

## Prayer Letter of Douglas Wu and Family

May 1, 2020

I've been out shopping for grocery a few times during the past five weeks of coronavirus lockdown, and I saw very few South Africans wearing a face mask! I was afraid that I'd be infected by the virus, and I was also worried if a large scale infection occurs in South Africa, then rioting and anti-Chinese incidents would follow! I recall I wasn't this afraid during the SARS epidemic in 2003 at Taiwan, because everyone was cautious and wore a face mask! I estimate less than 5% of the South Africa population wears a face mask, and most people think COVID-19 is just a bad flu. Although the government has announced multiple phases of extension of the lockdown beginning in May, but the actual effect would be much more muted due to inefficient enforcement. I feel the lifting of lockdown is beyond reach.



South African army & police at road check   Road barricades to shut down traffic   Many people feel it's just a flu



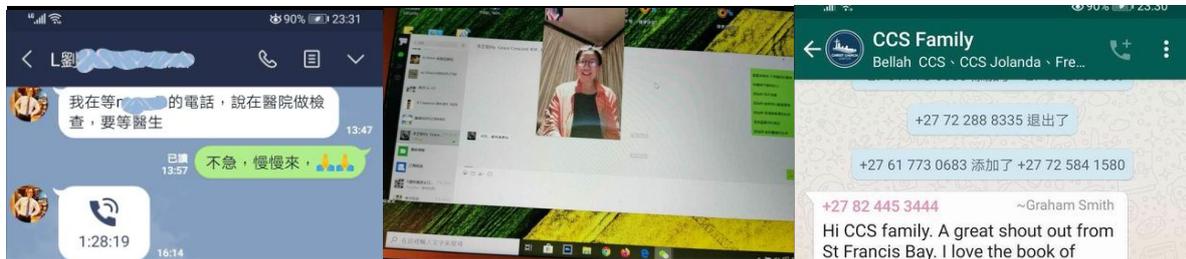
Many people say they have no masks   Riot started when the government truck with free food was late

I reached the books of the prophets in my Bible reading. In my sermon I reminded brothers and sisters to be ready for Jesus' return from the passage in [Ezekiel 3:17](#) *"I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel."* Then I read [Ezekiel 9:6](#) *"Slaughter old men, young men and maidens, women and children, but do not touch anyone who has the mark. Begin at my sanctuary. So they began with the elders who were in front of the temple."* This passage woke me up and I bowed down in front of God asking for forgiveness! With great fear I quieted myself in front of God, because the slaughter would start with the [elders in front of the temple](#)! Yet the Lord reminded me again in [Ezekiel 33:7-8](#) that He has made me a watchman for the house of Israel. I saw the general lax attitude of the South Africans to the coronavirus, so I repeatedly remind our brothers and sisters to protect themselves with face mask, alcohol wipes, and reduce trips out of the house. I noticed the amount of time we used to discuss COVID-19 prevention had been more than the time used to share God's words, so I asked myself exactly what does God want us to focus on? And how would Whitney and I bring brothers and sisters back to God? The answer is through Bible reading,

prayers, Bible study, hymns, worship, and fellowship. Praise the Lord! Although I can't go out for visitations during the lockdown, but God helped us to start a new Covid Prayer Group with the young professionals, including special one-on-one Bible study arrangements. In addition, I was also invited by two other online social groups to join their chat groups, so I took the opportunity to share my YouTube channel of Sunday sermons with them. May God perform His work with these messages.



