

Self-Care During COVID-19 A Path to be Followed

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Shortly after COVID-19 closed all the universities and colleges around the nation, I found myself frantically trying to put together all the new pieces of my life: working from home, homeschooling my elementary and middle school-aged children, and transitioning ministry to digital platforms. I was working 12 hours a day and could feel the anxiety growing inside of me. I had a knot in my stomach, I couldn't eat, and I was having trouble sleeping. Those things were taking a toll and I knew life was not sustainable at this pace.

During a quiet time with the Lord, He ever so gently told me that COVID-19 was **not a puzzle to be figured out** and put together perfectly in my own ingenuity **but a path to be followed**—a path the Lord himself was on with me, and it was leading me to Him. I felt my body instantly relax at that thought. I could now concentrate on Him and on caring for myself and others around me because my eyes were on Him and the path, not on the puzzle pieces.

Hearing the Word

Read Psalm 121:1-8 (NIV):

I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?
² My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.
³ He will not let your foot slip—
he who watches over you will not slumber;
⁴ indeed, he who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
⁵ The LORD watches over you—
the LORD is your shade at your right hand;
⁶ the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.
⁷ The LORD will keep you from all harm—
he will watch over your life;
⁸ the LORD will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.

Responding to the Word

- List what you learn about the Lord from this passage.
- How does it make you feel to know that the Lord is the Maker of heaven and earth?
- What comfort do you derive from v. 3-4 that the Lord “will neither slumber nor sleep”?
- What promises does the Lord make to His people in Psalm 121:1-8?
- What might be significant about the last word, “forever”?
- How would you summarize Psalm 121:1-8? What is the writer trying to convey to his audience? Can you capsulize it in one sentence?

Application

I don't know about you, but when I look to what is going on around me, to my left and right, to the situation, to the media, even to others, I can feel my anxiety increasing. When I look to the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth, life is put back in its proper perspective. The perspective is this: **When our safety and well-being are threatened, we look to the Lord for our constant protection and preservation.** Then, knowing and trusting He is protecting and preserving us, we can move forward in caring for ourselves and those around us.

As nurses, we all know the benefits of self-care--right down to making us better nurses. During this time of COVID-19, how might the Lord be inviting you to trust Him with your protection and provision and to make decisions that honor yourself and those in your care?

- What might the Lord be inviting you to start this season? Consider what you need emotionally, physically, and spiritually.
- What might the Lord be encouraging you to stop this season? What is inhibiting your time with the Lord and healthy life rhythms?
- What is your next step? Who can encourage you and keep you accountable?

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Jen establishes and advances witnessing communities of students and faculty who follow Jesus as Savior and Lord growing in love for God, God's Word, God's people of every ethnicity and culture, and God's purposes in the world.