

How Are We To Navigate Through...

INTRODUCTION:

Good morning! It must be said that we continually are living in different and difficult times in the present. We, for the last year and a half, have been faced with challenges that few in this generation have had to consider or address. Not to mention the challenges of this pandemic have been things movies have been made of such as the 1995 hit *Outbreak*.

Of course, there have been challenges across the world that we here in America are unaccustomed to, and we must admit that stateside we have been privileged with immense luxury that others do not have in other parts of the world, and regrettably we take for granted. But during this time of pandemic we have been shaken, divided, politicized, and recklessly become apathetic because we have not always addressed this problem from a place of calm and direction, but rather out of emotion and confusion. So the question I pose to us today is *How Are We To Navigate Through...?*

Obviously, since we have been hit so hard with Covid, the context is primarily going to be pandemic, but the principles that I hope we touch on go much farther than the pandemic. Hopefully, the lessons we learn from this reflection will not just help us to navigate the present issue of Covid-19,

but also the many other issues that life throws at us in the Fallen World.

Part 1: Understanding The Reality We Live In

The first thought that comes to the mind of many is “Why is God doing this to us?” The truth of it is I don’t believe God is responsible for the pandemic, but for many, we have no understanding of the Christian view of reality. Can God use natural evil to be a messenger of judgment? Yes, of course, He can, but I certainly don’t know that this pandemic is an example of this. So what’s going on?

We must begin to realize that since the Fall, the world is not in its original state or condition, where as we said last week that Heaven and Earth were once together, but now separated because the Image-Bearers sinned which is disobedience and rebellion against the Creator, and as a repercussion to that sin God’s presence was removed. Therefore, Heaven and Earth are separated creating what we now call the Fallen World with attributes that were not originally present in what we might call the “First World,” that state of the creation before sin and its repercussions entered the world.

The Fallen World has a very major component that the original “First World,” as we might call it, did not, Death. Death is an enemy of God, and

sadly too many of us see God and Death as old friends working together. This simply isn't true because the Bible says that Death is an enemy of God who by nature is Life. The Bible says the last enemy to be overturned in the Divine Sovereign rule of the Son is Death itself in 1st Corinthians 15, and the Resurrection of Jesus is the primary evidence of God's personal position and opinion towards Death. He wants Death to be overturned and thrown out of His Future World, also known as New Creation.

But when Death entered this Fallen World where Heaven & Earth were separated and God's Presence was no longer a daily activity, Death brought with it ramifications that are ungodly, or not God ordained, such as: Disease, which leads to the Death of the body, Division, which leads to the Death of a Community, and Destruction, which leads to the Death of Creativity.

Because Heaven has been removed, Death is now present with all of Death's comrades in tow (Disease, Division, Destruction, etc.) which now creates the opportunity for tragedy to be possible in this Fallen World. So what we are experiencing in this Pandemic is perfectly natural and expectable in the conditions that are possible in this Fallen World.

The Big Picture & How Do We View God?

So how do we begin to answer “Why is God doing this to us? My first response would be why do we assume God is behind it all? Since we know that these type tragedies are possible, why are we so naïve to not expect these conditions when they present themselves apart from God having to be responsible. Primarily, it is because we have a wrong view of God. Sadly, many of us look to God to be the Divine Cosmic Baby Sitter not the Divine Redeemer.

The View of the Divine Babysitter

In this view of God, we believe that God, like a Baby Sitter, is to be primarily involved with our everyday welfare, which I’m not saying God is not concerned with, but a view of God that is often not close in relationship, and one only used for the beneficial aspect of needs being met. In this view of God, He is more of a servant to our needs rather than our being a servant to His will. God is obviously the One with the biggest bull’s eye on His back, and we use God as target practice often without consideration. We as humans often feel detached enough from God or safe enough with God, I don’t know for sure which is more prominent, that we can criticize Him at will without much investigation to our critique. But when tragedy happens we quickly blame Him for allowing it to happen as if we didn’t live in a

world where tragedy was possible already, or He didn't love us enough to prevent it.

