

# Viruses, the Supremacy of Jesus Christ, and You

## How We May Make Sense of a Global Pandemic

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March 15, 2020

**Questions:** *Why does a Good and loving God allow such a destructive illness like the "Corona Virus"? I thought God only had Good for me, since I have been saved. So, why am I subjected to something so terribly bad? Where is God in all of the sickness and death caused by this Virus?*

**Answer:** In reality, what the Question really asks is: *"How may we make sense of the Corona Virus in light of what the Bible teaches? Doesn't a global pandemic, with all its suffering and death, prove that the Bible is unreliable and that we need to trust in Science, Technology, Medicine, and Government?"*

### The Corona Virus

First of all, the so-called "Corona Virus" is actually a disease called "Covid-19". And the number "19" means that the Covid Virus has been around for a fairly long time, and like all Viruses, it has mutated. For example, on the back label of Lysol, it says, *"kills Corona Virus"*. So, it seems as though the Covid (Corona) Virus was not dangerous (or not *as* dangerous) to humans until this 19<sup>th</sup> mutation.

From what I can glean from reading, this particular mutation began in China at some laboratory. So, is it possible that either the Chinese or Iranian Government was trying to *weaponize* this Virus, and somehow it got out? Senator Tom Cotton thinks so. We may never know for sure, but somehow the Virus escaped the laboratory, and now it is a very real and serious problem that we all have to deal with.

As of now, Viruses can't be cured with Medicine. For example, we can put a man on the moon, but we cannot cure the common cold. But, through the Agency of "Common Grace"<sup>1</sup> God has made a way for us to be able to treat the symptoms that make the disease less hurtful. But once you contract a Virus, you basically have to allow it to run its course. The Good news is that many Viruses can actually be *prevented* by vaccines. Right now, scientists and Governments all over the world are racing to develop a Covid-19 vaccine before too many more people die.

According to the "Center for Disease Control" (CDC), from October 1, 2019 through March 7, 2020, as few as 36 million and as many as 51 million people have

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<sup>1</sup> Common Grace is a type of the Grace of God available to all of Mankind, even lost pagans. In His Mercy, God allows humans to develop and find various "Helps" that make life better and easier for all of us. Many times, Common Grace is used by God to draw some of His elect to Salvation. However, Common Grace also drives many of the non-elect into further hardness of heart, and, in the end, *greater* Damnation (**Romans 2:4-8**). Common Grace is an example of the Love of God to everyone.

contracted the regular Flu just in the United States. And of that number, 22-55,000 people have died.<sup>2</sup> As of today (March 15), 2,345 people in 49 States have contracted the Corona Virus and fifty of them have died.<sup>3</sup> But that number is expected to rise dramatically over the next several weeks. As of today, there is no cure for the Virus and it may take up to 18 months to develop a vaccine. The World Health Organization (WHO) has determined that the Corona Virus is a “Global Pandemic”, while President Trump has declared it a “National Emergency”.

From what I can find, it seems that the best way to avoid getting the Virus is to wash hands thoroughly (at least 20 seconds) and repeatedly during the day, and refrain from touching your face. So, by taking several standard and wise precautions, we may can limit the number of people who get sick. It also seems that only those who already have medical issues are the ones at greater risk of dying.

### **The Supremacy of Jesus Christ**

Like all diseases, the Corona Virus is a product of the Fall and God’s Curse on all Mankind. When Adam fell, God cursed Man, Woman, and satan (**Genesis 3**). But that Curse also affected the ground, the earth, animals, stars, and galaxies. Now, *everything* dies. Stars and suns die, the dirt brings forth thorns, animals are vicious to one another, and people devise wicked things. So, as a result of the Curse, every living creature (humans included) have a time appointed for their death and even the *manner* of death.

The result of this Curse is that even the godly suffer. For example, on the Lord’s Day, Sunday, December 26, 2004, over 200,000 people were killed by a tsunami in the Indian Ocean in about ten minutes. And *part* of that death toll included believing saints who had assembled together to worship God on the Lord’s Day. Of the 55,000 people who have died so far from the regular Flu, there is no doubt that *some* of them were Christians. When the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima in 1945, Christians, who had gathered to pray in Church, were eviscerated in mere seconds.

