2

If we only live for ourselves, not only will we not reflect God's love, but selfishness and anguish will absorb us. The opposite of selfishness is love, and in love there is no fear.
(1 John 4:18)

4.3

This is a perfect time to be generous with others and to demonstrate the love of God towards others.
(Hebrews 13:16)

4.4

Identify your closest neighbours and be intentional and specific in choosing ways to do good to them. Make a plan: important tasks always require it.
(James 4:17)

4.5

Try to be practical. Good intentions are not enough. Today you have many means at your fingertips to reach those who are not close to you: phone calls, messages, video conferences, small details of affection, interest, or a friendly gesture... Just do it.
(James 2:26)

Listening is a great gift to give others in these difficult times. People's souls are burdened. Offer them healing balm with your silent listening and your few words.

(Romans 12:15)
(Proverbs 18:13)

4.6

4.7

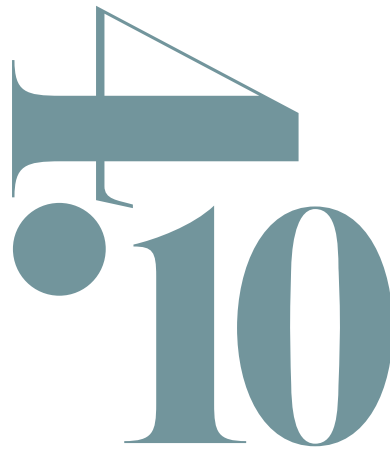
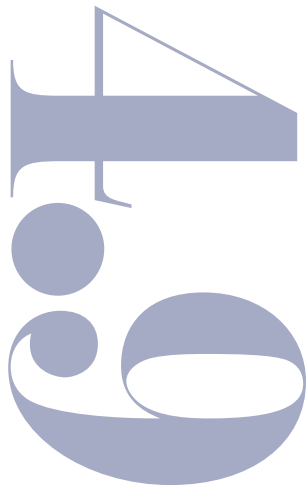
Share your pain with others and ask for help. We are to bear one another's burdens. Carrying your burden alone will not help. Rather, it can consume you.

(Psalms 32:3)

Do not stop others expressing emotions using pseudo-biblical arguments that have nothing to do with the real spirit of the Word. In the face of pain, Jesus wept, was sad, accompanied, prayed... Let us also imitate Jesus in His emotions and in His relationships with others.

(John 11)
(Galatians 6:2)

4.8



Tell
your close friends
that you
love them.
Love builds up
like nothing else.
When we love,
we are showing
God to others.
(Romans 12:10)

Declare to others
what you have
found in the Lord.
If you receive
any comfort
from Him
these days,
don't keep it
to yourself!
The Gospel
is good news
to share!
(Matthew 28:19)

“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.”

1 John 4:7-8



Taking care of church life.

5

We don't go to church. We are church.

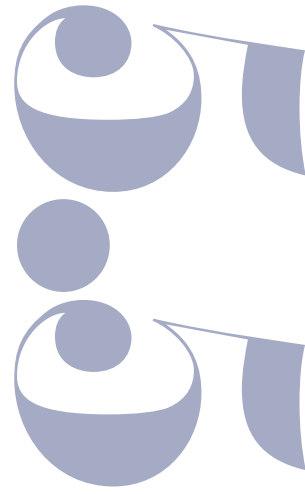
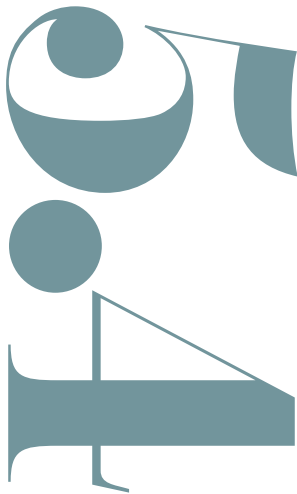
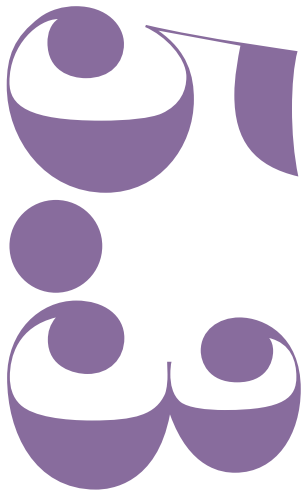


Now more than ever,
it is time to remind
ourselves that the church
is not four walls, but rather
we who are living stones, firmly
built upon Christ Himself,
the cornerstone.

