

throne and in control. We don't have to worry about whether our government leaders are making good decisions or if this is all just some more "fake news" from the media. We do get to pray! Pray for our leaders, government, and church. Pray for those who have contracted the virus, those who have lost loved one here and across the world. And we can ask God to help us all see this situation, world, and life the way he does. Please take a few minutes to listen to, "Give Me Your Eyes," by Brandon Heath – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fM4m3iE0Z24>, and then spend some solid time in prayer giving God Adoration, Confessing our lack of His Vision for life, Thanking Him for providing everything we need, and bringing our Supplications (Asking) to Him and trusting that He will answer in a way that is best.

### Saturday – Making Time for God

Today we are still being asked to keep out of public places to try and slow the spread of the virus. As we do, we as Christians are being given a great opportunity to build up our spiritual lives as families or roommates or individuals. Spend intentional time in some form of worship on Sunday. Use what Pastor Glen is providing as a resource with his sermon and the worship outline. Have a family devotion. If you have children, help them participate. If they can read, let them read from the Bible. Encourage one another to pray for each other – not just family but everyone impacted by this virus. In light of this virus, I wanted to share a post I found in the Chicago Tribune from June 6, 2019. When flu season comes around each year people live in dread of getting this terrible virus, because the flu invades the whole body. Weakness sets in making it difficult to function or even rest. Sin is the most serious thing man will ever deal with. Sin is a spiritual virus that invades our whole being. It makes us morally and spiritually weak. It's a deadly disease that infects every part of us: our body, our mind, our emotions, our relationships, our motives — absolutely everything. We don't have the strength on our own to overcome its power. But when we come to Christ, the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in us. When this happens, any sin that comes in begins to fester and God's Spirit reveals it to us. The Holy Spirit tugs at our souls to get our attention, telling us that we are not right with God. The cause of trouble, the root of all sorrow, the dread of every man lies in this one small word — sin. We all have this terminal disease and it's far worse than the flu or even cancer. It has crippled the nature of man and has caused man to be caught in the devil's trap! People don't willingly expose themselves to the flu virus — people generally run from it. This is what we should do with sin — flee. Sin is the great clogger, and the blood of Christ is the great cleanser. We don't need to be crippled any longer by the disease of sin because God has provided the cure. "The blood of Jesus Christ ... cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7) and He will give us the power to turn from sin. (This column is based on the words and writings of the late Rev. Billy Graham.)

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This week's *Bring it Home* devotions were written by Rhonda Frerichs.  
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### What Now?

**Look for ways that you can tangibly shine Jesus' light and love into the hearts of others each day this week.**

#### Monday – Where Are We So Far?

Pastor Glen has been leading us through this Lenten season and our series, "Dying to Live." We have looked at Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, and learned about and talked about "Killing the Old Man," and the practice of fasting and Scripture reading. Then we looked at being "born again" through Baptism and how it articulates beautifully all that we gain in terms of life, real life, through Jesus' death and resurrection. Last week we looked at and learned how Jesus looks at life. He role modeled a life showing, "It's not about me" – it's about the Father who is full of more love and life than we can understand. Jesus lived an ascetic life. He didn't have a house where He knew there would always be food on the table or a roof over His

head. He also lived a life filled with Acts of Service and this week I hope to encourage all of us to look for ways to serve others. We will also learn about and practice Lectio Divina as a Spiritual Discipline to help us grow into the new creations we are in Christ. Let's begin today by reading Ephesians 5:8-14. Read through it slowly and out loud. If you are married or have children, have your spouse or child read it through once and then switch. As you listen, pay attention to what words stood out for you. Talk about or write about what stood out. For me it was the word, "light." Literally, and more importantly spiritually, light dispels the pre-existing darkness. This thought produces so many more thoughts for me. How about you? What stood out to you? Perhaps with these unsettling times, the word "darkness" evoked sad emotions or fearful ones. Whatever came to mind, take it to the Lord in prayer. Each time you read through the verses pay attention to what words stood out to you. Do this at least three times. As we close our devotional time today end by reading/praying Psalm 91:2.