So, that kind of suffering and death caused by both “natural” and Man-made events has been happening to Christians for over 2,000 years. And so, there is every reason to believe that, in the current crisis with the Corona Virus, some believers will also get sick, and some of them will also die.

Now, providentially, this Virus comes on the heels of this Church having already gone through a “journey” of fifty-four Sermons through **1 Peter**. And in his first Epistle, the Apostle Peter teaches us that there are times when it is God’s Will that the godly suffer, sometimes horrifically, and many times “unfairly.” But, whether we suffer or escape Suffering, one thing never changes: Jesus Christ reigns supreme over everything in the Universe! And that includes the evil decisions of wicked men, satan himself, and deadly Viruses. So, nothing “runs amuck” on the earth. Nothing is autonomous. Everything from seeds to mosquitoes

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/burden/preliminary-in-season-estimates.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/coronavirus-us-cases.html>

to babies to multi-national corporations to black holes and unknown galaxies exist for only one reason: the Glory of Jesus Christ. And everything is controlled by God, and God orders all things to function so that His Word and Will ALWAYS come to pass, *exactly* as God desires it.

**Isaiah 14:27**

**For the Lord of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate *it*? And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?**

And we have been taught that one of the reasons why God allows His Own people to suffer is so that by us enduring Suffering "as a Christian" (patiently) (1 Peter 4:16), and by NOT losing Hope, and by continually trusting in the Promises of God, we prove two things to the unbelieving world:

1. That we really believe what the Bible teaches, that we are simply strangers and pilgrims passing through, and that this world is NOT our home.
2. That Jesus is better than anything this life can give to us, and He is better than anything this life can take away from us.

We must never forget what the Apostle Peter instructed John Mark to record about Jesus in **Mark 4:35-41**:

**On that day, when evening came, He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side." Leaving the crowd, they took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him. And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. And He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" They became very much afraid and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"**

Now, this infallible Passage teaches us that Jesus absolutely had both the Power and Authority to stop the natural disaster of 2004, the Man-made one in 1945, and the Corona Virus of 2020. Instead, God chose to allow them. Jesus *could* have spared the lives of all His people, but He chose to magnify the Glory of His Grace by allowing many to suffer and die.

And if that was all we knew about God, we would come to the true but incomplete conclusion that Jesus controls every Decision and every Act of both God and Man. But, because we have pressed into the Scriptures to learn just Who God is, we also know that God ALWAYS does what is Wise, and Right, and Just, and Good. God is *never* unwise, He is *never* unjust, and He is *always* Good. Therefore, allowing the tsunami to kill tens of thousands of believers, allowing the Man-made nuclear destruction of believers, some 75 years ago, and by allowing a deadly Virus to spread across the earth in our day, was NOT merely something that God *allowed*

(to demonstrate His Power), but was actually the very BEST thing that God could do to accomplish the two things that God is most passionate about:

1. That He is glorified above all that has been made.
2. That the Joy of every believer is made full.

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ has all Knowledge, and all Authority over all the natural and supernatural forces of this world. He knows *exactly* where this Virus started, and where it's going next. And Jesus has complete Power to restrain it or not. And that's what's really happening. This deadly Virus is NOT a side issue or something that will interrupt God's Plan. No, this Virus, seemingly acting randomly, is actually a tool in the nail scarred Hands of Jesus to make sure that God's Word and Will are carried out, *exactly* as God has spoken.

So, neither the United States military, nor the tidal waves of the Oceans, nor the evil intentions of godless people, nor Sin, nor Satan, nor Sickness, nor Sabotage is stronger than Jesus. The one, true, and living God, Who is revealed in both Nature and on the pages of inspired Scripture, is *never* backed into a corner, He is *never* forced to tolerate what He does not will, and He *never* loses.