(1 Peter 2:5)
(Ephesians 2:19-20)

For the Christian, being Church
is not optional, but a necessity
and a commandment.
It is the space in which
we develop and grow,
worship and learn.
(Colossians 3:12-17)





God has
protected
His people
throughout history
in many ways.
Today,
let us
not constrain
the manifold
grace of God,
which continues
to sustain us.
He supports,
cares for
the Church,
and gives
His life for it.
(Ephesians 5:29)

This is especially
the time
to be the Church
that the Lord
desires us to be:
that does
not conform
to the ways
of thinking
of the present
days, that
remembers where it
came from,
who saved it
and where it
is headed.
Fixing our eyes
on Jesus,
the author
and perfecter
of our faith.
(Hebrews 12:2)
(Romans 12:2)
(Jeremiah 15:19)

Remember
those in
the congregation
who may be
most vulnerable
because
they are alone,
ill, or have
no family.
Accompany them
in practical ways.
The Lord loves
the helpless.
(James 1:27)

5.6

Get used to systematically calling others and being available to meet practical needs, for example, praying together. Faith compels movement and we care for one another in the love of the Lord. Although we are not together now, we can be connected.
(James 5:16)

5.7

Be intentional: know the names of your brothers and sisters in Christ, love them in practical ways, make prayer lists, be interested to know if the Lord has answered these prayers, involve little ones... and in the middle of this darkness, do everything with love, as if you were doing it for the Lord Himself.
(Colossians 3:23)

5.8

The Church is the spiritual family that God has given you. He makes us responsible for one another. Yes, we are our brother's keeper.
(Mark 9:42)
(Genesis 4:9)

We are expected
to take care of ourselves
and also to maintain unity,
so that the world may
believe. They watch us in
the midst of chaos: let's
reflect Christ.
(John 17:21)

5.9

5.5

This is not our
final destination.
We are pilgrims.
The coming of the Lord
draws near and we
long for it. Until that time
comes, let us
not cease to fulfill the
mission for which
we were placed here.
(Matthew 25:1-13)



“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Hebrews 10:24-25

Using your time wisely.

6

*Our time
is a precious and scarce resource,
difficult to manage correctly.*

6.1

We are living through a difficult period and, at the same time, it is full of opportunities to serve and do good to others. It is time to grow in the Lord, as a family and in our relationships. It can be difficult, at first, to balance all these facets under new conditions but it is an urgent task.

Ask for wisdom.

(James 1:5)

(1st John 3:17-18)

6.2

Bring order to your routines and be wise in deciding what you need to do.

These are not holidays and it is important to use your time wisely. Being confined, the excess amount of information and number of sources, the rapidly changing situation... all these things will probably make you feel a sense of chaos.

But the Lord reigns.

Do your part and He will do His.

(Proverbs 10:5)

6.3

There is a time for everything.
Balance productivity and
work with rest and a
certain level of satisfaction.
The Lord Himself instituted
work and rest as essential aspects
of human life. Both are prior
to the fall, and they are
very beneficial after it.
(Ecclesiastes 3:1-15)

6.4

Make the most
of this crisis
to reflect on your life and
the time you have ahead of you.
What are your values?
Do your timetable and activities
reflect those values after
those first few days of adjustment?
In the same way that our
mouth speaks of what we treasure
in our heart, our timetable
also reflects what is
important to us.
(Psalms 90:12)

6.5

Do activities that
are important to you
throughout the day and put them
in order of priority.
This is a time to consider
what is important and urgent
and, most probably, the more
superficial aspects will become
less relevant. Examine your time
before the Lord.
(Psalms 39:4-5)

Paul exhorted Timothy to be a disciplined soldier and not to get distracted by that which wasn't suitable. Creating wise routines and putting our life in order gives us a mental and emotional structure, which protects our state of mind and our actions.
(2 Timoteo 2:4-5)

