

John 14:1 says, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.”

Troubled hearts – that’s what we have today. For some it can be as extreme as a panic attack – rapid heartbeat, dizziness, shortness of breath – “Oh no, have I contracted the virus?!” For all of us, it is worry and concern over things we can and can’t control. Maybe you’re over-tired or overweight, a trip to the doctor a new diet, exercise, or medicine is a positive step away from your troubled heart. For most in the developed world if money can fix it, it doesn’t have to be a tragedy. But, when resources are scarce, when help is not available, that’s double-trouble.

America is waking up to a 2/3rds world reality. We’ve been insulated for so long with the affluence and amazing depth of our scientific, medical, intellectual, economic, and military might that we’re not accustomed to being vulnerable – really vulnerable. “In God we trust” still appears on our money but our hearts too easily trust in stuff and people and systems.

People and stuff fail us. They decay, become defective, and die. Trust in the temporary, no matter how beautiful, powerful, or precious is a precarious place to be. But, it’s all too human to do so. I trust my wife; she trusts me. I trust my 1997 Chevy Cheyenne pick-up within a couple of hundred miles from home. But that kind of trust is not a bedrock trust. God is.

There is an annual Jewish holiday, Sukkot, that recalls the years spent in the desert on the way to the Promised Land. It celebrates and causes our Jewish brothers and sisters to remember the way God protected them in difficult times. Sukkot is also known as the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths. It’s characterized by building huts made of branches.

I recall camping in the Adirondack Mountains while in the Air Force. A tent seems pretty sturdy until you hear a noise at midnight. Your imagination runs wild – it’s a bear! Suddenly, nylon seems mighty thin. Grabbing my hatchet, with shaky hands I unzipped the tent flap. I didn’t want Lisa to see how frightened I was as I swung the light toward the noise. A raccoon! Relief flooded my soul as my prayer of thanksgiving went toward heaven.

One of the ways we can interpret the Corona virus lockdown here in Indiana is this: it’s a reminder that life is fragile. We surround ourselves with scientific, medical, intellectual, economic, and military might but we remain vulnerable and God remains faithful. As people of faith let’s celebrate Sukkot – the Feast of Tabernacles – early this year as we recognize that even here in America where we’ve built the strongest society in history, it’s still just a hut made of branches. So, “In God we trust” better be more than a motto.

John 14:1 says, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.” May the God who can never be unfaithful, who can never leave you in the desert, guide you through this time of trouble even as you find peace through trusting in Jesus.