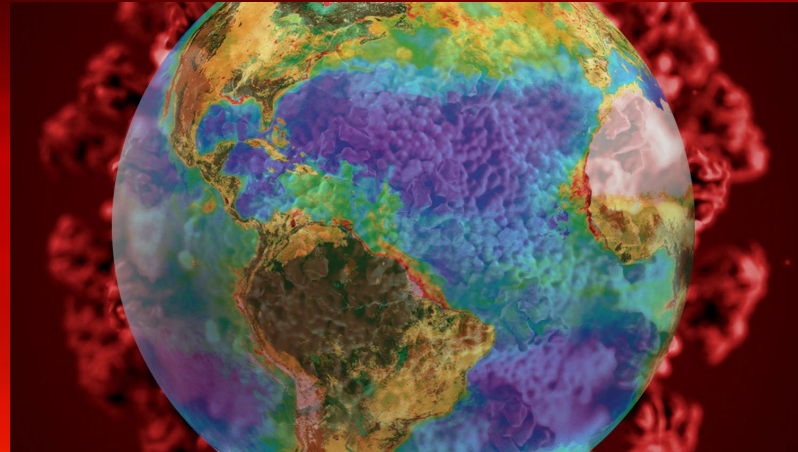


The subject I would like to share with you
for our mutual edification is the following:

The year 2020 of the Christian Age

Christians and Congregations In Coronavirus CRISIS MODE!



Six months of CRISIS great multitudes of human beings have had, all around planet Earth, because of the **coronavirus pandemic**. And counting.

The impact of the plague, which originated in Wuhan, China, is **GLOBAL**. 188 countries of the world have been affected.

CRISES of HEALTH for **11,239,357** infected through July 3, 2020.

CRISES of DEATH for **529,884** who have passed from this life to the next.

CRISES in SOCIAL relationships and MENTAL WELLBEING because of **QUARANTINES**, laws imposing **physical distancing** and the **obligatory use of masks**.

FINANCIAL CRISES on a large scale resulting from unemployment, the closing of businesses, factories, schools, universities, government entities, etcetera.



CRISES in CHRISTIANS and CONGREGATIONS? Definitely! I would say.

Beloved brother, sister, do you perhaps feel that you are, at times, or almost all the time, in a personal spiritual crisis resulting from the pandemic? Maybe ill at ease and worried about your congregation? Its **actual trajectory** during this pandemic, as also for its **future**?

CRISES exist, undenaibly, in Christians and congregations.

Crises in attendance.

Crises in evangelism.

Crises in contributions.

Crises of fellowship. Of not seeing each other face to face. Of not sharing personally. Of not feeling the brotherly warmth of pleasant spiritual exchanges. Of not being together, literally, for spiritual songs, prayers and the Lord's Supper.

Dangerous crises of LEADERSHIP in some congregations.

Crises of enthusiasm, commitment, and diligence.

Will we be able to recuperate completely from all these **crises**? Do we retain sufficient **faith, courage, and wisdom** to accomplish it?



VIRTUAL church? Thanks to God for all the media being well used. Nevertheless, there is a **GREAT NEED** for the **REAL thing**, in all its fortifying fullness, comfort and motivation!

Beloved, on the Internet I found an intriguing news subtitle which said: **“COVID-19 has weakened everything but TJMAX.”** Turns out this enterprise, with 4,200 stores all around the world, is having great success, without depending on online sales, and despite quarantines.

It could surely be said, without fear of error or exaggeration, that **our churches are not having similar success** in the spiritual regions of this world. People are flocking to stores when they can, but do not flock to our meeting places even when they could. Nor are they assiduously seeking us out on digital media.

The question arises: How many Christians are religiously present, virtually, for worship and study? How many will flock to meeting places once they can? To what degree has **COVID-19 weakened us? Personally? And our congregations?**

Is COVID-19 a work of Satan?

While it is true that God has **“power over... plagues”** (Revelation 16:9), it is no less certain that **He concedes “authority” to Satan**, including the **“power to hurt men”** (Revelation 9:1-11; 13:3-8, 11-18; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9).

And **“hurt men”** is just what the **evil COVID-19 virus** does. Including, not only making **Christians physically ill**, but also **debilitating** and **making them spiritually ill**.



HOW does the devil debilitate and sicken Christians by means of COVID-19?

Well, precious brothers and sisters, I do not doubt you already know how. Nevertheless, let's review his **devices** a little lest he **should get an advantage over us**. 2 Corinthians 2:11

For example, he **stops**, by **orders** of **earthly authorities**, the **sheep** of the present time from **COMING TOGETHER** in their own **sheep-folds**. That is to say, the **meeting** of **Christians** in their own **buildings**.

