

Separating The Precious From The Worthless

by Annie Poonen

This sermon encourages listeners to find value in the current isolation period, likening it to finding precious stones in a bag of pebbles. It emphasizes the importance of appreciating what we have, reflecting on Bible characters who faced isolation, and focusing on God's promises and presence during challenging times. Practical advice is given on utilizing this time for Bible study, prayer, organizing, and discerning what is valuable in our lives.

Scripture: Psalms 46:5, Matthew 6:9, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Romans 8:28, Jeremiah 15:19

Topics: "Value in Isolation", "God's Presence in Challenges"

Description

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Transcript

Sitting here these days, I was thinking of the last time I were in Bangalore when just before we left. It was about a couple of months back, first week of March. I can never forget when we met together as I walked into the church.

I didn't realize that it'd be the last time we would meet together as a group. We'd have to meet individually even in Bangalore. So, I walked into the meeting hall and it was so refreshing to hear the hymns, the singing and the prayer worshipped together, praising the Lord together and the message.

After that, we had breaking of bread. It was such a fresh meeting that day when we met around the Lord's table and we examined ourselves and we took part in the Lord's table. And I didn't realize that after that, no more meetings anywhere in the world and here we are meeting by ourselves, but thank God we can still meet.

We can meet together in this way by ourselves, but God allowed it. We have to thank God for the mercies He has given us that we can at least meet in this way. You know, when we lose something or we have a lack of something, we begin to appreciate it.

Like in Bangalore, I remember the days when we used to have a water scarcity. Usually in summer, we don't have enough water. They turn off the water certain days and give only a limited amount of water.

So then we begin to realize how valuable water is and we're so careful with water. We don't waste it and we try to use as little as possible and we can reuse something. We collect water and use that for the plants or things like that.

It's like that when we don't have something or we have scarcity of something, then we appreciate the value of that. It's like that here. We are not able to meet together for fellowship.

We're not able to see each other. We have to stay in our homes and things are so different. Then we value how it was when we could meet together.

Maybe sometimes we didn't feel like coming for the meeting because there was some small headache or something wasn't right or we were not getting ready in time and we think, okay, maybe I'll stay at home today or the children are a little bit sick. But here we think, now Lord, I'll do anything if I can meet one sister and pray with her. That's how it is.

The Lord leads us in two situations. Helps us to come to situations where we don't have enough of something which we long for. Then we begin to appreciate.

That's one of the good things that happen that can happen during these days. You know, sometimes I think of a story which I heard long ago in a message. You may have heard it.

I think some of my children may have used it in their messages. It's about a little boy. It's not a true story, but a little boy was walking down a beach one evening.

It was getting a little dark and he was walking down and he was bored with life. Maybe a teenager and he didn't want, you know, he thinks we're not going his way and you know that time when the children, boys are growing up, boys and girls are growing up in adolescent time. He was, it was one of those moods and he found a bag of stones.

Somebody had dropped or maybe collected some pebbles and kept it there. So he picked up that bag. It was getting late in the evening.

So he picked up that bag and he started walking towards his home. Then he aimlessly, he started picking those pebbles out of that bag and threw them one by one into the water. He watched the pebble drop into the water and saw the ripples or the splash and he did aimlessly, just threw them one by one and then he started his way home.

He reached home and then he tossed the bag down. Then after some time he picked up that bag. There were just one or two pebbles left and he looked inside the bag and it was not stones in that bag.

They were precious stones. Somebody had dropped a bag of maybe diamonds or rubies or something. It had dropped in the beach and he had found it thinking it was stones and he was throwing them into the water.

Can you imagine how he must have felt when he realized that he had thrown away all these precious stones which he had found and that could have made him so rich. He need not have worked for the rest of his life. He had treasured, kept those stones and he could have, he and his family could have lived in

comfort if he had saved those precious stones.

Now, that's not a true story. I don't think. But it reminded me of these days when we are at home, maybe we have a bag.

