



Divine Disruption

A Sermon by Dr. Tony Evans

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Introduction

Well Hello Folks. I'm coming to you today from the den of my home where we raised our children.

You see, over the last week and a half I've been around a whole bunch of people and a whole lot of different places. I've even been on an airplane and was feeling a little tired and given the fact that I am 70 years old, my kids were telling me, "Dad, come on. You're in that high-risk age group, so you need to be extra careful."

So, in an abundance of caution, we decided to just do my ministry to you today from my den because I want everybody to be safe. I'm just here with one of my family members who has on the camera and has on the mask and the gloves to do this taping because it's important that we be vigilant and protect not only ourselves, but the people we love and the people that we are around.

So, I'm coming to you in a little bit more intimate environment today to minister God's truth to you.

Part One

Well, needless to say, we're in a major situation here. A major crisis. But this is more than just about a virus. This Corona pandemic is also Corona politics. It's Corona economics and finance. It's Corona government. It's Corona sociology. It's Corona athletics. It's Corona *everything* because it has affected the systems of the world.

This is much deeper. If you just are only seeing the virus, you don't see all that's taking place right now, and I want to talk to you today about a *divine disruption*. I want to tell you what's really going on.

I shared with you last time, last week, the principle of how the world works. Let me repeat it: *Everything visible and physical is preceded by that which is invisible and spiritual.*

So, if you want to address that which is *visible* and *physical*, you must identify the cause and the cure to what is *invisible* and *spiritual*. Or, to put it another way, if all you see is what you see, you do not see all there is to be seen. Something else is afoot here, and it is attached to the spiritual realm.

That's why I want to read to you verses five and six of 2 Chronicles 15.

2 CHRONICLES 15:5-6 CSB

"In those times there was no peace for those who went about their daily activities because the residents of the lands had many conflicts. Nation was crushed by nation and city by city, for God troubled them with every possible distress."

Here you have described the world in chaos. Individual lives with without peace. When they went home, there was family conflict. He said city rose up against city—there was community conflict. Then it says nation rose up against nation—there was international despair.

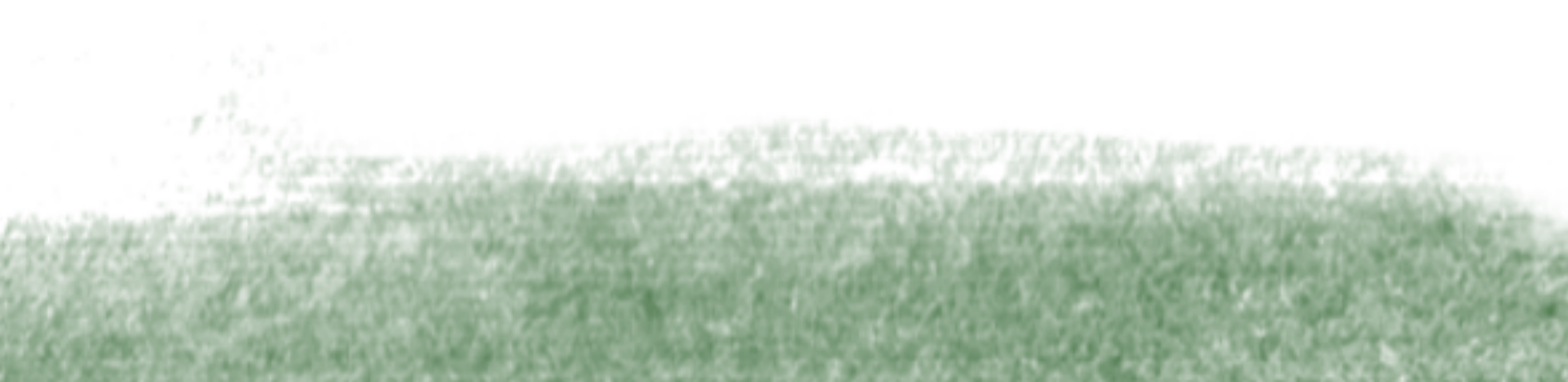
And the common denominator through all of them was chaos, no peace. And I think you will agree, everybody's restless right now. Afraid, nervous, insecure, no peace. But what ought to catch your attention is the end of verse six of 2 Chronicles 15.