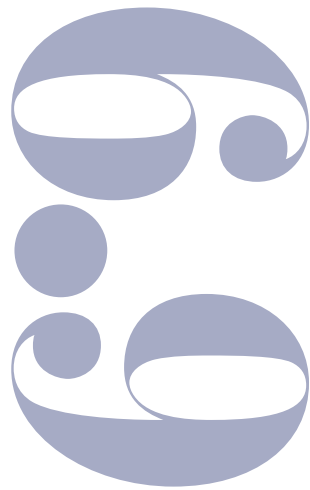
6.6

6.7

Discipline has to do, not only with time, but also with the appropriateness of what we do. Examples like Martha and Mary help us: in contrast to Marta's excessive activity and discipline, Mary, in her sensitivity towards the Master, chose the better part.
(Luke 10:38-42)

Each day brings its own troubles and the Lord's provision for us is daily, as with the manna in the desert. Everything that exceeds those measures, far from bringing us balance, leads us to overload ourselves and to strive in our own strength, not His.
(Matthew 6:34)

6.8



That is why constantly listening to or reading information about the situation can lead your thoughts to recurrent and catastrophic ideas. The Lord is in control. During this time, remember to fill your mind with the truths that the Lord gives you in His Word.

Read, for example, Psalm 91.

Look for moments during the day when you can stop your activity and take 15 minutes to concentrate, breathe, and talk to the Lord and tell Him what is making you anxious and give Him your worries. If you can't pray for long periods of time, don't go long periods of time without praying.

(1 Thessalonians 5:17)



**“Be very careful, then,
how you live – not as unwise
but as wise, making the most
of every opportunity,
because the days are evil.”**

Ephesians 5:15-16



Taking care of family.

7

*Families which are strong, well-founded on faith,
united in love, sustained by God.*



Telework, children, confinement...
It's very possible that you often
feel overwhelmed, without strength.
When you feel overloaded, STOP.
Don't accumulate if you can avoid
it. This is the moment to remember
that God gives strength to
the tired and weary.
(Isaiah 40:29-31)

Your home and your family
are the space given
to you by the Lord
to respond to this situation.
They are your closest
"neighbours", even though family
life can be difficult.
The Lord asks each of us
to do our part
in a responsible way.
(Matthew 22:37-39)
(Colossians 3:18-21)





Certainly,
the need for
the fruit
of the Spirit
in us these days
will be clearer
than ever:
love, joy,
peace,
forbearance,
kindness,
goodness,
faithfulness,
gentleness and
self-control.
Against such
things there
is no law.
(Galatians 5:22-25)

Choose wisely
which battles to
fight. Proverbs
reminds us that
whoever brings
ruin on their family
will inherit only
wind. Be wise.
(Proverbs 11:29)

There will
probably
be conflicts,
discouragement...
but this is also a
time to smooth
all these things
over with the
Lord's help. To do
this, we should
try to put Him in
the centre and
remember Him
often, if possible,
together
as a family.
(Romans 12:10)

A large, stylized white number '7.6' is centered on a solid teal background. The '7' has a thick, curved top bar, and the '6' has a thick, rounded bottom loop.

Also remember that love covers over a multitude of sins. Forgive and think about yourself with sober judgment, thinking of others as superior to yourself.

(1 Peter 4:8)
(Colossians 3:13)
(Romans 12:3)
(Philippians 2:3)

A large, stylized white number '7.7' is centered on a solid light teal background. The '7' has a thick, curved top bar, and the second '7' has a thick, curved top bar and a thick, rounded bottom loop.

When faced with the conflicts that are bound to happen, repentance and forgiveness are essential.

**Do not spare any effort.
You, and I, are debtors of grace and we were forgiven first.**

(Ephesians 4:31-32)
(Matthew 18:23-35)

A large, stylized white number '7.8' is centered on a solid purple background. The '7' has a thick, curved top bar, and the '8' has a thick, rounded bottom loop.

Try to not let the sun go down while you are still angry. It is easy to cross the line that leads us to bitterness, to think wrongly and act worse.

Talk about what has happened and try to resolve it in an edifying way.

