

HALVORSEN MINISTRY UPDATE



COVID-19 and us

Life has been reconfigured, experts say that it is forever altered. Uncertainty has likely never been more real for the majority of us. Everyone is experiencing loss, some the great loss of losing a loved one and not even being at their bedside to say goodbye. Although we might be tempted to discount our loss if we don't currently have anyone close to us (at this point) battling the virus, our losses are still real. We all are feeling loss and uncertainties in this global pandemic: "How long? How do we live like this? Will I survive?" The majority of the people in our lives - family, friends, neighbors, communities - are outside the confines of our houses, and physically absent from our lives. When will we be physically together again? We are not sure.

Aaron and I are thankful to be weathering out COVID-19 with my parents in the woods of Eastern Long Island, NY. Not being in the city right now is ideal for many reasons but we have been especially thrilled to have outdoor space and even go on daily hikes. Pictured above are Evelyn and Silas's "journey sticks," where they collected items on the hike that described their journey through the backyard's white pines forest. The kids will likely remember these weeks as being full of adventures in nature, learning to ride bikes, extra time with their grandparents, so many (too many!!) school zoom calls, and me attempting to homeschool. But, me, I still feel like my journey in COVID-19 quarantine has simply been jarring. Disorienting. Uncertain. I find myself asking: "When will home in Boston feel safe? are we doing enough to protect our family? God, what are you saying to me during this time of uncertainty? how are you moving in the lives of others around me?."

Asking Big Questions about Covid-19

Watching the weekly interviews at the Veritas Forum has been helpful for our students to process their experiences and questions during this challenging time. The first event was a profound look at both what we stand to lose during this outbreak, but also the depth of our hope in Christ. The guest speakers last week included David Brooks (NY Times), Andy Crouch (Praxis), Lydia Dugdale (Columbia

Medical), and Andrew Schuman (Veritas Forum). They gave unique and informed perspectives from scripture, history, and the front lines of the hospitals in NYC. Feel free to check out the last week's forum and watch future forums as you are able: www.veritas.org/veritasforumlivestream/

Please pray for Undergraduates:

- For the 40 students who have come to Christ on the campuses of Boston this year—that campus ministers and student leaders could do good follow up even from a distance and that all of these students would become strong followers of Christ for a lifetime.
- For many more students to come to know Christ through this pandemic as they face the fragility of life and think about the big questions of life. Pray that God would use the Veritas Forums in students' lives to draw them to himself.
- For the college ministers and student leaders to be able to effectively disciple students online (individually and in small groups)—that students will grow in their faith in God and their relationships with one another though they are separated from each other physically during this pandemic.

Pray for Graduate Students and Faculty:

- For grad students who had to move away in a rush as the campuses closed down; for their safety and peace as they adjust to life away and doing grad school over the internet. Grad school is often lonely and isolating, this only increases it.
- For many internationals who study in grad schools here (30-40% of grad students in Boston are internationals) this has been extra difficult because if they leave the U.S., they might not get back and often don't have resources to cover extra costs. Please pray that God would care for them and reveal Himself to them at this time of need.
- For faculty as they adjust mid-semester to teaching over the internet and continue research (and possibly balance having kids at home).

I am praying for you, that you would stay physically well and hanging on to the Lord tightly during this challenging time. I pray that this Easter season would be particularly special to you and your family. Please feel free to reach out to me if there is anything we can be specifically praying for. "May the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:7).

The VERITAS FORUM

VIRTUAL VERITAS FORUM

Coronavirus and Quarantine:
What Big Questions Can We Be Asking?

DAVID BROOKS
New York Times

ANDY CROUCH
Praxis

LYDIA DUGDALE
Columbia Med

ANDREW SCHUMAN
Veritas Forum

Tuesday, March 24 | 7:00-8:30pm ET
www.veritas.org | live Q&A