It says, "For God troubled them with every possible distress."

Wait a minute. *God* took the *blame* for what was happening?

"For God troubled them."

God is saying, "I'm behind your lack of peace and your disturbances."



Part Two

In the Old Testament, when God wanted to address the fact that people had departed from Him, there would be judgment. With the death of Jesus Christ in history, God recast His relationship to the world.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18 CSB

“Everything is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.”

So now, God doesn't rain down viruses. He doesn't rain down fire and brimstone. But we *can* experience what we'll call the *passive wrath of God*. That's described in Romans 1:24, 1:26, and 1:28.

ROMANS 1:24 CSB

“Therefore God delivered them over in the desires of their hearts to sexual impurity, so that their bodies were degraded among themselves. “

ROMANS 1:26 CSB

“For this reason God delivered them over to disgraceful passions. Their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones.”

ROMANS 1:28 CSB

“And because they did not think it worthwhile to acknowledge God, God delivered them over to a corrupt mind so that they do what is not right.”

Because they would no longer take Him seriously, because they departed from Him, He just released them to let them see what life looked like without Him. So, He, just like a dog on a leash, He lets go of the leash and He lets you run your own way from Him. And then you run into the consequences of that abandonment.

You see, what Romans 1 is describing is what happens when an individual or family, a church or a nation, departs from him. It creates a vacuum. And we know nature abhors a vacuum and it will be filled with something. And the something that is filled with when God is not filling it isn't too pleasant.

I'd like to suggest to you the Coronavirus is filling a vacuum due to the absenteeism of God. Now, we know God exists everywhere. But I'm talking about the relational absenteeism of God.

And He is saying, "You don't want me, you're gonna have life without me. But you created a hole in which things are entering into it that you really don't want."

What we need to understand is that what we are going through today, worldwide and individually, is a *divine disruption*.

He is disrupting the normal, natural, and preferred order of things.

On every single level, individuals: no peace. They went home: no peace. Cities: no peace. Nations: no peace. This is worldwide, because God is sending a worldwide message.

Part Three

What was the problem? There were three causes of the chaos that they were going through and that we are going through in this crisis that we face.

He says in verse three of 2 Chronicles 15, there was no true God.



He didn't say there was no belief in God. He said it was false. No *true* God. They have replaced the true God with idols and called it God. What is an idol? An idol is any noun, person, place, thing, or thought that you look to as your source independently of the true God.

A false god is a false person, place, thing, or thought, that becomes your point of reference. And that is called an idol in the Bible. The greatest sin in the Bible is idolatry, because what you've done is removed God's exclusivity clause. No competitors allowed.

When we adopt idols, and they can be sophisticated. They can be technology, money, people, relationships, they can be religion, all of those can be idols. Your career can be your idol, your education, and your degrees can be an idol.

Whenever that thing is placed alongside of, or in front of the God who has revealed Himself, it will be rejected by Him, a distance will happen *from* Him, and it will open a hole for wrong things to enter into that space.

You see, we like to use the name "God". But if you're going to use His name, the information you give must be correct about Him. You can't make up stuff, call it God, and think He's okay with it, just because you have the right nomenclature.

We're living in a day when God has been put on the loop like those highways that go around the city. We want God close enough to be respectable, far enough not to be bothered with. We want to be able to reference Him on Sunday, but we don't need His information, direction, or decrees on Monday.

We want to say we believe in Him, but we're not dictated to by Him. So we don't wind up with the true God, even when we were praying, singing songs and going to church. We often wind up doing it for an idol that we use the name God for. He said there was *no true God*. There was *no real God*. He had been replaced by *false gods*.

But why? Why was there no true God?

Well, verse three says, because there was a second problem. There was a void of teaching priests. He says there were no teaching priests.

You see, a mist in the pulpit is going to be a fog in the pew. When the pulpits fail, and the Pew becomes confused because of the pulpit's failure, then the culture is not going to be led in the right direction.

Part Four

The problem is the failure of the church. Our churches have failed. With thus saith the LORD. We've placated ourselves to the culture and dumbbed down the deity by ignoring His word. We're not teaching what God says. We're teaching what we think.

