Commentary: 5 practical ways to impact your community during COVID-19

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Leaders are making tough decisions in light of COVID-19 that can have significant ramifications for large numbers of people. As committed Christ-followers, we can use our influence to make a positive impact on the kingdom of God during this crisis.

Here are five practical ways we can be the hands and feet of Jesus. Christ will do the miraculous in our midst if we allow him to use us for his glory.

Share God's peace. The starting point is allowing God's perfect peace to fill our hearts. Then become intentional people of peace in your community. Start by being an active listener, connecting with people at their point of pain and offering encouraging words of hope. It's surprising how much a calm demeanor can reassure others. Be people of peace sharing the love of Christ everywhere in your community as you are able to get out and about safely.

Minister to the elderly. Many elderly are quarantining themselves. Can you imagine the increased levels of isolation and loneliness? Create a system to reach out by phone daily to make sure they are OK and have what they need. Be willing to assist with their needs, such as medication refills, groceries or household supplies, walking dogs, etc.

Consider creating a community prayer line. In the days and weeks to come, large numbers of people will be confined to their homes. The idea may be appealing the first day or two, but boredom is going to set in quickly. They will begin to look for ways to reach out and connect. Offer to

pray for them and to pray with them.

Know where to find assistance in your community. How can you help the hourly worker who has been sent home and may not be getting a paycheck until this is over? How do you minister to an isolated young man who is overwhelmed by feelings of helplessness and now is entertaining thoughts of suicide? With many school closings, what about children who are food insecure without a midday meal at school?

Reach out to a helping professional—a social worker, nurse or teacher, for example. Ask them about needs in your community and services offered so you can help and encourage others. Be familiar with the resources in your community.

Tell of God's transforming power. Most importantly, take every opportunity to share the gospel so people may come to saving faith in Christ. If you are stuck at home, think of just one person a day to reach out to and give a joyful witness to the transforming power of God at work in your life.

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