

# Corsicana pastor urges vaccine consideration after COVID

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CORSICANA (BP)—After a stay in the ICU as he battled COVID-19, Pastor Danny Reeves wants to “testify to the Lord’s goodness,” as well as encourage people to consider getting the vaccine.

Reeves, pastor of First Baptist Church in Corsicana, said he first started experiencing symptoms of the virus in early July. Body aches, a fever and headaches prompted a COVID test that yielded a positive result.

After initially feeling better a few days into his quarantine period, Reeves’ symptoms took a turn for the worse, and he decided to go to the hospital after spending 10 days at home. The virus continued to take its toll, and his struggle to breathe progressed quickly. He was moved to the ICU after two nights in the hospital.

## Given a ‘reality check’

The 49-year-old Reeves said the doctors gave him a “reality check” that there was a chance he could die.

“Those are striking words that get your attention,” Reeves said. “There were lots of emotions, and I cried a lot in the hospital. I fought for my life those first three nights in the ICU.”

After 11 days in the hospital, Reeves slowly recovered. Although that time was challenging, he said trusting the Lord is what brought him comfort.

“I have never faced what I would call a near-death experience, and I did feel fear,” Reeves said. “Yet I still felt a lot of confidence. If this was my

appointed time for God to call me, I knew I was ready. I look forward to seeing the Lord. I didn't want that to happen yet, but I knew if that's what God had determined for me, I had a real peace."

## **'I think I was just overconfident'**

Reeves had not received the vaccine before he was diagnosed with the virus, but now he said he wishes he had.

One doctor told him if he had been at the hospital this time last year, he may not have made it, because certain treatment methods for COVID had not been developed yet.

"I just didn't think it would happen to me, and therefore, I thought I was healthy enough to deal with it if I might get it," Reeves said. "I learned the hard way that this is not how this disease works.

"I think I was just overconfident. I wish I would have gotten the vaccine, and I believe my case would have been severely diminished if I had done so. I don't want people to go through the horror that I faced."

## **Plans to get vaccine once he is eligible**

Reeves now plans to get the vaccine himself once he is eligible for it, as there is a waiting period for those who have recently had the virus. He also now encourages everyone to consider talking to their doctor about getting the vaccine, though he does not support vaccine mandates.

"I've wanted to encourage people to consider getting vaccinated," he said. "I do not believe in mandates ..., but I do believe I probably could have been saved the level of horror that I faced if I had taken the vaccine.

"People have called to ask me, and I say everything I've read says you could

be saved by it. I've gotten a lot of feedback on social media from people who have chosen to get vaccinated because of my story, and that means a lot to me. I also think the vaccine could save you and your family, but could also maybe be a way to love our neighbors.

"My plea is don't get your information from mainstream media, but go to a trusted physician and let them talk to you about it. I had some great talks with doctors in the hospital about the entire vaccination process and how the Pfizer vaccine was handled. I talked to one physician who was actually on the development board for the Pfizer vaccine. I realized the vaccine would have been good for me."

## **Pupil in a 'school of humility'**

Reeves marked a small victory when returning to his church office for a couple hours of work earlier this week. As he reflected on the journey, he said he is thankful for the support he received and how it affected him.

"It (support from friends and family) has been irreplaceable, and it's meant the world to me. My loved ones have been just super," Reeves said.

"I think I've become a better pastor having been a patient to that degree. I learned what it means when somebody calls. I've learned what it means when someone cares enough to text, and I've learned the value of a card or note. God used all of that mightily to lift my spirit.

"I believe every part of our life is a school for us to learn what God has for us to learn. For me, it was a school of humility, and learning how much I need those around me."

# **Trust in the Lord in all things**

Additionally, Reeves said he wanted to be a witness for Christ to those around him even during his time at the hospital.

“I felt a real sense of calling even as a patient to minister to every single medical professional I came in contact with,” Reeves said. “I loved every person that came through my door.”

One of the main lessons Reeves has learned through the whole process, and the advice he gives to anyone currently struggling through a COVID-19 battle, is to be courageous and trust the Lord in all things.

“When Christ becomes our foundation, even the darkest of valleys shrink in comparison to God’s great power and love for us,” he said.