### **Psalm 33:6-12**

**By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deeps in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. The Lord nullifies the counsel of the nations; He frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the Lord stands forever, The plans of His heart from generation to generation. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, The people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.**

... and through all his suffering, Job came to this amazing conclusion about God:

### **Job 42:1-6**

**Then Job answered the Lord and said, I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' 'Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.' 'Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You instruct me.' I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You; Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes.'**

So, the *real* Question is *not* whether Jesus is overseeing, limiting, guiding, and governing all the disasters and all the diseases of the world, including all their sinful and satanic dimensions. Because He is. The *real* Question is:

**How are we to understand this Virus and make sense out of it in light of the Bible being true?**

And there are, at least, four biblical Realities that we can use as building blocks in our effort to understand and make sense of this viral outbreak:

## **1. God Has Subjected the World to an Unwilling Futility to Bring about a Glorious Hope**

### **Romans 8:18-25**

**For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he *already* sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.**

When Sin entered the world through Adam and Eve, God ordained that the created Order (including our physical bodies as persons created in God's Image) would experience Corruption and Futility, and that all living things would die. And being saved through the Gospel of God's Grace does not allow Christians to escape this physical corruption, futility, and death.

As God the Holy Spirit "carried him along", the Apostle Paul teaches here that the entire Creation was subjected to "futility", not willingly, but because of God, Who ALSO subjected all of Creation in Hope that the Creation itself will be set free from its bondage to Corruption and obtain the Freedom of the Glory of the children of God!

Because saved people understand that all of Creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until this very moment. But not only all of Creation has been groaning, but those who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, we also groan inwardly, as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons so that the final part of Salvation will be accomplished, the complete redemption of our bodies!

So, the day is coming when all of Creation will be set free from its bondage to disease and disaster and death, and we will inherit the Freedom of the Glory of the children of God. But, until that day, the Apostle teaches:

**even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.**

... which will happen at the final Resurrection. The difference for genuine believers, who truly trust in Jesus, is that our experience of this Corruption is NEVER Condemnation.

## **Romans 8:1**

**Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.**

## **1 Thessalonians 5:9-10**

**For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.**

Genuine Christians, like the unsaved, die because of wrecks and natural disasters and viruses. But we don't usually die because of any particular Sin. And that is vital for us to remember. We die with viruses for no other reason than we are fallen and we live in a fallen world. Yet, for us, the "sting of death" has been forever removed!

## **1 Corinthians 15:51-58**

**Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "*DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP* in victory. *O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?*" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in vain* in the Lord.**

During the current crisis with the Corona Virus, some people will be subjected to an unwilling Futility. Yet, the only reason God is subjecting them to this Futility is so that He may also subject them to a glorious Hope.

## **2. Sickness is Sometimes a Mercy**

The Bible teaches clearly and repeatedly that God sometimes inflicts Sickness on His people as a purifying and rescuing Judgment (Discipline), which is NEVER a Condemnation, but is actually an Act of Mercy for His saving Purposes. And we come to that doctrinal position based on **1 Corinthians 11:29-32**:

## **1 Corinthians 11:29-32**

**For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.**

This Passage, in **1 Corinthians 11**, teaches us that, sometimes, Jesus Christ takes the life of His loved ones through Weakness and Illness, and brings them to

Heaven. And, interestingly, these are the very same Weaknesses and Illnesses that Jesus healed in **Matthew 4:23; 8:17; 14:14**.

And the reason Jesus did this was because the trajectory of their Sin was leading them straight into God's Condemnation. And so, by ending their life and taking them into Heaven, God *circumvented* the desire of satan and allowed these believers to experience His Grace in Heaven forever! So, by cutting them off from this life, God was also cutting them off from their Sin. And by doing that, He was sovereignly preventing these saints from losing out. So, rather than seeing this as Harsh and Cruel, we need to realize that God was actually giving these people His Mercy.

In other words, *some* believers die of illnesses “**so that we may not be condemned along with the world**” (verse 32). And if God did that with a few of His loved ones in Corinth, 2,000 years ago, He will, no doubt, do it again to some through the Corona Virus in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. And this will happen NOT only because they may have abused the Lord's Supper, but also for other kinds of sinful trajectories that are leading them into destruction.

No doubt God will move in His Mercy toward some during this crisis with the Corona Virus. And as these believers die and enter immediately into Heaven, they will escape forever their trajectory of Sin.

### **3. Sickness is Sometimes a Judgment**

The Bible is equally clear that, sometimes, God uses disease to bring particular Judgments upon those who reject Him, and who rebel and give themselves over to Sin. And there are two great examples of this in the Bible.

