

Understanding the Novel Corona Virus wisely

By Wayne Richards

The religious question some people ask from this particular pandemic is “Why does God allow such devastating suffering?”.

The first thing to note about Covid-19 is that God did not cause it - we did. If it was not created in a Wuhan laboratory, it was at best incompetently allowed it to escape to the whole world. God did not cause the Coronavirus pandemic – we humans did this to ourselves.

The second point is that God never promises to save us from our own faulty behaviour. If he did so there would be no need for fun theme parks or rollercoaster thrill rides. People would simply throw themselves off high bridges for the thrill, relying upon God to somehow protect them against their own behaviour.

We are responsible and we are to blame for this curse upon mankind.

Thirdly, we should worship and praise God for his lovingkindness and mercy. God has restrained our foolishness. It could be a lot worse than it is. God could have simply let the virus destroy the entire globe but instead he has held it back. Its effect on children, for example, is almost insignificant.

Fourthly, the facts of this whole matter should see us thanking God for limiting the devastation and protecting us from ourselves when he has no obligation to do so. We believe in God’s intervening miraculous love and his provision for the fight against this brokenness and death with medical knowledge,

research, materials and self-sacrificing people. Christ conquered sin and death so that we might benefit eternally from his ultimate sacrificial death and resurrection. God’s grace and mercy can be seen in these circumstances as well.

Fifthly, we could ask ourselves: “What has mankind done with the record world-wide prosperity experienced up to this time in history? Did this generation learn to use it so as to alleviate global suffering – or did we selfishly squander it? Is it possible that having failed to use our mutual global wealth responsibly, we are now being challenged to live without it in a different kind of man-made suffering?”

Finally, we are meant to understand how God uses our gross failings and even the deadly consequences of wickedness to draw us to himself. He does so to remind us of eternal realities. Temporary suffering is nothing if it leads to reconciliation with the living God, who can save us not only from sickness and poverty but from ourselves and indeed death itself, forever. In whom do we place our ultimate trust? To paraphrase C S Lewis, God whispers to us in prosperity but shouts to us through adversity.

Are we listening?

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