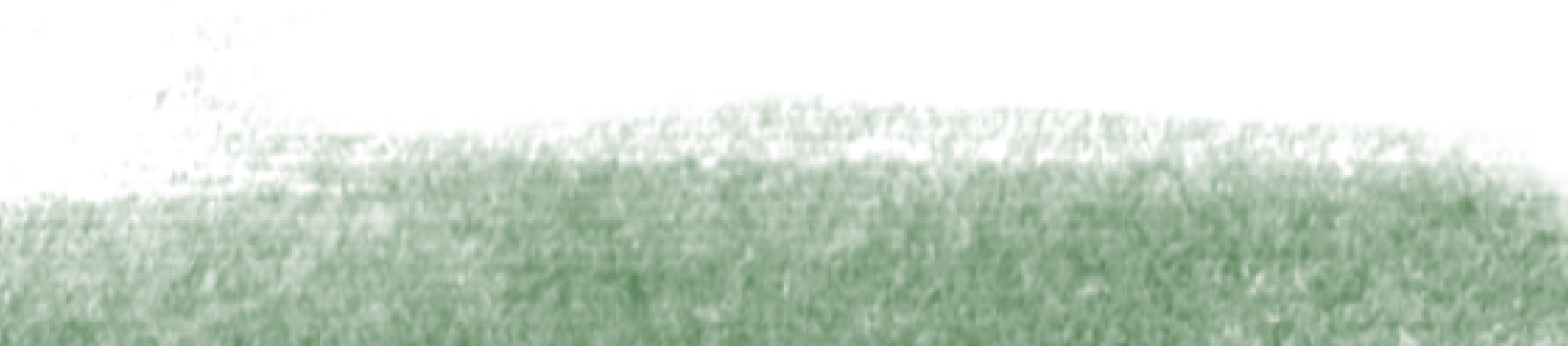
We're teaching people what feels good *for* them and *to* them. We're teaching what is *preferred* and what is *popular*. We're not teaching how *God* thinks and what *God* says, and how *God* feels on every subject.

You see, there are two answers to every question: God's answer, and everybody else's. And everybody else is wrong. God has spoken, and He has not stuttered. He's done that in His Word, in His inerrant, errorless book, to speak to *all* issues for *all* of life, and he's wrong about *none* of them.

He wants to, yes, tell you how to live your personal life. Yes, He wants to define your sexuality for you, not have you define it for yourself. Yes, He wants to define marriage and what it should be and what it should not be. Yes, He wants to define what it means to be a man what it means to be a woman, what it means to be parents, how children should respond to their parents. Yes, He wants to define that.

He wants to define how religion is supposed to work, how churches are supposed to operate, and how governments are supposed to fare and operate for the citizenry.

He wants to define all of that, especially since He says, "I created governments". So, when you go out and you create your own rules about any of those subjects, or any other subject you come up with, you have insulted Him.



And when the pulpits fail to do that, when the pulpits are giving people votes on what God has said, like this is a "majority rule" situation, when it comes to what He has spoken about, then there are no teaching priests.

And we're not conforming people to God's standard, we are just making them comfortable with their own standards, leading to all kinds of confusions that we've already seen in our lives, in our culture, and now in our calamity.

He says no, there was no teaching priest. No, God wants to speak into the issues of righteousness and justice, and how to handle the poor, and equity, and economics, and how to handle finances and all of that—all of that—He speaks about.

And it's the job of the teaching priest to declare it, to speak it. Yes, with *love*. But with *clarity*. There should be no uncertain sounds from the pulpit, not when you are speaking on behalf of God.

And His word must become this new standard. The old book must become the current standard by which all issues are addressed, by which all people must conform, and by which all systems must be adjusted. No matter how high they go, or how low they go, no matter whether they are political or social, or economic, or entertainment.

Part Five

When we take the true God seriously, and when pastors and preachers and leaders take what He says seriously and stop kowtowing to the culture, and start speaking with spiritual authority, and Holy Ghost guts, so that the people know God has spoken here, and I'm going to confirm it from church, and then I'm gonna go public with it in society.

Yes, letting people know we care. We love them. And we want their best, but the only way I can give you my best is to give it to you based on what God says. So, we live in a world where the truth of God is being watered down, dumbed down. So it's being camouflaged while we still quote verses or reference God.