(Ephesian 4:26)
(Ephesian 5:21)

Family members will often have to choose between conflicting interests. Many of the activities may be legitimate, but not everything will be beneficial. Ask for wisdom and choose what honours the Lord.
(1 Corinthians 10:23)

7.9

7.10

Make the most of this time to be intentional and to be a positive influence on your family. Bless your family with your actions. Start to come up with a plan.
(James 4:17)

Strengthen your relationship as a family and the relationship you have with the Lord. If possible, share devotional times that involve everyone and that build up your passion for God. In the midst of this dark situation, discover God together.
(Isaiah 55:1-3)
(Ephesians 5:15-20)
(Romans 12:1-2)

7.11

FOCUS

Y

Taking care of Young children.

Y.1

It is important that children know,
at their level, what is happening
but without all the details.
They observe you and perceive
your reactions and your example.
What you don't tell them, they will
interpret themselves and probably
incorrectly. Be honest and don't
lie to them based on your own
understanding.
(Proverbs 3:3 y 5)

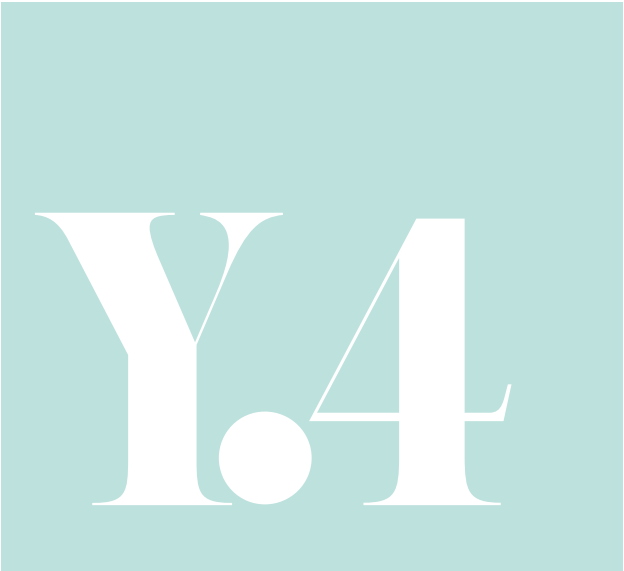
Y.2

Make them participants
in this crisis.
Remind them
that obeying is also
their way of helping.
Develop as a team
and work together.
You are family.
(Proverbs 4:1)
(Proverbs 6:20)
(Proverbs 17:25)




Y.3

Help the children understand the situation you are experiencing from a spiritual point of view. If they can see God at work during this time it will help them and you, also, as adults taking care of them.
(Proverbs 22:6)



Y.4

Do not underestimate your children's practical and spiritual contribution. Their young age doesn't prevent them from drawing close to the Lord, if they want to find Him. Encourage them to do it, learn with them and through them.
(1 Timothy 4:12)
(Matthew 19:14)



Y.5

Involve your children in family devotional times. Seek the Lord together, sing, make prayer lists that you can go through together... It will surprise you how much you can learn from them.
(2 Timothy 3:14-15)

In their daily life
and their routines,
structure the day in a way
that is manageable for
them and for you also.
It isn't about making
heroic efforts, but rather
saving your strength
and acting wisely.
(Luke 14:31)

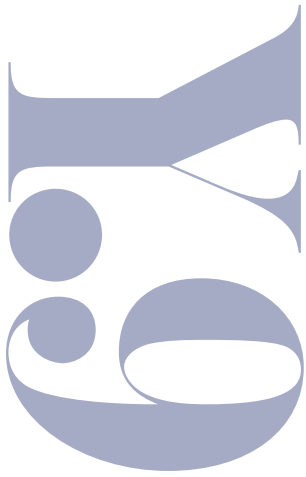
Y.6

Y.7

It is essential that
children have time for
tasks and routines.
If they don't, they will
easily lose them and
you need to remember
that foreseeably,
this situation is
only temporary.
(Proverbs 20:18)

Start the day with
activities of average
intensity and difficulty,
continuing with the most
difficult (like homework or study)
and keep leisure and rest
activities for the end.
Take their age into account for
each aspect but encourage
them to work diligently.
(Proverbs 6:6-9)

Y.8



Although this is an exceptional time, it is important to continue correcting them. This is one of the ways we show them how much we love them. Avoid being permissive.
(Proverbs 3:12)
(Hebrews 12:6)

This is a time when your example is essential for everything to work. Don't ask something that you aren't capable of doing. Be God-fearing, trustworthy and truthful in your service as a parent and this will help them see wholesome authority in you.
(Joshua 24:14a)

Remember that speaking the truth in love is at the heart of the gospel. Do not exasperate them but be clear and direct when you are instructing them.
(Colossians 3:21)
(Proverbs 16:6)

FOCUS

Taking care of the Elderly.