We are like that situation where we just have a bag of something. God has brought us to make the situation happen in our homes and in this country and all over the world where we just have to stay at home. And it's like finding us, finding this bag and we don't know what to do with it.

We don't realize that there are precious stones in it. These situations that we are facing this locked in and all locked out situation that we are in. It's precious stones inside and if we collect them and make use of it, we'll find that someday that will be a blessing to us.

Maybe years later, we'll think, yeah, that time in when we had that lockout in 2020, when we were indoors, the Lord gave me this word or we were going through this situation. We didn't have enough food and God took care of us. Or some some sickness came and our children were sick and we thought is it coronavirus or is it something else and the Lord gave me this word and assured me.

So value all those precious stones, which the Lord is giving us through his word during this time. Collect it and keep it and it'll come not only become a blessing to us but maybe a blessing to so many people, definitely to our children. Already I can see what a blessing it has been in our homes.

I can see how children who most of us would have who have children will see the children who are so much unrest that oh, I want to go here. I want to go to this vacation. I want to eat in this restaurant.

I want this. I want that. They're so happy to be at home and just listen to us, eat whatever food we're giving them because they can sense things are different now.

Already God has done a change in their lives. If not, they will God will still do a work. So this time of isolation really God has a plan for it and he will fulfill that plan.

Only thing we should not be in unrest and our children can sense are we in unrest, are we worried, are we upset, things are not going our way. The children can sense and they will learn that from it or they get that that spiritual disease, not the corona disease, but the spiritual disease. We can transmit it to them, but we want to give them a time.

These days we can see yeah, dad and mom. I remember those days when we've had this coronavirus problem and how you took it and years later we can see this is how my dad and mom faced a situation, this crisis and they were not afraid. They were not worried.

They were not in panic. They were not grumbling or murmuring and they can look back to that and they can run their lives in victory. So that's like one of the precious stones in that bag, which we can which we can keep and save for our children.

You know at this time we can think of people in the Bible who had to face times of isolation. It's a good time for us to meditate on those people like that. I can think of Joseph.

He was a young young teenager and he was taken away from his home, almost like kidnapped, taken away and sold as a slave and he had to work and after that he was put in prison. In prison and had to be away from his parents and his loved ones and his friends. Nobody was there to comfort him.

We can imagine what a young boy would face. Or we can think of John, an old man in Patmos. He was sent there as an exile.

So you can think of young people facing isolation, an old man like John the Apostle being put in prison. I mean put on the Isle of Patmos and he was all alone and it was a Lord's Day. He must be thinking this is the day when people all over the world are praying and worshipping and they are meeting together and here I am an exile in this lonely place and then the Lord came and revealed himself.

He heard God's voice like a trumpet. It was so clear and he was so struck by the Lord's presence that he fell down like a dead man. God met with him there.

Or people like Elijah, you know active servant of God. He was he did such a mighty work and proved himself to be a prophet and the prophets of Baal were subdued and then at the threat of a woman he started, of the Queen, he started running away. Ran, ran, ran and he was so tired.

He reached a place alone and there was a whirlwind. There was a storm. Mighty and then a still small voice, God spoke to him and said don't worry Elijah.

I am with you. I've sent my angel to prepare food for you. Eat and get nourished because you have a long way ahead of you.

So there are so many times in the Bible, instances in the Bible where people had to face isolation and then of late we've been thinking of the days of Noah. I think if you've been listening to the messages you would have heard of Noah and that kept me, started me thinking how was it in the time of Noah? I mean until the rain came the whole family was so busy building the ark and collecting food and they could meet their neighbors, they could meet their relatives, they could go shopping or whatever. So much of activity and then the before, just before the flood came they entered the ark and God shut the door.

It's almost like in our days, God has shut the door for us and we have to stay inside. If we want we can go out, but in Noah's case they couldn't go out. God has shut the door permanently for some time at least and can you imagine Noah's wife how she must be feeling? I used to think of her she's a mother-in-law and a mother and a wife sitting there now in a confined space wondering whether the food will last.

