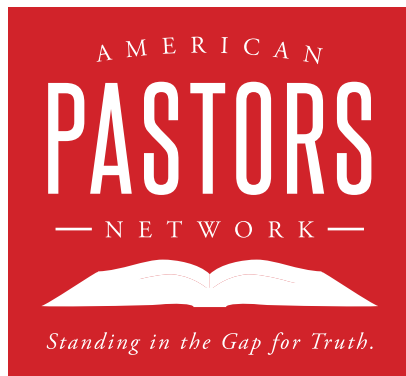


03/18/2020



# COVID-19 PASTORAL RESPONSE KIT

## FULFILLING OUR DIVINE PURPOSE IN TIMES OF NEED

### DEAR PASTOR & CHURCH LEADER,

With the advent of the Coronavirus—COVID-19—pandemic, the world is facing an increasingly challenging time. This biblical pestilence is taking lives, altering lifestyles, impacting our economy, and challenging our families and culture. Beyond anything we've seen in our lifetimes, this pandemic's impact, while seemingly draconian for the moment, could well extend for many months. This means that our civil and church leaders are not only immediately faced with difficult choices, but may be facing a longer-term challenge as the U.S. and world population is faced with a deadly and invisible enemy.

Into this scenario, pastors and churches are facing challenges that range from how to respond to demands of Civil Government to not meet as normal in churches and how to balance the biblical obligations to submit to civil authorities (I Peter 2:13-17; Titus 1:3; Romans 13:1-7), to pray for those in authority (I Timothy 2:2) and to yet carry out the biblical mandate of the Great Commission in sharing the Gospel and making disciples. (Matthew 28:16-20)

**In an effort to help serve the pastors and church leaders around the nation, the American Pastors Network leadership team met together for the express purpose of developing simple leadership guidelines.**

On our team are experienced and faithful pastors of over 40 years, a millennial pastor and pastors of inner city as well as rural churches. I believe that God gave great wisdom to this team, and we want to share that with you. It is our desire that this information will be helpful to you. We are not saying that this information is exactly what you should do or that you should all of it. Perhaps only one point is helpful. Feel free to use what you can as is or use this as a springboard for you and your church leadership team. Every ministry is different and unique, yet every church is the same in that our duties before God to meet the needs of the Household of Faith and to be bright lights in a dark world are the same. In the end, each true pastor called of God who believes in the Authority of

Scripture, Salvation by Faith in Christ alone and possesses the courage to preach the whole counsel of God is a pastor we as APN are committed to serving. It is our prayer that this will help you to most effectively provide the necessary leadership to your congregations and to provide assistance to work with your leadership team, your deacons and elders.

We believe basic biblical principles can help guide pastors and church leadership in how to respond to restrictive civil government actions. This would include the current actions prohibiting gatherings, etc.

**1). Observe all civil laws and submit to the laws of civil government until it conflicts with God's higher laws.**

**2). Do not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. Now is an opportunity to be creative.**

**3). Communicate an attitude of faith, peace and trust in God. (Psalm 119; II Timothy 1:7)**

**4). Use this opportunity to nurture a deeper relationship with your pastoral team; seek their counsel, not only in church scheduling decisions but also in seeking to meet the Internal and External Needs Focus.**

**5). Don't think "Retreat from the world" but instead, "Advance into the world"**

In the coming days, APN will share further suggestions that are tangible ways to meet the needs of the household of faith (internal) and meet the needs of those outside the household of faith to fulfill the obligation of furthering the Gospel and making disciples (external).

In the meantime, and in addition to the principles above, APN is providing two resources from our friends at First Liberty. First, please listen to the "Stand in the Gap Today" program featuring Jeremy Dys, First Liberty's Special Counsel for Litigation and Communications, at this link: <https://subsplash.com/americanpastors/lb/mi/+qr6v2v>.

**Additionally, please see the document below created especially for APN by First Liberty on "Guidance for Churches and Religious Institutions Facing Coronavirus Restrictions on Gathering."**

Pastors and church leaders, we are praying for you during this challenging time in our world. Please know the American Pastors Network is here to support you in the difficult days ahead.

In Christ,

Sam Rohrer  
*President, American Pastors Network*