New Covid Prayer Group   Rustenburg Chinese supermarket online group   Johannesburg Chinese Line group



1:1 Bible study with Brother Liu   1:1 Bible study with Sister Lee   Prayer invitation from host church

*Zephaniah 2:3* “Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD’s anger.” God’s work is always beyond our comprehension. Since I’ve been using YouTube to record my sermons during the lockdown, it means I could also review my own sermons. I thank the Lord for this opportunity of self-examination. Then my daughter Helen told me two weeks ago that a picture of Donald Trump I used in the sermon was a fake, and I’d need to verify beforehand next time. I was at first embarrassed by her criticism, and then became angry. I even accused her of not notifying me earlier! But the Holy Spirit reminded me right away to apologize to her and thank her for being my watchman. Afterward, after listening to my sermon for later in May, Helen again reminded me that the word “perseverance” is used in Romans chapter 5, but I used “patience” instead in my sermon, which would be more appropriate for Galatians chapter 5. Before I could figure out how to respond, she added that using “endurance” would be more appropriate too!



Fake photo of President Trump   My best sermon recording partner   Brother He watching the sermon at home



Lions in charge during the lockdown



Penguins strolling in Cape Town



Giraffes in the first snow of this year

A lot of brothers and sisters who are shop owners were indecisive on whether to pay the rent or pay workers' wages in April, because the government policy wasn't very clear. But God gave us peace in our hearts after prayers, and we understood that almost all businesses would need to wait until either the lockdown is lifted or until the policy is clarified, before any action is needed.

Clarence came back to live with us, and I'm thankful for the opportunity to be able to read three chapters of Bible with him every day – he in English and me in Chinese. Although it's a strange feeling but nevertheless thankful! Had it not with God's word, how else would we have common topics to discuss and share as father and son. My spiritual readings in April also included a re-read of "Exegetical Fallacies" by D.A. Carson, which gave me much inspiration. I asked the Lord to help me with the ability to interpret the Truth correctly.



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### Praises & Intercession

1. Praise the Lord that through His powers, I'm again able to start a cell group of one-on-one Bible study with a Brother and a Sister.
2. Praise the Lord that all three suspected COVID-19 cases in the hospital where Helen is interning turned out to be negative!
3. Praise the Lord that Clarence's school has decided not to recall the students back to school in April. The school will remain closed until the end of the national lockdown.



4. Praise the Lord for we're able to use tools such as WeChat and Line for video Bible studies and conferencing, as well as using YouTube to broadcast sermons for Sunday worship.
5. Praise the Holy Spirit for keeping us safe, and giving us joy and hope while facing the COVID-19 pandemic, so that we can see His glory.
6. The first five weeks of South Africa national lockdown has completed with satisfactory initial success. The next phase starts on May 1 but without a declared end date!

### **A prayer for the global COVID-19 pandemic:**

O Lord Jesus, who sits on the throne and watches over all in the world, who is also the God Jehovah-jireh, may you provide the medicine for COVID-19 after seven Sabbaths! The healer God Jehovah Alpha, may you cure the sick and help them recover! God Jehovah Ebenezer, may you help the scientists to develop the vaccine in a year! God Jehovah-nissi, may you lead the medical personnel at the front line and win this battle! God Jehovah Shalom, may you give us peace! We pray these by the name of Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!

### **Prayer List**

1. The South Africa national lockdown policy has been extended but without a clear end date! Pray for God to control the pandemic and to end quickly.
2. Pray for God to heal a Chinese person at Cape Town who has tested positive for COVID-19. Pray also the pandemic doesn't evolve into anti-Chinese incidents!
3. Pray for God to strengthen the faith of brothers and sisters, and to continue to have Bible studies, worship, and prayers via the various video conferencing apps.
4. Clarence's school has announced online classes but has been inconsistent, and yet they just announced the school would open on May 6. Please remember this in your prayer.
5. Clarence is planning to apply for transfer to either formal dental study or medical study next year. Hopefully he can graduate this year to qualify for the application.
6. Please continue to pray for God to keep Helen safe in her internship at the hospital and she won't be infected by the coronavirus.
7. Please continue to pray for Helen's South Africa birth certificate application and in waiting for God's timing.
8. Please continue to pray for South Africa's political and crime situations. May God watch over the South African Chinese people and that they may have peace in Jesus Christ.

Immanuel

Clarence/Helen/Sharon Whitney/Douglas