We don't know whether it will rain for she didn't know how long it's going to rain and after the rain stopped also she had to stay for almost a year they had to stay in the ark. Can you imagine her plight? How she must be tempted to complain, tempted to find fault with her daughter's-in-law and others grumbling and complaining. No fresh food, they must have stored food for months maybe, all the dry food and she wondered whether the food would last enough and all the smell of the animals you know, can you imagine how and maybe just one toilet or something for everybody to use.

No privacy, wherever she went she'd bump into somebody or other and things were people when her children were not doing the things she wanted them to do or not her way. Can you imagine how much pressure she must have faced in the ark and that kept me thinking how it must have been but then now I don't want to imagine Noah's wife's, I have to come to our situation. In our situation, what does the Lord want to tell me? What am I facing in these days? Of course, we have a lot more comfort, we can get groceries, we can get things delivered to us.

There's a lot more comfort, but what is the Lord trying to speak to us at this time? We may have questions. How long is this virus going to last? Will it affect our children? Suppose we have a little headache or a little

breathing difficulty or cold. Oh, is this a coronavirus? Should I keep away? What should I take some medicine? What should I do? All kind of fears.

So instead of brooding about the coronavirus, let's take our mind away from all those things. Anytime the news comes, oh so many people are dead and so many people are in the hot spot in Bangalore is just where we were living and all those things keep coming up and we keep thinking of the coronavirus. The Lord wants us to take our mind off all that and come to his word.

There are few verses which come to my mind at this time. Most of those verses are which we heard in the meetings. I thought of this verse, it comes to my mind, that is Matthew 6 verse 9 about the Lord's prayer.

Jesus taught the disciples to his prayer. He said pray like this, our father who is in heaven and that just that one sentence father. He is our father.

He knows and he cares. We are like our, we are his little children. He's able to take care of us and not only that he's in heaven.

All authority, all power is in his hands. He's sovereign. He can stop the virus in a minute.

A breath from him, he can stop and purify the whole earth. He made the whole earth. He can control the waves and the wind and everything, all the storms seized when Jesus was on earth.

How much more our father can do a little thing like this? The out of nowhere the virus came. He can just take it away. Even the locusts in the time of the children of Israel came and they were driven away by the Lord and says where the dwelling place of the, there was darkness everywhere but where the children of Israel lived in the land of Goshen, there was light.

There was no darkness there. He can do such mighty things for us. Why should we worry and we don't have to panic.

Our father, father in heaven is in control and we can tell our children we have a father, a heavenly father. Don't have to worry and don't have to panic about anything. Then the other verse that comes to my mind is 1st Corinthians 10 verse 13.

There it says, let me read that verse. 1st Corinthians chapter 10 verse 13. No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man and God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able.

But with the temptation will provide the way of escape also so that you will be able to endure it. Now this temptation which we are facing, the sickness is all over the world, not just Christians. Everybody is facing that.

So we can say, yeah, it's common to everyone. But for us, we know that God, he's faithful. He will, it's common to man, but he is faithful.

He will not allow us to be tested or tempted beyond what we are able. He knows my child over there in California or in Loveland or wherever you are, she won't be able to bear more than this. And he'll say this, thus far, I know more.

This is the limit. And if it does happen, he'll provide a way for us to escape so we can endure it. What a wonderful promise.

You know, we can hold on to that and cling on to that and say Lord, you have a way for me to escape the shortage of food or whatever it is. Maybe, you know, in people in India, some of them, they don't have jobs. They live from day to day.

They don't have money to, and they don't have credit cards or anything. All the money they have is in their home or in their wallet. And they have to live from day to day and they have to feed their families and nobody can take money to them because the roads are all closed.

Think of their situation, but even for them, we tell them and they don't have Zoom or Skype or anything. We pray that this verse will become true to them. God will provide a way for them to escape.

Somehow money will reach or food will reach them. That's our confidence as God's children. So when we are tempted to think, oh, we don't have this, we don't have that, our children are lacking in this, or they can't go out and play.

We can say Lord, thank you. Thank you for the sunshine you've given us some days. Thank you that we have given a home where we can stay inside and play.

