

Hello everybody

As you know last night the State President announced that South Africa was going to be locked down for 21 days. I trust as believers you're praying for our president, praying for the cabinet, and that you're praying for those that are vulnerable, those that are going to lose their jobs and particularly lifting up our church before the Lord. I trust that this is your instinctive Christian response.

What I'd like to do for the next couple of minutes is talk about our individual response to this crisis and then the churches response. What is the church going to do in the next 21 days?

So firstly individually, we are law abiding, God fearing, Bible believing and we are government honouring people, because we're Christians. So, we're going to honour this 21 day lockdown and I believe that it's a Christians responsibility to look after the widowed, the weak and the poor and the disenfranchised and also to follow the protocols of hygiene during the lockdown that the government has put in place. It is both wise and Christian to do so. At the same time though I hope you're not retreating into self-preservation mode. Its very easy for us to do that. To think of me and my family. We understand that as believers we've got to look out for our brothers. Now you're not going to leave your home, but you can certainly pray for groups of people, you can contact people via whatsapp and send them messages and prophetic words particularly those that are vulnerable and isolated. We have emergency teams that have been authorised by the government to go into these crises. This number: 083 7861202 is a number that you can phone if you're worried about someone. We will phone them and see if intervention is needed during the lockdown, so caring for each other through cyberspace is what we've got to do. Let's do it in a creative way and being led by the Holy Spirit and so that's our personal response to our nation

As a church we'd like to talk about three primary responses we are about to make. Firstly, we have been anticipating this a couple weeks ago because our friends who have planted churches in other nations around the world have just recently gone through this a couple of weeks ahead of us.

Firstly, there is the emergency intervention. Secondly, there is spiritual feeding and nourishment and engagement that we are going to be able to get through cyberspace to you. Then thirdly, as a pastoral team we are systematically praying for you and lifting you up before the throne of heaven. Jay Mannikam runs the One Life Foundation, he is working in collaboration with four massive Christian NGOs in the province and we are a center for people to be able to drop food and supplies off. In addition to that we are lisensed to go to the places that are in absolute need to bring the relief. So this number is the direct contact to get aid to the poorest of the poor. Let's pray for Jay, pray for the team, we've never done this before but Jay is the perfect guy to pull this off.

Secondly, our spiritual feeding, relating together, our church services we're still going to be able to pull this off and so this is what we said we were going to do. Every week an English service, complete with worship and prophetic words and a ministry moment and a zulu service both in audio (so you can play it on your phone) and video so you can use it on your TV if you've got those resources. In addition to that, a children's service once a week on a Sunday. We will also be producing a devotional that you can interact with for every single morning. It will go out at seven o'clock from our preaching team. We'll have pastors that are ready to interact with you. You will go on – you'll get it through an email or a Whatsapp link- you can see it on Facebook or Youtube and you will see below the video you can click comment. And you can put a prayer request there, a question there, a theological question, a personal question and our pastors will be online to interact with you over those 21 days. In addition to that, you've got the numbers of the pastors at your sites that you can get hold of and they are on call ready to engage with you. We will also be sending out a leadership podcast every week that you can subscribe to. We think everybody should be a leader in moments like this. It's really practical, how you help people in times like this, how you lead in the kingdom in times like this. It will be coming out on those same platforms.

If you are worried about being able to get material for the church services etc. or you know people who may not be able to get it, please in the next 48 hours, before lockdown, engage with us. We have technical teams all over the province ready to help you to be able to receive the church services on the weekends.

How will you be doing church? With whoever you're locked down with. Your wife, your family, your mom and dad. Our encouragement is do it together. You could get the material and watch it from the bath tub or as a family you could get together and watch it on the TV. Stand up. Worship together. Pray together devote yourself to the word together. We'd really encourage you to do it that way. And then pass it on to people that you know.

We are doing a debranded version – by which I mean we are taking out the name One Life so that the Baptists and Methodists and everybody else will feel comfortable about using it. Last weekend around 200 churches used our material and I'm sure that's going to grow. So if you have friends in other movements, other churches that want that stuff, get in touch with us or you can get it online.

The third thing, is as a church, as a pastoral team, all 22 sites have numbers of pastors at those sites they've got community lists with your names on, we are systematically praying though them trusting that God ministers to you, that God uses this time to glorify Himself, to build you up, to replenish you, to refresh you and to make you strong in your faith.

So, just before I go I'd like to leave you with a scripture. The writer to the Hebrews in chapter 12 says: "You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels and joyful assembly (consider the angles that are in heaven right now) and to the church of the firstborn (what is God saying to his church right now while the world is busy being shaken? Then this verse goes on to say that the time is coming that everything that can be shaken will be shaken. And quite frankly our

world is being shaken right now. Our economies are being shaken, people's confidence is being shaken. In the context of the angels in heaven, and God looking at his church and a world being shaken, this is what he says) Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken (you are part of a kingdom that cannot be shaken. The world can be shaken, but the kingdom of God is beyond the world, before the world. It cannot be shaken. You're in that kingdom if you're a child of God) Since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken let us be thankful and worship God acceptably with reverence and awe. Let us be thankful. Some of us are so busy organising things that we don't pause to be thankful. God says worship me be thankful. Thank God for your family, thank God for our nation, thank God for your church, thank God for your provision. He ends with "for our God is a consuming fire". When the bible speaks about God being a fire that imagery runs all the way through the bible. He is the fire that gets us going, the hedge of protection – we heard last time we spoke together – He is around us to protect us. Our God is a consuming fire. And he has pulled us into a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

I'm going into lockdown in about 48 hours time with a couple of other pastors in this house and we're going to stay for 21 days. It's going to be quite a time. I suppose I'm going to feel a little bit like a monk out there with a couple of pastors, preaching and waiting on God. I trust that your time will be fun, that you are replenished, that you look out for your brothers and the other side of 21 days we'll see you there and I trust that you will be strong, full of faith, full of courage. Keep in touch, the numbers are on the website, all the pastors numbers are up there. Keep strong.