As schools and businesses close, unemployment fears loom, grocery stores empty, and COVID-19 claims more lives, much of what we should actually be preparing for and thinking through is not just responding to the health issues of the virus, but responding to the many and various reactions of our neighbors. We live in an anxious age, whose hopes often go no further than the stock market, their health, their comforts and routines. This is a time when all that is being challenged.

I was at Walmart very recently getting groceries and making small-talk with the cashier, she told me that earlier a lady had come in and purchased $1,004 worth of groceries to stock up. She then informed me that this whole virus problem was created by the government “to distract us from what they are really up to”. I don’t want to comment on her conspiracy theory, I only mention that example to illustrate this: We have unprecedented opportunities to speak hope, truth, and life into a lost and confused world. Those of us in healthcare, all the more so!
If you're able to, we encourage you to meet with your CMDA chapters virtually (FaceTime, Zoom, etc.) to review and discuss some of this material, and work through these questions:

1. What prompted Christians in the early church to respond as they did, risking their own lives to care for those ill and dying?
2. What can/should we learn from how God has used outbreaks in the past?
3. Now that COVID-19 has seriously impacted the health & wellbeing of the world with Italy recording the largest one-day death toll of 368 people; we are now facing a growing danger in the US. In comparison to the Christians during the days of Cyprian, what would your reaction be if called upon to treat those diagnosed with Covid-19?
4. Although, you may not be on the medical front lines, are there ways you and the other students in your CMDA group could help impact and encourage those who do not share our hope and trust in God during these uncertain days?
5. Pray for the Lord’s enablement to live out the kind of life demonstrated by our brothers and sisters during the Cyprian Plague. How should such a plague prompt Christians to re-examine our love for this world and the things in it? (lifestyle, career success, financial security, health, etc.)
6. What related Bible passages/verses have been helping you maintain a gospel perspective?

Will our Christianity stand the test? Warning: Reading about such things does not always result in action!

In 1973 at Princeton Seminary, the famous “From Jerusalem to Jericho” study showed in a striking manner how negligent we can be with the hurting. Part of this study’s subjects were asked to walk across the campus from one building to another where they would deliver a message/sermon about the “Good Samaritan” (a parable about helping the needy found in Luke 10:25-37). What the subjects didn’t know was: On the way to the building where they were to preach, they would encounter a man (an actor) who was in bad shape, slumped over and coughing (obviously in need) directly in their path. The result? Approximately 50% of these seminarians offered zero help to the man, because they were too busy and had some other place to be. What about you?