



Moving Forward Together—Part 3
From Sermon 2.28.21

Read *John 6:66-69*

Review from Sunday's sermon: As New Heights prepares to reopen—balancing wisdom and faith—we need to be aware of spiritual dangers that can infect fellowship. Although at-home church was our biggest spiritual risk, it's by no means the only. While we are all used to the physical protective steps we've been forced to adopt, we now must learn and practice spiritual protective steps for unity.

I. Name the Four Categories of Spiritual Danger. Read and discuss the supporting Scriptures.

- Sin—*Romans 8:12-14 & Colossians 3:5-9*
- Worldliness—*1 John 2:16-17*
- Faithlessness—*Hebrews 11:6*
- Bitterness—*Hebrews 12:14-15*

II. What were the 6 protective steps (analogies) covered on Sunday & what does each look like in our life?

1. Vaccine—being in an authentic faith relationship with Jesus Christ as He is revealed in Scripture.
2. Masks—Guarding my eyes and ears from worldly contamination coming in and guarding my mouth from being a damaging infection to others.
3. Social Distancing—Removing and avoiding those people, places, and circumstances that lead me, tempt me, and cause me to fail and fall or compromise my new holy nature.
4. Sanitize—Because I must be "in the world", I need to daily/routinely be washed by the Spirit to remove worldly contaminants that can take root and defile. Prayer, confession, worship, forgiveness...
5. Regular Testing—objectively hold my responses & reactions to trials next to Scripture to see if I'm responding like Christ or like the world.
6. Aid the Infected—realize everyone is at a different place in all this and some have been greatly affected by not being at church. Showing great patience and restoring someone vs. judging

III. Which one or two of these steps is most challenging for you? What plan can you make now that will help you implement your protection? Various Personal Answers

IV. What does spiritual social distancing NOT mean? Total Isolation. Not having any unchurched friends or contact. Forming a Holy huddle of "us four and no more".

V. Read *Galatians 6:1-2*. Discuss the Church's history of "shooting its wounded". Too often, we fail to reach out to those who fail, sin, or quit. When someone is guilty of a sin that most offends us, we tend to shun them and view them as terminal/should be avoided at all costs forever. We need to pray for the backsliders, offer opportunities for reconciliation, be merciful, accept them back following repentance.

VI. What do you look forward to most as Church is reopened? Various Personal Answers