Thank you that we have health. Thank you that we have some indoor games, something to occupy our children and we can comfort them with this. And the third verse I was thinking of is in Romans 8. We all know that verse and we've memorized that also.

Romans 8 28, it says, We know that God causes, it's not that, you know, I used to think all things work together. Somehow they'll all work together. But this is so wonderful that God causes all things to work together.

It's God who will do that. He'll cause everything to work together for good. For whom? To those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose.

For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son. So God's plan is that we'll become like Jesus and he causes everything. This sickness here, this poverty here, this lack here, whatever it is, he causes it so that one day we'll become like Jesus.

Little bit more and more, more and more we'll be transformed into his image. And so when we get up to heaven and we see him, we'll say, Yeah, these people all seem to be related to each other. They seem to be, look, they look like Jesus, the saviour.

They look like Jesus, the firstborn among the brothers. What a wonderful thing. Whatever, wherever we are from, we'll be like our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then I want to share this verse, verse 31. If God is for us, who is against us? No virus can be against us. He who did not spare his son, but delivered him over for us all, will he not also with him freely give us all things? Then verse 38.

No, verse 37. In all things, in all these things, we overwhelmingly conquer through him who loved us. Just not just somehow conquer, but we'll be overwhelmingly conquering.

And then the verse 38. Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth. Nothing or anything created will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

Even a little virus can't separate us from the love of God. Big things or small things, whatever it is, nothing can separate us from God's love. And God has poured that love in our hearts.

And that love is for us and we can give that love for each other. Praise God for these wonderful promises he's giving us these days. We can hold on to these promises and say, Lord, that day in 2020, you gave me that promise.

I want to hold on to that. So, I want to share these few verses we can hold on to when we attempt it. And you know, another thing we can learn is like Noah's wife, until the flood came, she was independent.

She could do what she wanted. She could go where she wanted. And she knew that her husband and children are out at work.

And if she felt like making a cup of coffee, I mean, whatever drink she felt like, she could make that, sit down and relax. There's nobody to watch what she's doing. She felt like taking a snack.

She could eat a little bit or she could lie down and sleep, take a short nap if she wanted to. But then after the flood, after everybody came into the ark, must have been a different situation for Noah's wife. There her husband was at home.

Children are at home. She had to keep them occupied. She had to make fresh food, wholesome food, tasty food.

She couldn't just like pack something in a lunchbox and say, okay, while you're building the ark, you can take the snack and if it's, you can drink this water or drink this coffee. Here they were day in and day out. Every meal had to be fresh, had to be wholesome.

And oh, yesterday I gave this, but today, how can I give the same thing? And there's no fridge. I had to make fresh all three meals. Maybe God would have wonderfully given them a smaller appetite that they didn't feel like eating too much.

But whatever it is, God must have done some miracles there also. But whatever, it was a different life for her, for Noah's wife. I was thinking as women.

Now with this, we have, with this situation, which is happening in our homes, our husbands are at home all the time. We have no privacy like to do what we want, to text some friend or call home or talk because everybody is there. There's no space where we can go.

The only place maybe the bathroom and there's only one bathroom maybe for the whole family. And the limitations of space and time and everything. It's like that for us now.

We have to take that challenge and deal with it. We can't say, we don't know how long this is going to last. But there are some things which we can do.

There are some things which we we should not, I mean, we need to remove from our lives. I'll explain what I mean. If you look up this verse in Jeremiah 15, verse 19, that's a good verse to remember for us to keep

in mind.

Jeremiah 15, verse 19 says, Thus says the Lord, if you return, then I will restore you. Before me, you will stand. If you extract the precious from the worthless, you'll be my spokesman.

I just want to read just that part, if you extract the precious from the worthless. That's something we have to do now. You know, in India, we have these these seals that are flat.

We call it morum. Those who know Indian languages will know. And then we put the grain in that, maybe two, three cups of grain in that.

And then these women who are experts, they keep tossing that grain up and down, up and down, up and down. And they have a way of tossing it and turning it. It's an art.

