

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray continually, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

"In the midst of a civil war of unequal magnitude and severity... I invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States to set aside and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father." - Abraham Lincoln

WE ARE A COMMUNITY...

...THAT RESPECTS THE INCREDIBLE POWER OF WORDS

⁵ Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶ The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

- James 3:5-6 (NIV)

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power...

- Hebrews 1:3A (ESV)

³⁴ You brood of snakes! How could evil men like you speak what is good and right? For whatever is in your heart determines what you say. ³⁵ A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. ³⁶ And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgment day for every idle word you speak. ³⁷ The words you say will either acquit you or condemn you."

- Matthew 12:34-37 (NLT)

...God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

- Romans 5:5 (NIV)

...THAT KNOWS ALL ABOUT THE DEADLY POISON OF WORDS

⁷ All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, ⁸ but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. ¹¹ Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?

- James 3:7-11 (NIV)

The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.

- John 6:63 (NIV)

...THAT EMBRACES GOD'S PURPOSE FOR WORDS

1. THIS PANDEMIC IS A PART OF GOD'S PLAN

As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.

- Genesis 8:22 (NIV)

2. GOD HAS A PURPOSE FOR THIS PANDEMIC

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.

- Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NIV)

3. THIS PANDEMIC REMINDS US OF THE DEADLY POWER OF SIN

For the creation was subjected to frustration... in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

- Romans 8:20-21 (NIV)

4. DARK TIMES GIVE US AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHINE

"Children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky.

- Philippians 2:15 (NIV)

5. FEARFUL TIMES GIVES US AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go. - Joshua 1:9 (NIV)

6. DURING THIS TIME WE'VE LEARNED THAT OUR HOMES ARE MEANT TO BE SANCTUARIES

The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. - 1 Corinthians 16:19 (ESV)

7. IF GOD HAS BLESSED YOU DURING THIS TIME, HE WANTS YOU TO BLESS OTHERS

(God) comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. - 2 Corinthians 1:4 (NIV)

8. THIS IS A TIME TO EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE TO GOD

Praise the LORD! Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever. - Psalm 106:1 (NLT)

9. THIS IS A TIME TO EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE TO EACH OTHER

I thank my God every time I remember you. - Philippians 1:3 (NIV)

- THANKSGIVING EXPRESSED = ENCOURAGEMENT GIVEN