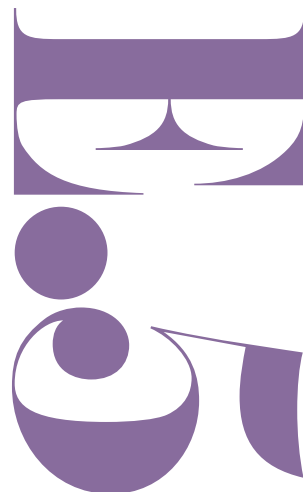
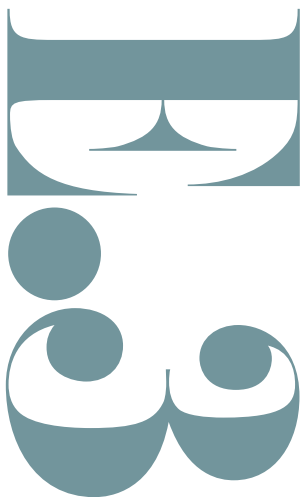
E



Our elderly relatives are of great value to God and they should be for us too. Honour the Lord by honouring your elders.
(Proverbs 16:31a)

Now, more than ever,
our elderly relatives need
our love and attention.
We ought to give them honour
and affection. In what practical
ways are you going to honour
and love them during this time?
(Exodus 20:12)
(Leviticus 19:32)
(Deuteronomy 5:16)





If your elderly relatives are not near you, be especially intentional every day, even several times a day: a gesture of support, of affection, a call, a message, a digital photo, something that makes them smile is essential for their emotional state in the midst of loneliness.
(Proverbs 12:25)

Create a space in which your elderly relatives can feel useful (maybe as intercessors, for example, or teaching the children?).
(2 Timothy 1:5)

Talk to them, but above all listen to them, because they are a source of wisdom, especially if they know the Lord personally.
(Job 12:12)
(Psalms 92:12-15)

E.6

At a time in which
the elderly
“don’t seem to be useful”,
we as Christians can make
a difference.
Make the most
of this crisis to be light
in this aspect too.
(Proverbs 20:29)

E.7

Psalms 71
is the prayer of
an elderly person,
the cry of someone who knows
they are more fragile
because of their age.
Read it carefully and be
the Lord’s instrument for that
elderly person near you.

E.8

The Lord promises
to be with us all our days,
to the end of the age.
He sustains us and does
the same with
our elderly relatives. He tells us:
“I will always help you,
I will always sustain you”.
(Isaiah 41:10)
(Isaiah 46:4)
(Matthew 28:20)



**“But as for me
and my household,
we will serve the Lord.”**

Joshua 24:15

8

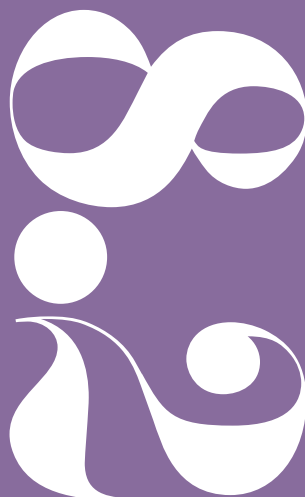
If you are ill or you are taking care of someone who is...