That is, he **obligates** us, by means of **quarantines**, to **disobey** the **command** of Hebrews 10:25, which says: ***"Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."***

For our mutual protection and the good of our neighbors, we obey the civil laws, trying to fulfill, though it be incompletely, Hebrews 10:25, by meeting in our homes and participating in virtual services and studies. Asking the Lord to forgive us if He is not pleased with our decision.

Now then, having stopped meeting together for three or four months, let us be careful not to have already formed ***"the habit"*** of ***"neglecting to meet together,"*** as did some of the first century, **quickly returning to meet** once legal restrictions imposed by civil authorities have been removed!

The devil weakens and makes ill, taking advantage of COVID-19, by putting the **BREAKS** on **EVANGELISM**. However, we see that not all Christians and congregations cease to evangelize. In the photo below, a brother of the congregation in **Carúpano, Venezuela**, with his mask on, distributes tracts in Plaza Colón.



HOW does the devil debilitate and sicken Christians by means of COVID-19?

He does it, **discouraging those who administer congregations**. Be they elders (also biblically called bishops or pastors. Acts 20:17-28). Be they deacons or teachers. Be they evangelists and ministers of the Word.

How discourage them?

By **multiplying their labors and worries** because of the **distancing** of the **membership**, the **challenges** of providing **quality virtual services**, perhaps substantial decreases in **offerings**, plus the **rigorous fulfillment** of **government rules** relevant to **renewing normal schedules**.

By **making them feel almost alone** in their **struggles** to maintain an active, faithful congregation. Not supported by a distressingly high portion of it. Fearful for the future of it.



BAD SPIRITUAL VIRUSES IN US?

Beloved in the Lord, these negative forces loosed by Satan in the Age of the Coronavirus, against Christians and congregations, play the roll of **dangerous spiritual viruses**, which have the potential to make ill and kill, spiritually, not only individual souls but also **whole congregations**. Especially, **small** and **medium-sized** ones.

Let us say those of less than **100 members**. And the danger increases in proportion to the **weaknesses** and **sicknesses** that the congregation might have been suffering **BEFORE** COVID-19!

As the weak, sickly physical body is more susceptible to COVID-19, so is the weak, sickly congregation more susceptible to SPIRITUAL VIRUSES! Weak and shaky because of conditions and ills such as:

Spiritual diabetes, attributable to the excessive consumption of sweets that delight the heart and mind, but do not contain the proteins of divine truths that fortify the soul. Like repetitious sermons on self-motivation, personal triumphalism, material prosperity and miraculous healing.

A Spiritual Parkinson's Disease of being double minded.

A Spiritual Arthritis of rigid ritualism.

A Mental-spiritual Confusion, or **Schizophrenia**, due to following different gospels.

A Spiritual Asphyxia caused by religious sentimentalism and extasy.

A spiritual, puffy Swelling due to embracing aberrant social movements.

These spiritual infirmities, plus the dangerous steps taken by Satan to hurt Christians and congregations, are sufficient cause to induce good administrators of the true Word of God, and of that people faithful to Christ, to declare a...

A state of emergency!
A CRISIS MODE!

Until this sinister Time of the Coronavirus has passed, and we have been able to overcome, individually and collectively, its ravages.



Churches in **CRISIS MODE!**

When “**CRISIS MODE!**” is declared in any business, factory, educational institution, government entity, etc., because of any natural disaster, accident, social, racial, criminal or military situation, it is to be expected that all responsible and affected parties respond, as one, to confront the crisis, whatever its nature may be.

Well, beloved, **the same is to be expected in our congregations! That all of us respond as one!** Each according to his abilities and personal resources. **Now!** For the duration of this **real spiritual-corporal-material crisis** brought on by the coronavirus plague.

That no one –neither teenager, young adult, adult or mature person; man or woman- hold back, **not cooperating!** Because of being spiritually indifferent, insensible, passive, or just plain lazy. Lacking in compassion, love for God, His church, and the suffering world. **Holding up the shield of the quarantine** to hide his own personal agenda of being **spiritually INACTIVE.**