Over in **The Acts 12**, King Herod exalted himself in being called a “god.” And Dr. Luke recorded this event for us:

#### **The Acts 12:21-23**

**On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and *began* delivering an address to them. The people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died.**

What a horrific and instant Judgment! And you would think that God, doing this, would drive people far away from the Gospel and make it even *harder* on the Apostles. Yet the very next verse says:

**But the word of the Lord continued to grow and to be multiplied.**

So, from this we conclude that God can do that with anyone who exalts himself. Which means that we should be amazed that more of our rulers do not drop dead every day because of their arrogance toward both God and Man. And the only reason they are not is Common Grace and God's Mercy.

Another example is the Sin of homosexual intercourse. In **Romans 1:24-27**, Paul wrote:

**Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.**

Now, this is an example of the Wrath of God that Paul described in **Romans 1:18**:

**For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,**

So, from this, we conclude that God can and sometimes does use Illnesses (like the Corona Virus) to bring Judgment upon those who reject Him and His Way. So, there is no doubt that, during this 21<sup>st</sup> Century crisis with the Corona Virus, God will use it as Judgment to some.

#### **4. God's Powerful and Convicting Voice**

All natural disasters, whether floods, famines, locusts, tsunamis, or diseases, are all a very powerful and convicting manifestation of the Voice of God to everyone, both saved and lost,

***"I am God! Fear Me! Love Me! Obey Me! Worship Me! And do not trifle with Me!"***

#### **Luke 13:1-5**

Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. And Jesus said to them, **"Do you suppose that these Galileans were *greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. "Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? "I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."***

As the Corona Virus spreads around the world, we must hear the Voice of God. And as we hear, we should tremble and repent. Every death by this Virus is ordained by God. Because only God gives life, and only God manages and controls it. May God be Good to us to use this Virus to humble us so that we will not boast or speak arrogantly against the Lord. And as we see the damage unfold from the



Corona Virus, may we become more determined than ever to fear God and to love Him and strive to obey Him.

### **Where Do We Fit in?**

#### **Psalm 139:16**

**Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained *for me*, When as yet there was not one of them.**

#### **Hebrews 9:26**

**And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment,**

Our lives here on the earth have already been numbered. We had a very specific time to be born, and the time of our death is already in God's Mind and Will. But God doesn't simply know about our death (Omniscience), He also *controls* our days. And what that means is that until it is God's Will to take us home, we CANNOT die. And if it is time for God to take our lives and bring us into Heaven, we should not desire to stay.

And that isn't being fatalistic, dear friends, it is trusting in God and in His Promises. It is this Divine Confidence (as opposed to Self-confidence) that is birthed in an unshakable Hope in God and in His Word, that gave the early Church such boldness and made them utterly fearless, even though they were faced with almost certain annihilation. Now it is possible that the Corona Virus may take some of us home. It may kill me. But if it does, then may God be praised! Because that would mean that not only was our deaths the *wisest* and *best* thing God could have done, but our deaths will blend in seamlessly into the mosaic of God's Will and our own eternal Joy!

And if we survive this current threat, may God be praised! And may the Humility and Boldness that we read about in the Bible flow through our Church so that we will labor on to be found faithful, fruitful, and busy in the Work of the Lord, until Jesus returns.

Truly, those of us who are saved are in the safest place in all the Universe, the Hands of God. So, let us use wisdom and caution, but let us not fear a Virus. Instead:

#### **Matthew 10:28-39**

**Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And *yet* not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows. "Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. "But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven. Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to *SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST***

**HER MOTHER-IN-LAW; and A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.**

### **Don't Waste This Virus**

The "bottom line" is that we must guard our hearts that we do not waste this Virus. So, as many are giving in to panic and fear, let us be:

**... steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in* vain in the Lord. (1Corinthians 15:58)**

... and may God grant that, even as many of us may suffer- that we will...

**... always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame. For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong. (1Peter 3:15-17)**

We must always remember that Jesus did not scream in agony on the Cross to purchase us so that we could be safe and secure. Instead, God suffered a great Cost to Himself (the Death of His dear Son) to redeem us so that we could live our lives in fearless abandon to the Glory of God!

Amen. I love you all

Soli Deo Gloria  
To the Glory of God Alone