But all the dusty parts will fly off. And then the stones will come to one part. And then the broken wheat or broken rice will come to another part.

And then you toss that so that you can use the broken rice. And you toss the other thing away, which has the stones. And people care.

And that the women who do that, they keep on doing it till it's so much separated, so clearly separated, that you may not, if they are good at it, you may not find a single stone after it's sifted. Or a single bit of chaff after it's sifted. And that's what, and when I read that verse, that's what I'm reminded of.

The Lord is separating the chaff from the worthless from our lives. You know, before there were a lot of worthless things we were doing. Chit-chatting, shopping for unnecessary things, throwing away food which we could have saved, or eating unhealthy food.

So many things we were doing. Worthless things. And the Lord gives us time now.

Sit down and think. These things are worthless in your life. These things which we were doing, you need to throw away.

Too much of occupying with your appearance, maybe. Or your dress, or your whatever you put that in. God will show us when we sit down to reflect and meditate.

God will show us, yeah, these things are worthless. I used to think like in the past, in our home in Bangalore, I used to love to go spend time in the little garden patch that I had. I like to see a little plant, newly grown, a new shoot coming up.

Especially things which I liked. And then enjoy that time when I was there in the garden. That was good, relaxing for me.

But after I came here and I realized how much of my time I wasted. Maybe it was not, maybe I could have done something else. But now there's no garden, nothing.

I can find and do things which are more worthwhile. That's what I mean. For gardening is good, but suppose the Lord is showing you, you're spending too much time in doing this and that.

Too much time with your, maybe with your hair, or with your whatever. I'm not judging anyone, but whatever you're occupied with and God will show. Yeah, too.

That was, you were spending too much time with that. Just like he told Martha, Jesus told Martha, Martha, you're worried about too many things. You're cumbered, you've taken up with too many things.

Only one thing is needful. So the Lord brings us back to that one thing. This is what is needful in my child.

This is what you need to do. So it's a good time that we have. We can make use of this time to reflect and throw off the worthless things.

That like the, like the chaff and the stones are removed. Now those, some of the things which are, I want to, I talked about things which we throw off. But I want to talk more about the things which we can do.

The things which are worthwhile, which we can do. I know all of you, all of us will agree with one thing. That is to read God's word and study God's word and meditate on God's word.

That has come powerfully to lot, many of us, especially now we have time to sit and listen to messages. And we think, Lord, I want to make use of this time. It's just like, you know, you have an extended study holiday.

I mean, before your exam comes, you have 10 more days to study for this exam. And you think, yeah, I have 10 more days to study. I'm going to study this and this.

Oh, this one I haven't done before. I want to do this properly. It's like that.

God has given us one month, maybe two months. Maybe, you know, I'm sure after a few weeks or something, all this will go and we are free to go out and do more. We have more freedom.

But this time we won't get again to study God's word. So that's what I'm doing now. And we are by ourselves.

And this is my bedroom I'm sitting in. I keep my Bible open. And whenever I get the time, I read this passage, that passage.

Oh, where is this verse? Where is that verse? Whichever comes. And I keep a little notebook or where I can jot down, keep a piece of paper or something in your Bible where whatever verse comes to you, you jot it down or some thought. Maybe a line of some hymn comes to you.

Many, many hymns come to me at this time. And I keep humming that song and it refreshes me, uplifts me. Like some recently I was thinking of take time to be holy, speak off to thy Lord.

I don't know. It's an old hymn. If you know that song and songs like that, tell me the story of Jesus right on my heart, every word.

You know, so many songs which we used to teach our children. We used to sing as children. Those come to my mind.

And I said, I have all the time in the world to sing or hum and read God's word, jot down what God is speaking. Then prayer. That's something God is giving us time to do.

We don't, we may not have time to kneel down and pray, but as soon as we wake up, oh Lord, thank you that you give me health. Thank you that you give me life. Thank you that my children are safe.

Thank you that, so many thanks. Thanks for food. Thank you that I can chew my food.

