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Corona-Pandemic – Thoughts from a Christian Viewpoint

Some basic considerations

Dear reader,

I don't know what's on your mind right now, but I'm sure there's a lot occupying your thoughts, just like mine. We are currently experiencing a situation that is unprecedented in world history. Of course, there have been pandemics in the past, but never before has a disease been able to spread so quickly across the globe as today, and never before has a disease reached every continent. In addition, the consequences for the economy cannot yet be estimated at all, but will certainly be massive for the whole earth.

We are worried, we are searching for information and at the same time we wonder whether we can trust it. We are given instructions on how to behave which massively restrict us, and perhaps we'd rather not follow them at all. Or we ask ourselves whether all this is even enough, whether we shouldn't rather go into hiding and not emerge again before months have passed.

It strikes me that there is a huge need for orientation. I will try to give you some hints here. It is very important to me that I don't want to give more instructions, but rather help you find your way in these turbulent times and make your own decisions that you can substantiate for yourself (and maybe for others).

Different points of view

There are a lot of different viewpoints from which to understand the current situation.

Some see a completely natural event: Viruses sometimes pass from animals to humans and can cause different more or less serious diseases. Depending on the hygienic conditions, this can easily happen or is extremely rare. That this virus spreads so quickly is entirely down to us, however, because we have become so incredibly mobile and interlinked.

The other extreme are conspiracy theories: XY deliberately created this virus in order to achieve their goals. For XY, different groups then insert whoever they consider

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responsible. In between these extremes, you can find every shade of understanding and interpretation.

Maybe it helps if we remind ourselves that the world is not flat. No, I don't mean the ball we live on. We live in a world that has a natural level - what we can see and touch - and a supernatural level. Now some people might claim here that they only believe what they see, and that there is no room for the supernatural. Yet we all live comfortably with things that we cannot see or touch: love, trust, fear, kindness, hate, faith, and so on. You could maybe imagine it like a building with different floors. The ground floor is the tangible world, the ground beneath our feet, the water we drink. Love and trust and similar abstract concepts you would find a few floors up. Then there are in-between levels. We all believe that the light will come on when we flip the switch, yet none of us has ever seen electricity. Many of us feel the same as I do: I don't even really understand it. And then there are the upper floors, the levels of the supernatural. These include abstract ideas such as love or trust, and also faith.

From my point of view, we can understand the corona virus (SARS-CoV2, as it's officially called) on different levels and come to different conclusions.

At the natural level, scientists can demonstrate how viruses pass from animals to humans and then from one human to another. They can research how this particular virus behaves, in what ways and how quickly it spreads, how it makes us ill. As a consequence, they can also tell us how we can protect ourselves from it or how we might slow down or contain its spread. This level is part of the world created by God. God made our earth with all its living beings and subjected it to its particular laws.

We don't question gravity; we don't wonder each time an apple falls from a tree that it just falls down and doesn't rise into the air. It would never occur to us to question the natural laws at work. So why would we question scientific insights with the corona virus of all things? The only difficulty I see is the fact that we're dealing with a new virus. Science is only just beginning to investigate it, whereas gravity has been studied for a long time and we understand it in much depth. If there is sometimes conflicting information, the reason is not automatically that somebody is trying to mislead us, but that every day new things are being discovered and some things have to be revised.

Then there are the in-between levels, where natural and supernatural aspects come together. China is being blamed for initially keeping the fact that a serious illness is spreading there under the carpet. Now we are not quite sure whether the situation in China has improved as much as the Chinese government claims. In the West, governments are dealing with the situation in very different ways. This is the level where we interpret facts. Every government needs to do this and then conclude for itself how to deal with the situation. It is in the nature of things that different countries decide to take different approaches. The differences have to do with many factors: with the culture of the country, with the political form, with the economic situation in which the country finds itself, and much more.



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For believers there is also the level of faith, where we try to understand things from the perspective of our God. For Christians, the yardstick for this is the Bible, in which God has revealed Himself to us human beings.

What does the Bible say about Corona?

Well, if you ask like this, the answer is of course: nothing. This is logical, because it is a virus that has only come to our attention since it has started to make people ill. And yet a few things can be said about the current situation from a biblical viewpoint.

God sometimes allows things to happen that we don't understand. This doesn't mean that he doesn't have everything under control. Faith in an almighty God does not mean that God keeps all dangers or difficulties away from us, even if we don't always understand why he allows things to happen to us which are painful and difficult. God challenges us to trust Him even if it is difficult, when we are challenged and perhaps even afraid. "But when I am afraid, I put my trust in you." the singer of the psalm is saying (Psalm 56:4). God also promises to be with us in all our troubles and never to abandon us. "For the LORD your God is a compassionate God; he will not abandon you or destroy you." (Deuteronomy 4:31)

So then, where is God in this situation? I've been thinking about this a lot too, and was struck by an exciting thought. The virus, and the disease that comes with it, strikes the whole world. We are all affected sooner or later, and it takes all of us together to find good ways of dealing with it. Governments everywhere are calling on their people to comply with the measures that are currently necessary because they can only be effective if we all keep to them. Elderly and vulnerable people should not go shopping and so depend on others to do it for them. This virus has the great opportunity to bring us together - despite keeping apart with social distancing. I was wondering what it would be like if instead a world war were threatening us. Then solidarity wouldn't help us very much. We would have to encounter everyone with mistrust and fear, we would fight each other instead of supporting each other. This is why I see that God doesn't leave us in all this alone, even in the face of a threat.

I pray that you can spend these days with peace and serenity and that you find ways to be close to people, even if you have to stay away from them.

Sincerely, Barbara Beusch

If you've found this helpful, please recommend it to someone else.

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