

These days of social distancing in response to the pandemic are unsettling. Being isolated, not able to go to work or school, missing family members – bring difficult and challenging feelings. Some days may drag with the feeling of too much time on our hands. How might you stay spiritually and emotionally strong in this time? Consider these three things:

1. Be honest about what is troubling you; be honest with yourself and with God. The Psalms show us the way in this regard. *How many are my enemies! How many rise up against me!* (Psalm 3) *My God, why have you forsaken me?* (Psalm 22). *Why, Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?* (Psalm 10)

These Psalms are open about the troubles that are happening to them and around them. As the Psalms are honest about what is troubling them, so can we be honest about our struggles.

Maybe you are lonely and miss a loved one. Maybe you are worried about what will happen to those you love. Maybe you are worried about what may happen to you. Praying your concerns to God may help ease your burden.

2. Find a safe way to talk with someone. The Lord said *It is not good for the man to be alone* (Genesis 2:18). I think it is fair to say it isn't good for the woman to be alone, either. God's comfort can be given to us through those around us.

Have you been able to phone or facetime with family and close friends? That is a great, safe way to stay connected. Call a church member just to check in on them. Perhaps there is someone you can share your struggles; use phone or social media to connect. We are in this situation together. Sharing our burden with someone can cut it in half.

3. Reflect on God's comfort and guidance.

Take a few moments to let your inner thoughts settle. Be still.

Reflect on the following passages (they are written out on the back side)

Psalm 91	God's Protection
John 14:27	God's Peace
Romans 15:13	Hope in God

As you begin, ask God to speak to you through the Scripture. Read one passage slowly and focus on the protection and peace and hope God gives. Sit quietly for a minute and pray your thoughts to God.

Read the passage once more, resting in God's presence in Christ Jesus for you and with you.

PSALM 91

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

² I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

³ Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence.

⁴ He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

⁵ You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day,

⁶ nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday.

⁷ A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.

⁸ You will only observe with your eyes and see the punishment of the wicked.

⁹ If you say, "The LORD is my refuge," and you make the Most High your dwelling,

¹⁰ no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent.

¹¹ For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;

¹² they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

¹³ You will tread on the lion and the cobra;
you will trample the great lion and the serpent.

¹⁴ "Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him;

I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.

¹⁵ He will call on me, and I will answer him;

I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him.

¹⁶ With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation."

JOHN 14:27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

ROMANS 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.