Thank you that I can get up and do my work. I'm not paralyzed. Thank you.

Thank you for so many, many, many things. We can't enumerate. Think of the number of things we have to thank God for.

Then throughout the day while we are doing our work, instead of thinking, how many people are there dying of this or that, think of God. Lord, speak to me. This time is so short.

Your coming is so near. Is this a picture of what's going to happen in the coming days of tribulation? Suddenly tribulation will come like birth pangs for a woman. Suddenly it'll come.

We didn't know when it, we didn't know two months back this would happen. We thought, okay, it's happening in one corner of China. We didn't realize it's gone to every part of the world.

It's almost like the old earth, earth held in God's hand and it just spread all over the earth and we don't know, what's coming in the coming days. Give me strength so that I can stand in those days. When greater trials come, let me not feel.

You hold me. You're my father. You're almighty.

You're the king of the universe. You have all power. You're in charge of the whole universe.

Help me to stand so that I won't fall in the coming days. Then we can pray, Lord, my children, are they ready? My grandchildren, are they ready? Are they so far away from you? Still there is hope. My brothers and my sisters, my siblings, others whom I knew, whom I came across and I don't know where they are spiritually.

Will they stand in the time of testing? Lord, and then we can pray for them. Say, Lord, have mercy on them. Give them a chance to repent.

Help me to do my part. Maybe I can take my mobile phone and send a text message. Hey, listen to this message.

God has spoken to me. I want to share this with you. So many things we can do.

Prayer is not like three times a day or seven times a day. You know, in Bangalore, just before we left, it was so hectic. I had such a lot of work to do and I thought, will I ever finish it? I was almost in tears thinking I'll never finish.

And now I have all the time and say, Lord, thank you. It's such a change for me. I can pray.

And even during those times when I didn't have time to pray, I used to hear the bell ringing in the Catholic church. You know, our home was very close to the Catholic church. So every morning, 5.30 at noon and in the evening, the church bell would ring.

And I said, OK, that's a reminder for me to pray. Lord, I thank you that you are near me and I can speak to you. Just a short prayer.

Then after that, there'd be a Muslim. The mosque, they would call out from the mosque to pray and say, OK, they are calling to their false God. But I can call on the true God at this time and say, Lord, I want to turn to you.

When this country will turn from heathen religion and turn to you, open their hearts so at least they can think of you through God. So anytime and all the time, God will send a reminder to pray. Spend that time, few minutes, few sentences of prayer.

We can make use of that opportunity to pray. I also said about keeping a journal, you know, just write jot down even if it's in the night. Sometimes I wake up in the night and then I don't want to switch on the light.

But in the dim light, I have a paper and pencil and I just scribble. I don't see what I scribble, but in the morning I say, yeah, I must write this down because this is a thought which came to me. So at my bedside, I keep a paper and a pencil and I scribble something and then I write it down because who knows that might be valuable to somebody.

It will be definitely valuable to me sometime in my life. So those are the things which we can do. Bible study, prayer, then we can have the habit of rejoicing in the Lord all the time.

You know, around us people are grumbling and complaining. Oh, this thing, we can't get this, the shortage of eggs. Easter and people have bought up all the eggs and the shortage of milk, the shortage of this vitamin, the shortage of hand sanitizer, toilet paper, the shortage, the shortage, and say, Lord, I don't want to be taken up with all that.

I want to rejoice. I want to spend my time rejoicing in you and praising you, singing your praises. Have a cheerful attitude so that when I meet my husband and my children and all those who are near me, they see a cheerful disposition.

They see happiness radiating from me. They see the joy of the Lord coming out of my life. Maybe in this time, that's what God is trying to teach us.

Practice that happiness, practice being happy and cheerful and encouraging, encouraging each other, person to person, by the telephone, by phone, WhatsApp message or anything, any way God has given us. And we see the needs of others. You see, OK, so-and-so doesn't have this.

Somehow can I send this material to her? OK, if you don't have eggs, I have extra eggs or I have an extra gallon of milk. Maybe when you get some, you can return it or you can keep it. Or I have masks, extra masks.