*In the hope that this illness
would not end in death but,
always, for the glory of God.*

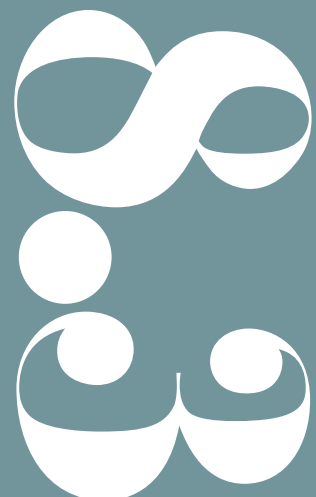
The illness from this virus is, certainly, a time of pain, weakness and uncertainty. We want to remind you that we are praying for you, even without knowing you, and we believe God can heal you.
(Matthew 8:2)



This is a time to mobilise the church for prayer. Don't hesitate to ask for this support, much less with all the technological means available to us. Praying for one another will be our privilege and encouragement.
(James 5:14-15)



We also remember with you that He binds up our wounds and heals the broken-hearted. This is our desire for you at this difficult time.
(Psalms 147:3-5)



8.4

We walk holding His hand,
even if He does
not appear to be with us.
Now He asks us to look with faith
as we try to walk upon the water.
Jesus calls us to come
close to Him, and also
reminds us that in the middle
of this difficult sea
“I am with you”.
(Isaiah 43:2)
(Matthew 14:22-33)

8.5

The phrase “Do not fear”
appears in the Bible 365 times.
(Perhaps one for
each day of the year?)
This is a gift from the Lord
to you, like a calming whisper
in the middle of this difficult time.
Take hold of it with
thankfulness and trust.
He looks after each one of
the hairs on your head.
(Isaiah 41:10)
(Matthew 10:29-30)

8.6

In the midst of uncertainty
and fear, as Christians
we try to hold on to
the hope that these afflictions
that we are currently
experiencing are nothing
compared to the glory that
is to come. We hope that
this image encourages you,
although we continue to
hope you will recover and
are praying for this.
(Romans 8:18)

In these days
of illness, the excess
of information can
negatively affect your
state of mind. Instead,
remember what the Lord
does in our lives in the
middle of a desert and
loneliness and how He
sustains your life in the
midst of pain.
(Isaiah 43:19)
(Psalms 41:3)

8.7

8.8

Maybe you are isolated
in this quarantine. In the midst
of this, the Lord is working closely
and directly with you. He sits with
you at your table, He watches
over your sleep and rest, He
transcends all confinement. May
your relationship with Him be
intensified now and may you be
able to feel His hand close
to you, that He is the
One who sustains you.
(Isaiah 41:13)

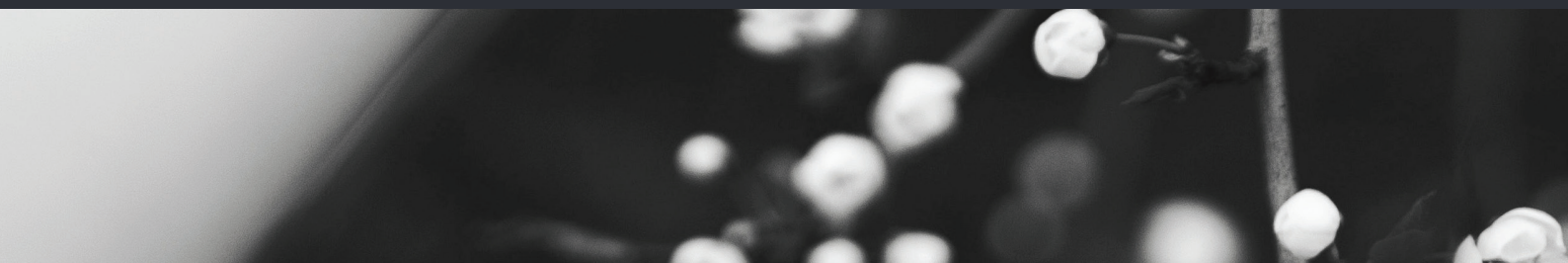
At this time we want
to remind you
of Psalm 23.
We pray and hope that,
according to His will, this
illness would be just a
passing moment in your life,
that the Lord would restore
your health and
bless you greatly.

8.9



**“When the cares
of my heart are many,
your consolation
cheer my soul.”**

Psalms 94:19



If you're grieving...

