



Two paths:

Inward or Outward, Panic or Rest, Hoarding or Giving

I realize the panic around COVID is different everywhere. I remember when Boulder had torrential rain and flooded in 2013 in our neighborhood. Our street where the water rushed down off the mountain destroyed most of neighbors yards, basements, and lives for most of the year. Two blocks over, you'd almost never know there was a flood, no damage at all, just more grass to mow than usual. The same goes for this crisis. Some communities are devastated by loss, death, and fear of it all. Some are continuing on like normal with no real changes surrounding the threat of the virus. Regardless, across our world is a sweeping anxiety that is

causing us to act out of fear rather than love, inwardly instead of outwardly.

But within these responses we have a call as Christians. We are confronted with two paths: inward or outward focus, the way of the World or the way of Christ, panic or rest, victimization or opportunity, hoarding or giving. This is not just moral goodness and it is not just seeing the silver-lining. It is the path of choosing self and self-preservation or the path that Jesus calls all of us to if we claim he is King over our lives. As I walked through the bare shelves of our grocery stores the last week in Boulder, I was reminded of all the people in our communities that don't have enough money to buy months worth of paper supplies, 12 packages of rice or ground beef, 4 pounds of hand sanitizer, or 30 cans of beans. Most people in our world live paycheck to paycheck so they cannot hoard supplies at their home the way those in privilege can. Some are young and healthy with no real worries about the virus for themselves and yet could be carriers to those with compromised immune systems where the virus could be deadly.

So my challenge is this:

What if we as Jesus-people advocated for all those in our communities that could not buy flu medicine, that may not have everything they need, and are worried about what next week may hold for them and their family? What if we thought of our less-fortunate friends that are at-risk of greater infection than our younger healthier residents? Our focus in these times must be Spirit-led, meaning we focus outwardly. It means we draw strength, guidance, and power from the Love-Force that is God himself. It means we focus on other's needs rather than on our own independence. (Also, it goes without saying that you must also take care of yourself so that you have the opportunity to take care of others. Use wisdom as your guide). This is the call of all Christians everywhere. The question we must ask ourselves daily is, "How can I step out of my narrative, my fear, my concerns, and focus on the needs of others who don't have anyone to advocate for them?" This is a tough ask for all of us, but it is the call of Jesus. Join me in attempting to be

faithful, not perfect, through this crazy season of life. It's strange, confusing, and foggy at times, but those are the moments when God does his best work.