I have extra gloves. You can have a few. You know, God will open our heart to the need of others and especially I want to talk to girls who are single.

You know, till now I was talking about indirectly about married people, those who are single and by themselves, especially I know in India there are so many girls, even if they are staying with their families, they are the only Christians in their home. Maybe their family is all Hindu or unconverted people and now they are at home. There's no church for them to go to.

Before that, they could go for the church meetings and be encouraged by seeing each other. Maybe there are limitations. Maybe there's only one phone or there are other financial constraints and you can't get out

of your home.

Maybe you don't have a job and there's financial restriction. I want to encourage such girls. If you're staying alone, all that I said about till now, find your joy in the Lord.

Say, Lord, I don't have the joy which I should have. You know, that is what prayer is. Lord, I don't have this which which I need, this bread.

I come to you, feed me, give me the joy in my heart, give me your presence with me, give me the realization that you are with me, give me the assurance. I don't have church brothers and sisters to encourage me, but you are there. We can ask the Lord, Lord, you give me and you think he will not.

He says, if your father, if you evil parents, I mean good parents, but in evil in God's compared to God, when your child asks you for an egg, you won't give a scorpion. When he asks you for bread, you won't give. Here, eat the stone.

You don't do that. How much more God will give us? So, dear single sisters who are alone at home, you don't have husbands or parents or anybody to comfort you, take comfort. The Lord is near you.

He'll give you extra grace. If the temptation which you're facing, I'll give you extra grace. Others don't have it, but I'll give you, I'll make my presence more real to you.

And there are some maybe who are students, maybe in India, this is the examination time. And a lot of children, I mean, they have to study for the exam and then the exam is postponed. So, what will they do? They can't keep on studying and studying and there's no other outlet for them.

And maybe some of you, some girls may be facing a time when you should have done an exam and passed and you could have got your job then. Or maybe it's your college admission is pending. It's all held back because you couldn't do your exam.

Maybe you could have had a good chance to get into a good professional college, but you couldn't get in because this whole thing has happened and you don't know when the exam will be, whether you'll get a chance to get admitted into a professional college, whether your whole career, you know, all that uncertainty young people face in India. And you can take courage. God is in control.

He has a way out of the situation. And he'll give me a, even if there's one seat and I'm eligible, God will keep that seat for me in that college. And another thing which we can do is single girls, married or students or whoever, take this opportunity to do things which you couldn't do before.

Like if you're a single girl and you have an opportunity to do an online course, take that chance and do it so that you would be qualified to do some exam. You can get that will help you to get a job. Maybe you get a chance to do something further in your field, learn a new course.

Maybe if you have an ability to play some musical instrument, keep practicing the piano or guitar or whatever you have, so that you do make, learn that musical instrument and we can be a blessing to others. And girls who are at home, take the time, maybe things which you couldn't do before. I used to wait for opportunity to organize my kitchen, to do the cupboards, throw off things which I don't, which are old, which need to be thrown off.

And I'm a big collector of unwanted things. So this is the time we can take to organize our kitchens, our cupboards. Maybe you find things which you need repair, like a lot of our clothes, maybe need to be tightened or loosened, some hooks, some buttons, our clothes or our children's clothes, our husband's clothes.

This is the time when we can catch up on all that. And another thing we can do is watch good programs. I forgot to tell you in the things which we need to cut off are things we did.

Some people have become addicted to chit-chatting with friends, movies, too much time with the TV, anything that the Lord doesn't like. Some young girls may have had a liking for some guy and you're dreaming about that guy or wanting to text that person. That's very common.

And now is the time to say, Lord, you're trying to speak something to me. I need to cut off that friendship and don't need to text that person anymore. Maybe this is not your will.

Are you trying to show me that this is not your will for me? This friendship is not the right friendship for me. Are you trying to speak that? If we don't listen to the Lord when he tells us these things which we need to cut off, you know, he might drastically cut it off in a way which will be painful for us. So use the time if the Lord is speaking to you about some friendship which you need to cut off.