9

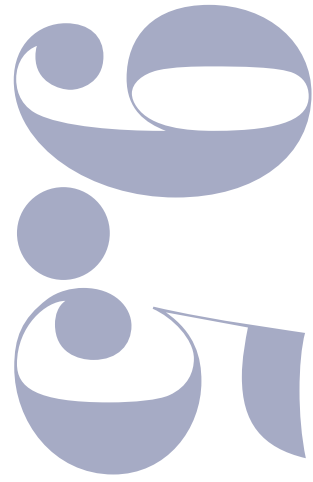
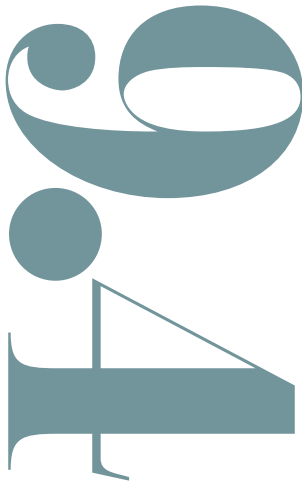
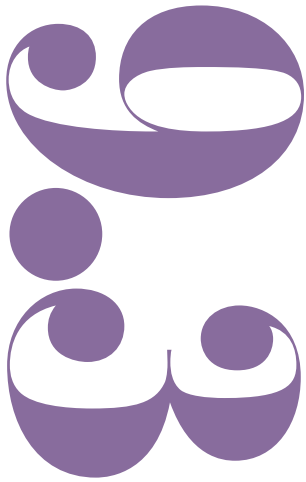
*We were not created for death,
but rather for life.*



If you are grieving,
even as a believer,
this is a time of pain.
Death is always a tragedy
because of the separation
that it brings and
in this present time
it continues to break us.
(Revelation 21:4)

Emotions form part
of God's design for us
and they belong to creation.
However, like all things
they too have been
affected by the Fall.
Do not be guided by them,
but do allow yourself to
feel them and share
them in your time of mourning.
Jesus Himself did just this.
(John 11:35)





Confronted with the death of a loved one, remember that Jesus cries with you, just as He did before Lazarus's tomb. We remember His words to Martha who wanted to believe but was held back by her own unbelief: Did I not tell you that you would see the glory of God?
(John 11)

There is a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance. From the wisdom that God gave him, Solomon reminds us that there is a time for everything. This is a time for weeping and sadness.
(Ecclesiastes 3:4)

If the grieving situation is complex because you were unable to say goodbye to your loved one, do so although it is a posteriori or in a symbolic way (for example, with a letter expressing what you would have liked to have said, or by meeting virtually with other relatives). The Lord will be with you as you cry out to him.
(Psalms 18:6)

9.6

Allow yourself to be consoled at this time by God's promises. It can be tempting to fall into rejecting God or isolating yourself from those around you. However, like Job, may we be able to bless God in the midst of all of this.
(Job 1:21)

9.7

There will come a day in which God will wipe every tear from our eyes and there will be no more death, nor mourning nor crying nor pain. We remember this at moments like these. The separation is painful as we long for a day in which all this will be different.
(Revelation 21:4)

9.8

The Lord will continue to act in the midst of your pain. He will comfort us and will use us as an instrument of comfort for others. We hope to be an instrument of comfort for you now.
(2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

Passages such as
Proverbs or
Psalm 23, among others,
finish with a vision of the
future, an image of a
banquet to which we are
invited, a vision of a dwelling
place prepared for those who
are His. Make this your vision
in the midst of the pain
that surrounds you.

9.9

9.5

If your family member
was not a believer, we
understand that the pain
will be greater for you in
these days. Use this pain, as
you are able, to be even more
intentional in sharing about
God and His love with those
people that you love.

(John 11:25-26)
(1 Corinthians 15:21-22)
(2 Corinthians 6:2)



**“For if we live,
we live to the Lord, and if we die,
we die to the Lord. So then, whether
we live or whether we die,
we are the Lord’s.”**

Romans 14:8

Looking to the future.