### **Tuesday – Social Distancing**

If you are like me, you may not listen to much of the news, as it can be a bit depressing. When I do it is usually Channel 9. I like Kyle Clark on NEXT and I think I heard him possibly coin a phrase about this unusual situation we all find ourselves in – "the Great Distancing." Right now we are all being called upon to not ask, "What can my country do for me," but "What I can I do for my country?" We are being asked to cut back on socializing in order to cut back on the spread of COVID-19. The fear that this disease has caused for some of us is really causing some socially awkward situations. For instance, have you been in a store recently and coughed or sneezed? It's like you're a Social Pariah! Well this is some of what Jesus was calling into account in today's reading from John 9:1-12. Read through this using Lectio Divina (the same as yesterday, reading, listening, reflecting). What stood out to you? Could you picture yourself walking through the town with Jesus and coming upon this blind man? Did you think about how the blind man felt having the disciples and his neighbors talk about him rather than to him? How refreshing it must have been for the man to have someone touch him – and not only touch him but speak to him and heal him! What can we learn from this? I am not suggesting you go out and touch and try to heal someone. I am suggesting that God is always at work taking the rags of our lives and turning them into beautiful colored robes of righteousness. God is helping me become more aware of judgmental thoughts I have about others instead of looking for what a person really needs – to see Jesus through me. Take some time to think about what God is teaching you. As you go through this day and end this time pray, "Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." Then thank Him for forgiving you.

### **Wednesday – Blind as a Pharisee**

Jesus came into the world to give us life, and that life was the light of man. He came into the world and though the world was made through Him the world did not recognize Him. He came to that which was His own, yet His own did not receive Him (John 1:5, 9-11). Even if we are born with sight, we are all born

spiritually blind. For today, please read John 9:13-34. The Pharisees were true examples of this. Right before their very eyes was a man who tried to help them see that Jesus is the true light that gives sight. It seems he was "Dying to Live," as he boldly tells the Pharisees how he was healed and that Jesus must be sent from God to do such things. This took a lot of courage, as anyone who confessed that Jesus was the Christ was to be put out of the synagogue. As you read today, try to picture yourself in this scene. Perhaps you are the blind man who had his sight restored. Maybe you are a neighbor, or perhaps just an onlooker. Can you imagine what it would be like to see for the first time? During this season of Lent, which it still is, even though we may not be gathering together, ask God to keep your eyes wide open to His truth. Pray today that you and everyone in your neighborhood, at Immanuel, in the city of Loveland, in the state of Colorado, in the U.S., and in the world will have their eyes open to how we treat God and treat each other.

### **Thursday – Jesus: Our Best and Only Hope, Our Friend**

Please listen to, "What a Friend we have in Jesus" – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9oRay5YBHg>. If you do not have the ability to listen I have attached the words so you can just sing it without accompaniment. Then spend time listening to God. 1) What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry Everything to God in prayer! Oh, what peace we often forfeit, Oh, what needless pain we bear, All because we do not carry Everything to God in prayer! 2) Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged, Take it to the Lord in prayer. Can we find a friend so faithful, Who will all our sorrows share? Jesus knows our every weakness; Take it to the Lord in prayer. Are we weak and heavy-laden, Cumbered with a load of care? Precious Savior, still our refuge, Take it to the Lord in prayer. 3) Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer! In His arms He'll take and shield you, You will find a solace there. Blessed Savior, You have promised You will all our burdens bear; May we ever, Lord, be bringing, All to You in earnest prayer. Soon in glory bright, unclouded, There will be no need for prayer—Rapture, praise, and endless worship, Will be our sweet portion there.

### **Friday – Seeing Life Through God's Eyes**

For today, let's start by reading from the Old Testament reading from Sunday, 1 Samuel 16:1-13. Pay particular attention to verses 6-13. As I read through this today I could relate to Samuel. I know quite often I judge life and people based on what my physical eyes see or my ears hear. I can neglect taking the time to sit quietly and wait for God to speak or show me something. I want to see life through God's eyes, don't you? I get so caught up in "my little world" or my own struggles that I can forget that the people in China, Italy, Spain, the U.S., and Colorado are my brothers and sisters. God cares just as much about them and what is going on for them as He does for me. We are living in very different times right now and it can be easy to be confused by all the different information out there. The reality is God sees everything that is going on. He is still on the