

The Real Virus

As I write (March 2020), all around me in the UK many are in a state of near panic, a panic stirred up by wall to wall media coverage of the draconian measures which are being announced by the government almost by the hour, and all to cope with the coronavirus. Something similar is going on worldwide.

In this article, I will say nothing about the medical, social or political aspects of all this. I have my views, and though there is a great deal that I could say, that I might like to say, I forbear.

Rather, I want to make a spiritual point, to draw attention to the vital issue in all this. I want to talk about the real virus.

The virus I am referring to infects all the human race; it infects us now. It has been with us since the fall of Adam, and it has infected every one of us, 100%, without exception. And the death rate from this virus is 100%, without exception – spiritual death, physical death and eternal death. Even so, most men and women don't want to hear anything about it, and they don't want to be told of the only cure – the guaranteed cure – for it. They simply ignore the virus; they live and die without giving it a moment's thought. And yet now – when this coronavirus erupts – look what happens!

The Greeks had a saying: ‘Whom the gods intend to destroy, they first drive mad!’ Quite!

The virus I am talking about is sin. It affects every one of us from birth. No! From conception:

I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me (Ps. 51:5; see also Job 15:14; Ps. 58:3).

David wasn't saying he was born out of wedlock, of course. He was saying that from conception, he was in Adam, a

child of flesh, a sinner, under the wrath of God. Moreover, he was speaking for all of us:

You [that is, even believers] were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience – among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind (Eph. 2:1-3).

Unpalatable as it may seem, this is the truth. Every human being is born a sinner under the wrath of God:

Whoever does not believe [in Christ] is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil... Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him (John 3:18-19,36).

We – all of us, 100%, without exception – have been infected from conception by this virus of sin. And it is fatal. It has killed us spiritually. It is certain, 100% certain, that it will kill us physically; we shall all die as a result of it.¹

But it gets worse, far worse.

After death, we face the third stage in this virus' effect; namely, judgment by the Lord Jesus Christ:

The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son... Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to execute judgment (John 5:22-27).

¹ Unless Christ returns before we die.

[Christ] is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead (Acts 10:42).

God... has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead (Acts 17:31).

We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10).

Christ Jesus... is to judge the living and the dead (2 Tim. 4:1)

It is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment (Heb. 9:27).

[All men and women] will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead (1 Pet. 4:5).²

Finally, we know what the permanent consequence of this virus is for all who die without having sought the cure for it:

Their end [destiny] is destruction (Phil. 3:19).

The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying: ‘There is peace and security’, then sudden destruction will come upon them as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape (1 Thess. 5:2-3).

...the righteous judgment of God... when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day (2 Thess. 1:6-10).

There is only one cure for this virus:

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life (John 6:68).

² See also Ps. 9:8; 96:13; 98:9.

Jesus said...: 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me' (John 14:6).

There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

This cure has 100% success rate. All who turn from their sin and trust the Lord Jesus Christ will, at once, be fully saved for ever:

Whoever believes in [Christ] is not condemned (John 3:18).

Everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him [has] eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day (John 6:40).

Everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name (Acts 10:43).

'What must I do to be saved?'... 'Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved' (Acts 16:30-31).

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved... Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (Rom. 10:9,13).

Conclusion

So... with the eruption of this coronavirus, the world goes into panic mode and does all it can to stave it off, and this, even though, for each individual, it is far from certain that he or she will get it, and even if he or she does succumb to it, the effect is almost certain to be minimal and of short duration. I am not belittling the effect of the virus on the specially vulnerable, but, as I write, as things stand this is the reality.

In stark contrast, everybody has already been infected with the lethal virus of sin, a virus which carries the certainty of eternal death. Despite this solemn fact, and despite God sending his Son into the world to save sinners, the vast majority of men and women could not care less, and blithely go on towards the day of judgment.

Is this not madness, madness of the highest order?

Although he was talking about persecution, Christ set out the principle that eternal death is infinitely worse than physical: ‘Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell’ (Matt. 10:28). The majority do the very opposite. And though, in his earthly ministry, Christ cured all kinds of disease, it was to vindicate and illustrate his power to save from sin (Mark 2:8-11; Heb. 2:1-4). It is the virus of sin that we should be most concerned about.

The lesson is clear:

Prepare to meet your God (Amos 4:12).

How do you do that? In this way:

Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon (Isa. 55:6-7).

And that means now!

In other words, you must repent and turn to Christ. Do it now! I appeal to you to trust the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners – trust his name, his person, his merit, trust his blood sacrifice to propitiate the wrath of God for you, trust Christ’s righteousness to cover you in his own perfection – and you will be saved, at once, from all your sin. Nothing else will do.

It is not a question of catching this virus. You’ve got it! You’ve had it since conception. And eternity gets closer every day. There is no time for delay!