But the God of the Bible is being lost. Because we're leaving the Bible out while trying to keep God. You can't do it. God has raised His word above His name. You must take this word seriously. That is if you want to take solutions seriously.

The pulpits must preach in such a way that it overrides what people think. It overrides what your mom and dad taught you. It overrides what your professors have to say. It overrides what the media is trying to promote when it disagrees with Him. No. This is not a time for sermonettes. This is the time for serious communication. Without apology, but with love, with caring, with understanding, and with compassion.

So, we started off by saying there was no true God, that the true God had been replaced by false religion. That's because there were no teaching priests. The church is supposed to be more than just sitting on a hill. It's supposed to be influencing the environment.

And then it says there was no law. In other words, people had no guidelines to govern their actions. You hear people going around today talking about, well, this is *my* truth. This is what *I* think. This is how *I* feel. This is what *I* believe.

No, you don't get to believe apart from God. You don't have truth that disagrees with God. Because then you're calling God a liar. You know how we feel when people call us a liar, don't you?

How do you think God feels when folks call Him a liar? Because I believe this God, even though you said that, and I'm gonna go by what I believe not what you said.

You just said, "God, you're a liar. I know more than you. I'm going to tell you how we're going to do this since there was no law."

So guess what they wound up with then and guess what we have now? Chaos, distress, that God allowed. Not because he's raining down viruses, but because we've dismissed Him.

So it's opened the door for viruses and other things that bring about dismay, and confusion and conflict. And yes, what He says here is, lack of peace.

Well, that raises a question, doesn't it?

Is there a solution? If God is the cause, and thus God is the cure, what's the cure for the cause?

2 CHRONICLES 15:4 CSB

"But when they turned to the Lord God of Israel in their distress and sought Him, He was found by them."

Did you see that? Did you hear that? "In their distress." Well, that's the same thing that was spoken of in verse six. God caused their *distress*. Then it says, in their *distress*. So let's look at that word *distress*.

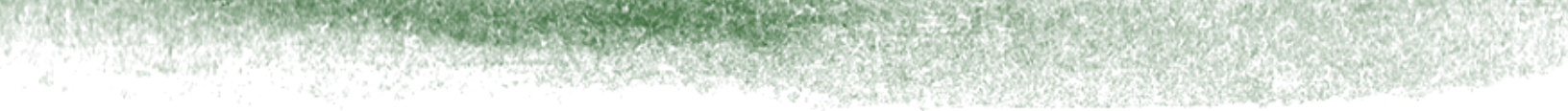
God uses the distress to create the distress because it was the distress that put them in distress that they wanted to get out of.

Let me say it another way. God will let things get as chaotic as they need to get until He gets our undivided attention. Not because He wants to be mean. But He wants our attention.

We do that with our children, right? We make things inconvenient until they pay attention. This virus is a health crisis. We need to listen to our health leaders, we need to keep, not *social* distancing. That's not the best word. It's *physical* distancing. Because we still need to be socially connected, because technology will keep us connected. But then we need to keep our space, yes, and we need to be aware of the symptoms and act accordingly.

Yes, we must be wise in that. But don't think that that's all you're dealing with, or we're dealing with as a society and a world. We're dealing with something much deeper.

"In their distress. They cried to the Lord. They sought Him."



You know what God is wanting now? He was wanting a return to Him. From your life, with your family, with our churches, and with the government. Yep. Even the government, since He created government. He wants a return to Him.

He doesn't just want us using His name, doing an introductory prayer. No, He wants to set the agenda, call the shots, and have us adjust *our* plans to what *He* says should happen. That's what He wants. He wants conformity to His will, submission to His authority and a relationship with us as His people.

"They sought the Lord their God."

How do you seek Him? You pursue a relationship while simultaneously submitting to His authority. Those two things: you pursue a relationship while simultaneously submitting to His rule, His authority, where He has the last word over your word, over your thoughts, or how you were raised.

Their distress woke them up. We better get right with God so our distress and lack of peace can be corrected by the God who gave us the distress.

And He says He let them find Him. You know why? Because that's what He's after all the time. He's after this relationship. But we're out of alignment. We're not in alignment with Him. And He's letting us know through these things that happen.