The View of the Divine Redeemer

The second view we will discuss, which I believe is a Biblical view, is the view that God is the Divine Redeemer and His primary concerns for the forward motion of history is not to Baby Sit us but rather to Redeem us. In this purpose, God's mission is to redeem not just humanity but the entire world of Creation to put things back as they once were. God's mission of redemption is sometimes benefitted by the natural happenings of suffering in this Fallen World that we may find questionable in the immediacy of tragedy until we can be reminded or get to a place in our walk with God that we see there was a higher purpose that fits into the Divine Plan of Redemption. So we might ask, "Can God use attributes of a Fallen World for His Good Purpose of Redemption?" The answer to this question again is, yes, even though we must be careful not to attribute every tragedy to God, remember tragedy is to be expected in a Fallen Universe. God is primarily not interested in our personal happiness, which to some sounds offensive, but rather is primarily interested in our holiness which in the end is where humans truly find eternal happiness. So God can in fact use

suffering as a way to get our attention that otherwise would not have been gotten if suffering had not happen. In this way suffering in the experience is bad, and normally we describe anything against our personal will and pleasure as bad, but in its purpose in the big picture of God's redemptive plan we must describe it as good.

Where Does The Suffering Originate?

The primary reason mankind goes through any kind of suffering is often the ramifications of mankind's freewill choices or the ramification of the possibilities of the Fallen World which are labeled as Moral Evil and Natural Evil.

You may be asking right now, "I didn't know there was more than one kind of evil?" But let's start off with a proper understanding of evil. Evil is not the opposite of good, but rather the absence of good. And Jesus, in the Gospels, reminds us that there is only one who is good, God alone. So what is evil? It is the absence of God who is the only good. So how does evil come about? Let's explore both aspects of evil:

Natural Evil

Natural evil would be the damage, destruction, or death of humans or any living thing due to natural events of nature such as a tornado or an

earthquake or something along those lines. Yet, take earthquakes, the shifting of tectonic plates is necessary for the economy of life, yet because we live in a Fallen World where death is possible sometimes these natural elements of the ecosystem become hazardous and bring about results that are devastating to life. Looking at humans specifically, consider if death were not possible for humans, then these “natural evils” wouldn’t exist, and we would simply know them as “natural events.” Earthquakes because of the need for tectonic shifts and tornados because of atmospheric pressures would continue to exist, but the ramifications of these natural disasters would no longer be disasters just natural events or processes of life . Now consider in our present context of the pandemic that if death were not possible then the fear would be gone from this natural evil.

Moral Evil

Moral evil is when humans, or the Image-Bearers, take the freewill gift that God meant for love and use it recklessly in a way that does not bring about God’s good purpose, and this is done through freewill centered on the self. It is this type of evil that we have experienced or been guilty of using in relationships. This type of evil comes about through personal choice.

In the case of the Corona Virus, if it came from the lab in Wuhan, it seems that it is the combination of both moral and natural evil at work. Man's choice to be reckless with the virus that gave birth to a natural evil event called a global viral pandemic. This would be a primary example at how both moral and natural evil can in fact work together.

So to connect the sources of suffering and the role suffering can play in a positive sense in God's grander vision is to remember the nature of humans who have this little thing called an EGO. C.S. Lewis puts it that God uses pain as a megaphone to rouse a deaf world. Pain by understanding the physical body tells us something is wrong and needs to be addressed. But we must not see that God wants us to suffer, but rather uses suffering that is already inevitable, induced by either moral or natural evil, to pierce us or wake us up to the bigger picture of His plan to redeem us. In light of this, it must be said again and again that sometimes our suffering has nothing to do with God, but simply are the ramifications of living in this Fallen World and with each other. With that in mind, listen to what the Apostle Paul says in his understanding of suffering in this world, who suffered at the hands of both moral and natural evil, when comparing it to the ultimate plan of God's redemption work.

Romans 8:18

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

1 Corinthians 2:9

“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him”—

Paul definitely kept the big picture in mind and saw the role of suffering in this Fallen World, and how it could participate in God’s greater plan for redemption to bring humanity to Himself. We must be encouraged by Paul’s view of God and his understanding and approach to life in times of suffering such as these.

Can God use attributes of the Fallen World?

I want to go back for a second and address something for clarity sake that I referred to earlier in the question of “Can God use attributes of the Fallen World?” God, in fact, can use attributes of this Fallen World because of His Sovereignty to bring about His will of redemption, but as I said earlier we must be careful not to attribute all tragedy to the responsibility of God. When God used attributes of the Fallen World, in all the cases I know of, it was preceded by a prophetic warning which helped the tragedy make sense from a Divine Purpose. It was a warning to get people’s attention because we all know our stubborn hearts and minds have to be reminded of our own limitations at times that only tragedy can remind us of so that we

will begin to look beyond ourselves for help and direction. As I have said elsewhere people typically don't change unless they begin to have an appetite for truth or are met in the crosshairs of tragedy. We in the context of this pandemic by no means have a prophet speaking on God's behalf warning us of disasters if we do not repent like in the case of Pharaoh. I believe God's last and final prophecy was spoken of not through a prophet but through His Son Jesus, therefore, the last warning has been given and as believers we wait for His return to judge the world and to put things back to right again.

