



It's...a number, right?

AAAHHH.....

It is a number. Granted, it's a large number and it's getting larger every day, but it's on the bottom of the prayer list and sometimes I'm in such a rush I forget to update it before I send out the worship helps. When that happens, I feel a pang of guilt and briefly wonder if anyone will notice. To this point, no one has; or, at least no one has mentioned it to me if they did. As a matter of fact, that's what happened today. I sent out the e-mail with the worship helps for December 20, and I forget to update the number.

But this time, God would not allow me to hope that no one noticed my mistake.

The number at the bottom of the prayer concerns is the number of families who mourn the loss of a loved one (or ones) to the "Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), or as it's more commonly known, Covid 19. The number of persons who have died as of 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, December 19, is 314,381. That's a big number, but more importantly that number represents *people*. *PEOPLE* have died and families mourn. And so does God. Maybe that's why God stopped me (during a very busy day) and put THIS number on my heart.

You know, Joseph Stalin supposedly said, "The death of one person is a tragedy. The death of one million is a statistic." Mother Teresa said, "If I look at the mass, I will never act." When Stalin and Mother Teresa agree on something, you have to take notice. Turns out, scientists have studied this phenomenon and even given it a name. It's called "compassion collapse" [Small & Slovic].

Fortunately, God's compassion does not collapse.

Jesus said, "*Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God's sight. But even the hairs of your head are all counted. Do not be afraid: you are of more value than many sparrows*" (Luke 12:6-7). If God knows every bird that falls from the sky, God notices every person who dies. This knowledge is humbling and comforting to me as a person of faith, so I can go about my business, right? Turns out God is not letting me off that easy! God wants me to help?! What can I do?! I'm not a medical doctor, I have no special healing abilities! Besides, this is a touchy subject to a lot of people!

And after I finished my rant, God and I had our "Come to Jesus Meeting" and God told me what God wants me to do: *I* will follow the advice of those persons whom God has blessed with medical talents. *I* will control my personal behavior. *I* will not put my personal desires ahead of the greater good. *I* will continue to wear my lapel pin that reads, "Masking for a Friend" (that last one was my idea). As usual after God has humbled me, I feel better able to do what God wants of me. Does it work the same for you? aaahhhh.....

Ann
Dr. Ann Hitt

The picture above is of my grandchildren planting an African violet on the grave of my Mother, their GG, upon the first anniversary of her death. "*Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*" Amen.

Go to our Facebook page or YouTube channel on Sunday at 9:30 a.m. and join us for worship!

Please be in prayer for...

- All who are ill
- All who mourn
- Those who are fearful
- Those who have lost their job
- Our Church
- Our country
- The world
- Yourself
- Me

Even in these difficult times, our ministries continue, so we need your financial support. Please mail your gifts to the church address shown above or use the give online button on the website. And thank you!