Part Six

I know that a lot of people will dismiss this because it doesn't look like okay, it sounds more religious than practical to the virus. No. It is at the core of the issue of the virus.

I want to challenge you now. I want to challenge you to make knowing Him, drawing near to Him, connecting with Him your goal. He's giving you a direct route, by the way. It's the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, born of a virgin, lived the perfect life, died a substitutionary death in your place for your sins, to give you the gift of eternal light and connect you with the Father.

And anybody who comes to Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and for the gift of eternal life, He'll grant it to you for free. You don't have to earn it, you can't work for it, but He's giving it away. If you come to the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation, you will ignite a relationship with God.

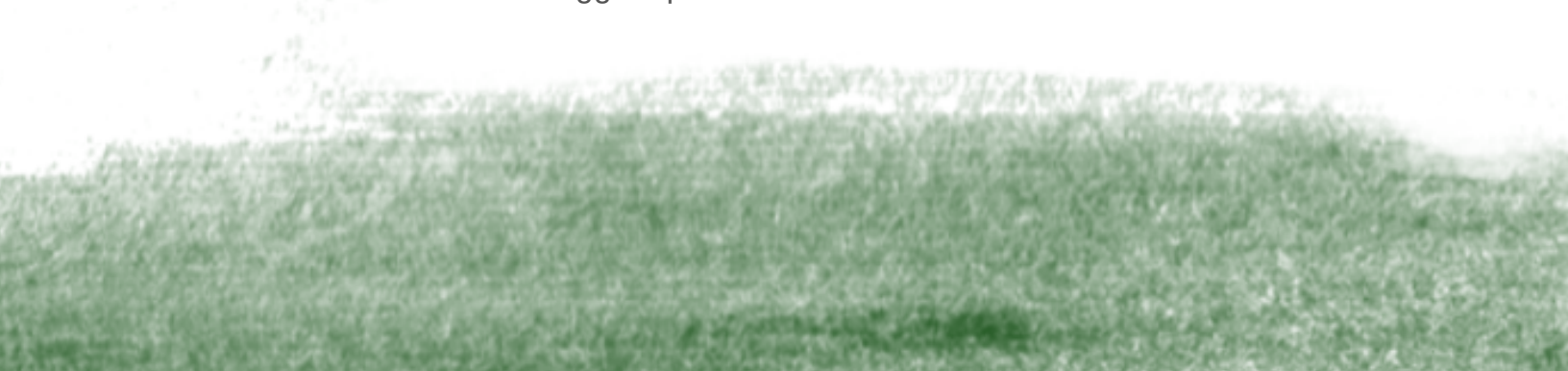
And then as you cultivate that relationship, reading His word, reading the book of John, reading Isaiah 40, to understand how He's in control of everything, and using this word to get to know that God through His Son, you'll begin to see He can speak peace, while we wait on Him to solve problems.

Conclusion

Well, I'm in the den of my home. I was married to my wife for 49 and a half years. Of course, a few months ago, she went into eternity due to a bout with cancer. But I was reflecting on how we met. When we met, I saw this lovely young lady, but she was not responding at the rate to which I was accustomed. Girlfriend was moving a little slow, so I had to help a sister out.

So I took her to an amusement park in Baltimore, Maryland called the Wild Mouse. Wild Mouse was a roller coaster for two, it did all those roller coaster things, but it did something else. It acted like it was going to jump off the track and then turn real quick. I said, give me two tickets, and they gave me two tickets. We got on the Wild Mouse. The wilder the ride got the closer she got. By the time the ride was over, you thought only one person got on it.

See, I created distress, because I wanted her to get closer to me. That's what God does. He creates distress because He's after a relationship. But He knows as long as you don't have that distress, you're going to stay on your side. He doesn't want you that far from Him. God has put us in distress, or allowed us to be in distress, because He wants us to snuggle up close.



Now is the time to run to Him, seek Him, pursue Him, be passionate after Him, to come to know His son and through His son come to know Him, to get into His word and grow in your commitment to Him. And then to submit to whatever He says whether you feel it or not, because your feelings must be the caboose, not the engine.

And then let's watch Him deal with the problems because He's had the ability to draw near to us and change us.

May God bless you as you pursue Him. And may our culture learn that the God who causes the distress also alleviates the distress when we return to Him.

