

WHY IS GOD ALLOWING THIS CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC?

Luke 13:1-5; James 4:13,14

While we should always be cautious in declaring why God is allowing or sending trials and tribulations including this Coronavirus, there are some reasons we can discern by looking at God's Word. God could stop this virus at any time He chooses. But He has let it go. Why? Here are six possible reasons God is allowing this coronavirus pandemic and lockdowns of our economy, churches, etc.:

1.TO WEAN US FROM IDOLATRY AND LOVE OF THIS WORLD (BY ENCOURAGING US TO TRUST IN GOD ALONE) – 1 John 2:15-17; 5:21.

- This world is a world of idolatry. An idol is anything we value or treasure more than God Himself. Idols can be anything – power, control, money, pleasure, success, work, etc. God may be using this virus pandemic to reveal our idols. God often used plagues, famine, war, and enemies to get Israel's attention for forsaking Him and turning to idols. Idols are false gods – Psalm 115:3-8. The world is an enemy we can love instead of God – 1 John 2:15-17. We either love the world or we love God. Even believers need to keep ourselves from idols – 1 John 5:21.
- God may be using this virus pandemic to encourage us to find our true joy, treasure, and value in God alone – Psalm 62:5-8. *“Since God is our only true Refuge, every source of refuge in this world will fail us.”* – Matt Mason. Everything else and everyone else is not worthy of our heart's allegiance. God is the only One worthy of our trust. He alone satisfies the soul. He is to be our Greatest Desire and Delight – Psalm 73:25,26.

2.TO REMIND US OF THE FRAGILITY AND SHORTNESS OF THIS LIFE – James 4:13,14.

- We do not control our future – only God does – James 4:13,14. This virus reminds us everything can change suddenly! Back in January, who could have guessed almost everything, including our church building, would be closed down?
- Our present life is like a vapor or mist. It is short compared to eternity – Psalm 90:1-6, 10, 12. *“Live today for what lasts forever...Hold onto hope because God is our eternal home”* – David Platt. We should always be ready to meet Christ face to face.

3.TO CALL US TO REPENTANCE – Luke 13:1-5

- Jesus tells us to be careful in judging or condemning others in the midst of tragedy. While some might think those who suffer somehow deserve it, Jesus warns about this. He says disasters and tragedies should call us all to repentance. Why? Because we could die at any moment ourselves. We are all mortal and born under the sentence of death. It is only the grace of God that we didn't get hit by a tornado, or suffered a horrible accident, or came down with coronavirus. Anything we receive other than hell is God's grace.
- Jesus' call to repent is also a warning about a worse death than a physical death. There is the coming second death. We must repent and believe the gospel in order to be delivered from the wrath to come. To enter into eternal life we need to repent or turn from our sin to go God's Way. Realizing the shortness of life, true repentance includes turning from our idols and embracing Christ – Acts 26:17b-18, 20b; 1 Thessalonians 1:9,10. *To risk all with Jesus is to end all risk.”* – C.H. Spurgeon.

4. TO POINT US TO CHRIST'S COMING AND ETERNITY – Luke 21:10, 11

- Some have asked if all this turmoil in the world is leading to Christ's return. We should always be cautious in saying the End is at hand because no one knows the time of Christ's return. Many have been wrong. But still "pestilence" is a sign leading to Christ's return – Luke 21:10,11. We can also see the way the end may actually come today in a way that past generations could not see clearly happen: globalism in economics; computer/internet – instant news/propaganda; surveillance and microchips; group think, etc. We can see how the world could be ripe for a "Savior" – 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4.
- Whatever happens with this coronavirus pandemic, we should always be longing for the return of Jesus Christ! – 2 Timothy 4:7,8. When He comes He restore all things, set everything right, and bring in a New Heavens and Earth without any Coronavirus and sin forever! Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus!

5. AS AN OPPORTUNITY NOW FOR THE GOSPEL – Matthew 5:16; 1 Peter 2:11-12

- The gospel is not quarantined nor the Word of God bound – 2 Timothy 2:9. The Church has the message of Hope and Salvation in a time of despair and darkness.
- Let us continue to live out salvation by doing good to all people – Galatians 6:10. We are the light of the world and are to let our light shine – Matthew 5:16. Let us be known for doing good even when it hurts. This is a witness to the world – 1 Peter 2:11, 12.
- Praying and longing for Christ's coming should lead us to desire others come to Christ! *"The Redeemer's coming is the desire of the entire church. The ministry of prayer for the coming of the Lord ought to grow more and more fervent as the years roll on....Let there be prayer to our Lord – "Come Quickly!" – and an equal measure for sinners – "Come to Christ!" Let us blend the two in wise proportion and set both on fire. Let us tell of Christ's coming for judgment and then invite people to come to Christ for mercy! Let us warn them that He is on the way but tell them that He waits to be gracious. While He lingers, they have time for repentance. Thus, we will both drive and draw, both convince and comfort."* – C.H. Spurgeon.

Concluding applications:

- Who are what are you trusting in?
- Do you live daily in light of eternity? How does the shortness of life impact how you live?
- Are you longing for Christ's return?
- How is your life displaying Christ's love to others?