

# The Dangers of Doomscrolling

2 Corinthians 4:7-18

Thursday July 8, 2021

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*We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed. —2 Corinthians 4:8-9*

Hi, my name is Shawn, and I am a Doomscroller. You might be one too. Not sure what that is, check out a few paragraphs from the New York Times last year:

*Your phone alarm goes off at 6 in the morning. You check some news sites and Facebook. It's bad news after bad news. Coronavirus cases keep climbing, and so do deaths. Children can't go back to school. Your favorite restaurant and barbershop are still closed. People are losing their jobs.*

*Everything is awful. The world, as we remember it has ended. Next thing you know, it's 9 a.m. You haven't climbed out of your pit of despair yet to even shower. You repeat this masochistic exercise during your lunch break—and again while getting ready for bed.*

*This experience of sinking into emotional quicksand while bingeing on doom-and-gloom news is so common that there's now internet lingo for it: "doomscrolling." Exacerbating this behavior, shelter-in-place orders leave us with little to do other than to look at our screens; by some measures, our screen time has jumped at least 50 percent. (New York Times Article: <https://shawnlinks.com/doom>.)*

I'll have to admit that over the years, I have been a news junkie. I just can't get enough of it. In the last year, however, I have cut way back on watching the news on TV or online. I do read through headlines and only go to the things that interest me the most. The headline regarding this New York Times article was one of those that caught my attention. As I read it, I kept thinking, "well, that is me, oh, and that is me, and that too." Since COVID-19 settled in as cloud hovering over our 2020-2021 existence, I have been "Doomscrolling." Many of us have been. But why?

Many of us are trying to figure out what is happening and where the trend lines of our post-pandemic world are going so we can speak into what our businesses, organizations, and community groups will do next. Schools, little leagues, family gatherings, camps, churches, and all kinds of groups have had to navigate our world's return to normal.

Recently, God drew my heart to a passage of Scripture that I had memorized when I was in high school. In the passage in 2 Corinthians chapter four, Paul talks about how challenging and difficult life had been for him as he served Jesus. In verses eight and nine, he wrote about having terrible things happen to him, but that they had not crushed, destroyed, or driven him to despair. Paul talked in the prior verse about having the wonderful treasure of God's presence dwelling in Him. He knew He was not alone.

The Apostle Paul then shared in verse sixteen how the circumstances of life were aging him physically on the outside, but that his inner being was being renewed by the Lord each day. The chapter concludes with Paul explaining that what he was experiencing was temporary and would make the joy and reward of heaven that much better and sweeter. He challenges us in the final verse to keep our eyes on eternal things, not on temporary things.

If you too admit to Doomscrolling or you have just been in an emotional or spiritual funk as a result of the headlines that impact on our world and your life, lift up your eyes. Let's focus on the eternal, not the temporary. As we lift our hearts and perspective to the eternal, we truly lift our hearts to our God. We look to the one Who made eternity possible in His Son Jesus. Courage comes as we look beyond the headlines of the day and see our eternal God!

To practically switch from the focus of all our world is experiencing today to our Lord, we first have to stop Doomscrolling. Let it go. I am writing these words for myself just as much as for you. Replace your reading of the news with something encouraging. Read God's Word. Replace the materials adding to your doom and gloom with stuff that brings you hope and joy!

**Instead of doomscrolling, let's lift our eyes to the things that will last for eternity!**

## Today's Prayer

*Lord, convict me regarding my obsession with the doom of our world. Help me to lift my eyes up and see you afresh. Replace the heaviness this world brings into my heart with the joy of you and your hope in my life!*