

# KEEPING IT BRIEF

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Volume 1

Short Daily Devotions to Draw  
You Closer to God

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# **Keeping It Brief Volume 1**

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# 1

## At a Distance

A new term has become part of our everyday language since the COVID-19 virus entered our landscape. That term is *social distancing*. It refers to the practice of maintaining space between ourselves and others so that we do not get close enough to anyone to encourage the spread of the virus. Social distancing is beneficial, as it has proved effective in slowing down the transmission of the virus from one person to another.

However, it seems that some of us have been practising ‘spiritual distancing’ for some time now. At least, we have tried. Some of us have been deliberately distancing ourselves from our brethren, and we have also tried to even put enough space between ourselves and God. We do not want Him so close that He influences every aspect of our lives, but we choose to maintain a distance. We want Him nearby where we can call Him whenever there is a problem but at a distance when everything is going well.

In the face of this current crisis, let us draw closer to Him. There are no other viable options on the table. It was never in the plan of God that we pull away from Him and try to distance ourselves from His presence, from His power, and from His purpose for our lives.

- ***“But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.”***  
(Deuteronomy 30:14)
- ***“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word***

*was with God, and the Word was God.”* (John 1:1)

- *“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.”* (John 1:14)
- *“Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.”* (James 4:8).

As we draw closer to Him, we will inevitably draw closer to each other.

The choice is ours. What are we going to do?

## 2

### Logic

Some things, like micro-organisms, can be seen if examined with the right instrument.

Other things cannot be seen, regardless of the instrument: wind, gas, gravity, temperature, electricity.

So they are fictitious and cannot be real?

Well, we can't see God either (John 4:24).

# 3

## A Prayer of Return

*Luke 15:11-24*

I wandered away  
Far from the Lord  
I spent a long time  
Thought I was enjoying myself  
Now things have changed  
And I realise  
I need to return to my Father  
Will He still love me?  
Will He still have me?  
My Father, forgive me  
Oh Father!  
Now I understand  
Now I appreciate  
Your love  
Your kindness  
Your goodness  
Thank you, Father  
I want to be with you  
Forever!

## 4

### Treasure

What do we value most in our lives? That will bring different responses from different persons.

Is it our money, successful business ventures, bank accounts, and all the privileges they bring?

Some of us put our careers, homes, vehicles, clothes, jewellery, and other possessions as being the most important things in our lives.

Some treasure giftings and abilities or country of residence; others, their education.

A few of us have had the fortune to be born into a family that is well-connected. We carry a name that is easily recognised in society.

Now, we have a lot of time for reflection. Most of us have had our busy lives screech to a halt or at least, slowed down.

This is the acid test. Is whoever or whatever we have been trusting in, able to provide relief and assurance at this time?

Educated or not, wealthy or not, held in high esteem or not, we were all created by Him (Genesis 1:27) and need to place our treasure in Him.

At the end of the day, that is the only safe place (Matthew 6:21). Since we are His treasure (Exodus 19:5), should not the relationship work the other way as well?

It is time for self-evaluation and examination. It is time to trust Him as never before.

It is time to love the Lord and serve Him with all our heart and all our might (Deuteronomy 6:5), not only in this crisis, but always.

**For this time of trouble will last for a while and then be over, but He remains eternal.**

## 5

### Sing Praises

Nothing seemed to be looking up for Paul and Silas. They were in the will of God, doing His work, spreading His Word, when they fell victim to ungodly forces (Acts 16:16-24). Berated, beaten, bloodied, and bound, they were locked up in the inner prison. They had good cause to sulk, grumble, murmur, and complain. But in their darkest hour, they sang praises, not in their hearts, but loudly, so that other prisoners heard them (Acts 16:25).

What did their fellow prisoners think? *Surely these men are insane, stupid, or simply do not grasp the gravity of their situation.* But victory came as they praised. There was a great shaking, doors were opened, and there was liberty. The prison keeper and his family came to the Lord. Official freedom for Paul and Silas came in the morning.

In our current situation, many of us feel imprisoned in our homes. We have taken a financial beating, an emotional beating, or even a spiritual beating. There are falling incomes and scary happenings, while we are cut off from physical contact with our friends and unable to attend the House of God. We may feel insecure and abandoned.

However, singing praises is the way to go. It not only lifts our spirits but also the spirits of those around us, or at least, it gets their attention. Even more importantly, it invites the presence of God into our situation. Nothing and no one remain the same in His presence.

Think of something that God did in your life and sing praises.

Commit the future to Him and sing praises.

Those in your household will hear your praise.

- Praises invite His presence (*Psalm 22:3*)
- Praises bring relief (*Psalm 18:3*)
- Praises bring victory (*2 Chronicles 20:22*)

Regardless of our frame of mind (Psalm 108:1; Psalm 42:11; James 5:13), praises are desirable.

As we praise, doors open or new opportunities present themselves, souls are won to the Kingdom and we are set free.

## 6

### Shelter in Place

In these pandemic times, this phrase is often used. It is advised to remain where you are, once it is a safe place, until the danger is passed.

We, the people of God, have also been called to remain under our Lord's protection.

Noah and his family sheltered in place in the ark. He had answered the call to build the ark (Genesis 6:14). His family was saved from destruction. After Noah, his family, and the animals entered the ark, the door was shut by God Himself (Genesis 7:16). There was no turning back.

The children of Israel sheltered in place in Egypt, on the night of the first Passover. They were instructed to remain in their houses (Exodus 12:22).

King David was an expert at sheltering in place. His many experiences at being on the run, in fear for his life, saw him frequently hiding (1 Samuel 22:1; 24:22; 26:1). He recognised that more than just a physical hiding place was needed (Psalm 119:114).

The prophet Isaiah urged God's people to shelter in place to escape His judgement (Isaiah 26:20).

The apostle Paul advised the centurion and his soldiers to shelter in place, even as they prepared to abandon ship in the middle of a storm (Acts 27:31).

We are to remain in Him, in safety under His blood. There is no other refuge, no other safe zone. Let us shelter in place, for our adversary the devil, is roaming around,

seeking someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8).

No one shelters in place when there is no trouble. This command is only issued when danger lurks outside.

The climate of this pandemic can easily steal our peace, our stability, and our mental health. Let us remain in the safety and security provided by Him. We are not to simply confine ourselves to our homes, but we are to secure our hearts and minds in Him, for there we find hope, peace, joy, and strength (Nehemiah 8:10; Psalms 29:11; Romans 15:13).