10

*"I awake...and I am still with you."
(Psalms 139:18)*

10.1

We do not have the ability to know the future, but we rest in that God not only knows but also controls it and His Will will be done. He sustains our lot.
(Psalms 16:5b)

10.2

In this time of uncertainty concerning health, work, finances... He reminds us that we are not to be worried, but rather focused on God's Kingdom and everything else will be given to us.
(Luke 12:29,31)

10.3

As He is a personal God
who knows you from when
you were inside
your mother's womb,
He knows what you need
even before you do.
(Matthew 6:8)
(Psalms 139:1-18)

10.4

We ask the Lord
to help us see His Will
as it really is:
good, pleasing
and perfect,
despite the pain that
we are experiencing.
(Romans 12:2)
(Matthew 6:9-15)

10.5

As this crisis continues,
it is from the Lord's hand
that we can look to the future
with hope. He encourages you
to look ahead, to choose
your paths well and
not grow faint, because
He walks with you.
(Proverbs 4: 25-27)
(Isaiah 41:10)

Remembering
the victories of God
in the past
strengthens us to face
present battles.
This is what David did.
(1 Samuel 17:36)

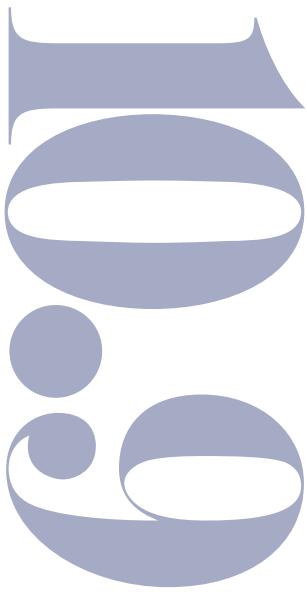
10.6

10.7

Our God is creative.
He is making something new.
Do you want to see it?
But He uses these
processes to teach us.
His promises are faithful.
(Isaiah 43:19)
(Psalms 37:24)

God is not going to leave
His work incomplete in you.
On the contrary, He is
perfecting it day by day
until it is complete.
(Philippians 1:6)

10.8



Do not obsess
with the idea
that this situation
should pass you
by, nor that the
past was better.
Rather, ask God to
teach you today
and to make you
more into His
likeness through
this process.
(Ecclesiastes 7:10)
(James 1:2-4)

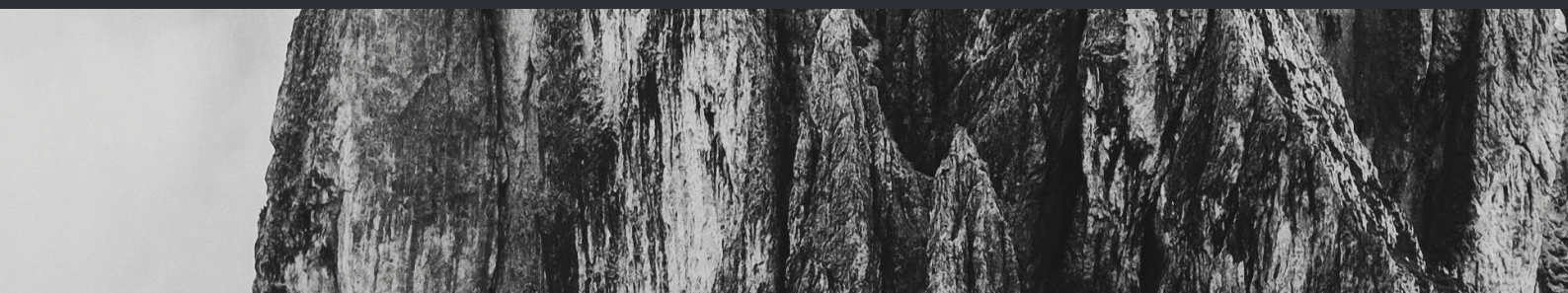
When we are
overwhelmed by
what is around
us, this often
misshapes our
vision of the
future. Choose
carefully what you
engage in and
fight to continue
forward as one
who wants to win
the race.
(1 Corinthians 9:24)
(Psalms 16:8)

As Christians,
we are focused
on a goal:
to fix our eyes
on Jesus.
And this is a time
for mission;
of reaching others
and of striving,
not towards what
was left behind,
but towards
what is waiting
for us ahead.
(Philippians 3:13-14)
(Hebrew 12:2)



“My times
are in your hands.”

Psalms 31:15a



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**“Wait for the Lord;
be strong, and let your heart
take courage;
wait for the Lord.”**

Psalms 27:14

