

Church Without

How will you continue to be a Christian if you could not meet with others or go to a church and if the internet broke? (Or even if your computer wore out, your phone died and you couldn't get another one?) What would you do for prayer and worship? How would you remind yourself and each other about your distinctive identity and calling as a Christian?

1. People who are dispersed have to find ways of remembering and passing on the stories, traditions and truths that bind us together. So make sure that you **have a BIBLE** in the house- a real one, not on an electronic device. Read it and learn to retell the stories and messages for those who cannot read for themselves. The people of Israel in the OT were often cut off from what they thought was the heart of their worship and the story of the early church in the NT is all about small numbers of Christians trying to work out how to be Church under difficult circumstances. There is a lot for us to recognise! God does a lot of work through the uncertain and the weak and rather less with the complacent and the comfortable! What is he teaching us and doing in this situation? Read, listen and learn.
2. **Set aside a special corner** somewhere in your house or garage or garden shed where you can reverently place a few things that remind you of worship and the God we serve. Perhaps a white cloth, a cross, candles, an icon, symbols of the faith, your bible. Visit that place each day, light the candle and connect yourself with God – perhaps with a simple sentence like “Here I am Lord” or a favourite bit of scripture or prayer.
3. Perhaps you have a piano, CD player or hymn book? Learn a few favourites and **sing to God**- however much you are or are not in tune! He will accept it with joy and it might cheer you up too!
4. **On a Sunday prepare a meal** at which you light a candle to remember Christ the Light of the World and that you are called to be a bearer of that light.
 - Silently recall the times when your thoughts and words and deeds spoke more of darkness than light and ask God's forgiveness.
 - Repeat aloud the words that were said at your baptism (I turn to Christ, I repent of my sins, I renounce evil)

- Make the sign of the cross on your forehead and on the heads of those with you as a physical memory of Jesus salvation.
 - Thank God for the food and all the good things he has given us
 - Retell the story of the Last Supper to help everybody remember Jesus and what he did for you
 - Share a piece of bread and a glass of wine (or whatever you have) as a physical way to help everyone remember.
 - Enjoy the food aware that you are consciously in the presence of God and doing something that others of faith are doing too all over the world to keep His memory and our faith alive. Share your stories of God, the old days of normal church, people who have inspired you in the faith.
5. Of course **Prayer** is vital. So why not set aside three short times a day – perhaps something like this:
- 15 minute Coffee Time- Read a chapter from the bible (A Psalm/ extract from a gospel/ Whatever God directs you to). Think about what you have read in relation to yourself and the world and your situation and pray for God to be with and in all you do today and for everything you do to be to his honour and glory. Pray for others
 - Lunchtime – 15 minute pause to say the Lord’s Prayer or another of the biblical songs or prayers really slowly and reflectively and offer to Christ the events of your day so far. Pray for others
 - Evening – before bedtime- Reflect upon your day- what has honoured God and what has not? Give thanks for the good and repent of the bad. Pray for others
6. **LOVE AS GOD LOVES:** There are just two things to remember. Love God with all you are and all you’ve got and Love other people as much as you love yourself and your family.