Say, Lord, I'm done with this. I'm not going to have this. I'm not going to text this person anymore.

Even if that comes up, I'm going to just not respond. So there are so many things. Maybe God is trying to show something about our marriage plans.

Maybe somebody was planning to get married and then the Lord says, pray about it. Maybe this is not the time. Maybe you have to postpone your wedding.

Or maybe, who knows, put yourself in that and ask the Lord, Lord, what are you trying to speak to me? I want to obey. There was one verse which came to me when I was a student and I used to lay hold of and which now comes to my mind. That is in Psalm 46.

If you open your Bible and when you get time, read that Psalm. Psalm 46. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

You know all that. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains quake at its swelling. All that.

But there's one verse which I want to share and that is verse 5. God is in the midst of her. She will not be moved. God will help her when morning dawns.

Put your name there. God is in the midst of you, Annie, or whatever. Put your name there.

God is in your midst. God is with you. You will not be moved.

That means you won't be shaken. This thing which is happening and a lot of people are afraid, wondering whether this is happening, this is going to happen. What's the next virus going to be like? Nothing will shake us.

Nothing will offend us because God is with us. We will not be shaken. And so nice, it's so wonderful that he puts that pronoun, her.

God is in the midst of her. If the Lord is with us, sisters, dear sisters, he's in our midst. He will help when the morning dawns.

For me, the morning is when this night is over, when this crushing and the difficulties, testing the virus of what will happen next. Some people say there'll be another surge of virus because people will start going out and then expose themselves. Whatever happens, I'm not going to be afraid because God is with me.

I will not be shaken. And if we are not shaken, our whole family will be strong. Our husbands won't be shaken.

If our husbands see us getting worried and upset and becoming like a neurotic, oh, my wife, she can't handle this. How will I help her? But if he sees a wife who's so strong, she's not going to be shaken by this. That'll give strength to him.

That'll be marrow in his bones, it says. Godly wife will be like that. Be strength to him and to our children and give us strength and be a strength and we will not be shaken.

Let more trials come. Okay, we pass through the time of this virus. Maybe another virus may come or some other sickness may come.

But the last time God took us through and he will take us through. Let it be, whatever happens, financial troubles, troubles from parents, trouble from sickness, whatever happens, we will not be shaken because it's not that we will not be shaken. God won't allow us to be shaken because he is with us.

That's the comfort we have and that's the boldness we have as his children. God won't let us be tempted more than what we can bear. He won't, he'll know when to stop.

So these are the verses. Let me repeat the verses which I had written down. Matthew 6, that's the Lord's Prayer.

First Corinthians 10, 13, that he will not allow us to be tempted more than what we can bear. Romans 8, God causes everything to work for our good and that nothing can separate us from the love of God. And Jeremiah 15, we have to separate the precious from the worthless.

And this last verse, Psalm 46 verse 5, God is in our midst. He will not allow us to be shaken. So God bless you, dear sisters.

I'm so happy to see all of you and so encouraged that we are in similar situation, each one in our own home, but God is with us and he's encouraging us and he will help us to be more than conquerors, more than conquerors. Praise the Lord. Shall we just say a word of prayer before I go for that all.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this precious time you've given us these days when you are speaking to us. And we know that you want to speak many more things, wonderful things to us. You want to whisper things in our ear, very special and loving things.

Help us Lord, open our ears to hear those things and help us to keep those things in our heart so that it will be a blessing not only to us, but to our children and to all those who come across our path. Bless hard,

my dear sisters over here in Loveland, in California, in India, Bangalore, everywhere Lord, we pray that you speak to each one and meet our need and comfort us, encourage us so they'll be strong, so that we will be strong and we will not be shaken with whatever trials come across our path. Help us to count it all joy that we can look back on these days as days of triumph.

Thank you again Lord Jesus. We ask these things in Jesus precious name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/BariVEsEkIM.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/annie-poonen/separating-the-precious-from-the-worthless/>

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