

## ALPHA COUNSELING SERVICES

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Dear Friends,

I don't know where to even start sharing with you! With COVID 19, ethnic distress, police issues, political and election rhetoric our world and especially the U.S. has been turned upside down. This week I have 15 hours of counseling scheduled in 2 days. 9 of those hours are directly connected to people having serious problems made worse by COVID. Most are not just concerned about the virus but being stuck at home and having no work or too much work is causing them to no longer be able to ignore problems that have been brewing for some time. I am surprised at several people who are not Christians but want to talk to me knowing that I will take them to the Bible for solutions to their problems. Currently I know several people, talking to me, who need Christ and are open to hear what I have to say about Jesus. I ask for your specific prayers for these people!

I am personally comforted by several verses that help me refocus on Jesus after watching the evening news. My favorite which I repeat to myself often is John 14:27-ESV *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.* Since there is no peace in the world right now this verse has extra special meaning to me. My second go to verse is Philippians 4:6 & 7 ESV *do not be anxious about ANYTHING, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the*

*PEACE OF GOD, which SURPASSES all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.* Paul continues in verses 8 & 9 with encouragements important in tough times. *...whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if any excellence, if anything worthy of praise think on these things.* The Amplified Bible says "think continually on these things (center your mind on them, and implant them in your heart)". Paul goes on and says in verse 9 *... and the peace of God will be with you!*

A COVID update! The United States has the dubious distinction of having the most cases of COVID in the world and the state of Florida is ranked 6<sup>th</sup> worse of all the nations of the world! With all this negative news it is so easy to get discouraged and depressed and looking to the future be overwhelmed with gloom but all these verses are meant to remind us that we have a God who has promised inner peace in spite of outward troubles.

Please pray for Alpha in these times for it is apparent that God has allowed us to stay health and to minister to people struggling through these dark times. Also, pray for our nation and our leaders who have great influence on how we, as a people, will survive all these problems.

Thank you for your prayers and support that helps us serve people!

*Richard*