

The Coronavirus Outbreak Impacts Main Street

Written by Steve Marr

Wednesday, 04 March 2020 13:45

We see daily news reports of increased infections worldwide from the coronavirus. Financial markets gyrate but move sharply lower.

For most of us, not much has changed . . . yet.

Scripture is clear that we cannot predict the future. “Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow.” (James 4:14, NIV) Many want to see into the future in order to take the right steps for success. However, the future is not predictable. We are better prepared when we understand the changes that have already occurred and act on those changes.

I do not know the full impact of the coronavirus. Some reports are alarming. When Bill Gates says the virus looks like a generational disaster and commits \$100 million from his foundation to address it, we should at least pay attention. Financial analysts prognosticate that the current turmoil in the markets will be minor and short-lived while others say a 40% drop in the stock market is likely. I don't know what will happen, and I don't believe any human does. Over time we will learn which direction is correct.

A wise businessperson should focus on what is occurring in the economy and take action.

In my town several businesspeople are already feeling the effect. A car repair facility is experiencing shortages of some key parts, and several gift shops are not receiving merchandise they ordered. Less merchandise; less sales. This reality affects Main Street as it impacts thousands and thousands of businesses across our country.

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Travel is another area experiencing cuts and decreases. For example, *The Wall Street Journal* has canceled all non-critical travel for their staff. This impacts airlines, car rentals, restaurants and hotels. Multiply this by the number of other companies taking similar measures and you see the burgeoning problem.

We see the major economic impact to world areas already experiencing significant implications from the virus. Manufacturing in China has dropped, and orders are not being filled. Auto production plants have closed because of a shortage of parts, and each of these closures is expensive. We also see lockdowns in cities in many places in the world. Each of these has costly economic implications. Should the virus take hold in the United States, as many fear, consider the impact on restaurants, movie theaters and any place where people gather.

Scripture tells us, "The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty." (Proverbs 22:3, NIV) There are enough warning signs with events that have already occurred which flash warnings to any prudent business owner. What can you do?

1. Establish a continuity plan for the worst scenario.

News reports indicate that the New York Stock Exchange is prepared for continuing operations should the virus strike the city preventing most people to come to work. Schools in many parts of the country are already preparing options for distance learning. When organizations like these make contingency plans, we need to pay attention.

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2. Take reasonable sanitary precautions.

Old-fashioned hand washing is still the number one defense against any virus. I don't want the common cold or the coronavirus. Also, make sure sick people stay home. You might even consider keeping your distance from friends for a while.

3. Take quick action if your business suffers the effects of the coronavirus.

Don't expect the effects to go away. Instead, the impact will likely accelerate.

4. Ask God for guidance.

Don't underestimate your need for prayer. Ask your family and friends to pray. The Lord is a better counselor than any human on earth. Christians leaders need to seize these opportunities.

Coronavirus Business Owner Survival Report

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Starting next week I'm doing a 6-week Coronavirus Business Owner Survival Report, more information is available at:

<https://mailchi.mp/christianemergencynetwork/bosr>

With the Lord's help we will get through this together.