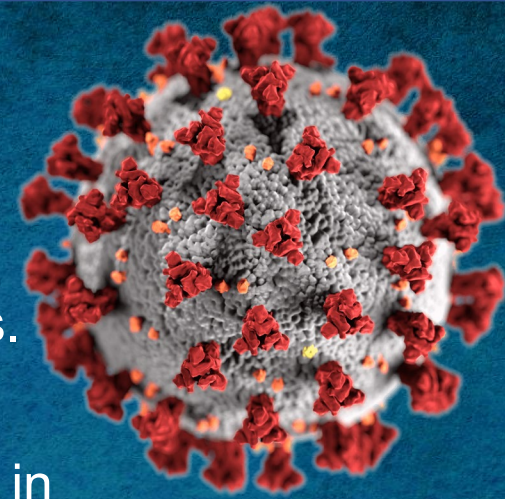
Churches in the **CRISIS MODE!**

At this time, I would like to speak, particularly, to **teens** and **young adult Christians**, so vigorous and intelligent, full of abundant potential for Good. Young ladies as well as young men. It is often said that you are “**the future of the church**,” and that is so. Well now, it is my privilege to inform you that...

What was **FUTURE** has now **arrived!** With its fantastic technologies, and also its own challenging crises.

So then, beloved teens and young adults, we beseech you to **fully enter into ACTION**, if you have not done so already, for the duration of this **CRUCIAL PHASE of CRISIS MODE for churches of Christ impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.**

It is well known that the insidious coronavirus, with its claviform spikes that connect to human receptor cells, has a predilection for us older folks.



This means that you, beloved young people, can be involved in activities, during this Time of the Coronavirus, with less risk than we can. Thus, since we Christians are in the “**CRISIS MODE**,” it is extremely important that you shout out: “**PRESENT! Count on us!**” Will you respond with a strong and sincere **AMEN**?

That you bring to bear, then, with **meticulous diligence** and **joy** in the Lord, **your admirable expertise** in all that is related to the **parameters** for the **creation and transmission of VIRTUAL worship, Bible studies and conferences of EXCELLENT QUALITY.** Obtaining the necessary equipment and programs. For a professional presence on social media, YouTube, etc. Maximizing their use to impart spiritual information of the highest value.



These are areas where many middle-aged Christians, and even more of older ones, **are lacking** in the **knowledge** and **skills** required to exploit the enormous potential of the **digital world**. Areas where you, **teens** and **young adult Christians**, can, and should, **SHINE** for God, His powerful Word, His beloved church, and the billions of souls that have a vital need to know them.

The challenge for you?

To see that evangelists and congregations of Christ have a PROFESSIONAL and POWERFUL PRESENCE on the Internet.

For the PRESENT, and for the FUTURE. To the END.



Because, for many years, we have already been inhabiting a **connected world**. You understand it, and you know how to communicate with its billions of **connected peoples**. For Good, and not for wrong. So that the Good teaching and prophecies of God may reach the masses in their own languages.





Why is it **URGENT** and **IMPERATIVE** that **churches** of **Christ** have a **strong, professional, appealing PRESENCE** on the **INTERNET**? In the cybernetic world? On the most sophisticated, powerful, and current platforms?

Simply put, because her **doctrine** and **practice faithfully** reflect the **divine pattern** laid out for the church by her Celestial Architect.

The church established by Christ exist in the material world, but, nevertheless, is ***“not of this world... not from this world,”*** affirmed her Founder. It is **SPIRITUAL**, and not carnal. Neither is it a religious entity allied with secular-political powers. Matthew 16:18; John 18:36.

She is governed by Christ' New Testament in her worship, organization, finances and works. 2 Corinthians 3:3-17.

It is due to these exclusively spiritual parameters that she does not make merchandise of the gospel nor require tithes. Her worship is *“in spirit and in truth,”* according to the *“new covenant.”*

In her, *“There is neither Jew nor Gentile [zero racism]; slave or free [zero social prejudices]; male and female [zero male and female prejudices]; for you are all ONE [unity of mind and*

spirit, without human barriers] in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:28

The **conditions** to be **saved** and **belong** to her are: **Believe** in God and Christ, **repent** and **be baptized**. ***“Then your sins will be forgiven.”*** Acts 2:36-47

For these reasons, and many more, she merits a strong presence on the Internet.

And for these reasons, we lovingly invite you to fulfill the above conditions to be saved and added by Christ to His church.

My name is Dewayne Shappley, evangelist for Jesus Christ and His Church. Many thanks for hearing and seeing this message. I pray it has been a spiritually positive experience for you.

hshappley@yahoo.com

In **English**, more than 50 articles and studies, in text, slide and audio formats, are available through the following link:

<http://www.editoriallapaz.org/English%20bible-studies-Shappley-church-of-Christ>

In **Spanish**, more than 2,500 articles, sermons, Bible class lessons, Bible commentaries, courses for ministerial training, exchanges with respondents, hymns, etc., in text, slide, audio and video formats, are available at:

www.editoriallapaz.org A work made possible by churches of Christ