So how are we to respond as believers now that we find ourselves in the middle of this global viral pandemic event that reeks panic and uncertainty across our world, country and individual communities?

Part 2: So How Do We Respond as Christians?

I know in discussing how Christians should respond to the situation many walls may begin to go up and ears become plugged, but what I want to discuss is not taking away your freewill to make a decision, but simply things to consider.

The first thing I want to address are more warnings against, therefore, reminding us that sometimes our approach simply isn't Christian.

Anti-Authority

What I have heard from so many who push back on either vaccines, masks, or doing any kind of social distancing is from the standpoint of being anti-authority, primarily for seeing things only through a political lens. The truth is this should never be the position of the Christian because of our faith and allegiance to Christ we recognize that He has put certain authorities over us, and one of those authorities is in fact the government.

Romans 13:1-2

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Whether we like it or not, authority has been placed over the life of the Christian, and we must be looking not to be anti-authority, but rather seeking ways to be submissive. We may be tempted to spurt out that Government and God are not the same thing, and to this there is no doubt, but notice in the verse above who put the authorities in place? Was it not God? At the time of this writing who was the authority in Paul's day? It wasn't a Caesar who was a Christian, but rather the Roman Empire breathing murderous threats against believers, and bringing many to their deaths.

I'm not saying there are not times to push back when a government is forcing things that go against the Kingdom values, such as abortion, accepting all these gender neutral nonsense pronouns, pagan views of sexuality, the view of human life like in the case of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Nazi Germany, etc., but in what we are experiencing in the context of Covid-19, I don't think such examples can be given. And in this I'm not saying there hasn't been bad choices made by those who represent Government on this issue, but we must let go of all the conspiracy theories that we so quickly hold onto without a shred of evidence. At least have strong evidence for your conspiracies if you choose to hold them, but most do not!

One further note, if there is any reason for reluctance in vaccines, mask wearing, or social distancing, it should be on the basis of the science not on the attitude of, "I'm not doing it just because you told me I should!" We must as Christians lead the way at looking at the evidence and debate the evidence in the ring of Science or on the basis of Scripture, but a rebellious spirit in general should be squashed for the simple reason it is not of Christ. It is completely respectable for someone to say I'm pro vaccine based in the research they have obtained, or for someone to say I'm not

there yet based on the evidence they have obtained, but what is not permissible is to rely on emotions, hearsay, and an attitude of “I’m willing to buck the system at all cost,” when we haven’t investigated properly what the “system” is even saying. Humility should be our attitude in all things.

What About Mandates?

What are we to make of mandates if they happen? If there is any group of people who should understand mandates the most, and why they could possibly be necessary at times, it should be Christians. We, as believers, should know the human heart better than anyone. Our very faith is based not on suggestions, but on mandates. God didn’t give us 10 things to consider or suggest to us to roll them around in our minds and get back with Him later on it, but rather commandments which are mandates. The reason we celebrate Maundy Thursday of Passion Week is on the basis of the mandate of Christ to love one another so that we could be identified as followers of Jesus. We are in fact mandated, but what is confusing to many is the mixing up of patriotism and faith. Many have forgotten their mandate to love one another because they want to fight against any and all mandates posed against their said “patriotic freedom” but our Kingdom mandates trump all earthly ones.

Humans, in fact, need mandates at times because we as sinful creatures rarely take it upon ourselves to do the righteous or the responsible thing. The examples are endless in human history to support this fact. This is in fact why God gave us mandates. Jesus submitted Himself to the authorities who mandated His very death. In human perspective, which is the way all of us at first think, we see this event as awful, unfair, and cruel, but from God's perspective we see this event as beautiful in what it accomplished in the redemptive plan.

The question shouldn't be the attitude often taken "I don't want to be mandated to do anything," because that isn't Christian, but rather we should be asking, "Am I doing the responsible thing already? Are there good reasons some authority may want to start mandating us?" For instance, if they mandate masks is it really an attempt to control our freedom to put a piece of cloth over our mouth and nose to try to prevent, as best as possible, the spread of a disease that has killed many or could kill others in the future until things get under control again, or are they simply taking measures that might protect us? It seems some have equated being possibly mandated to wear masks in the same category as being mandated to give up your guns, and obviously these two are worlds apart. Sometimes our "freedoms" have

to be taken away because our freedom of choice is going in the wrong direction. If there are two different viewpoints of what that is then it must be worked out, and sadly, war becomes the final answer in many cases.

The question for Christians shouldn't be against mandates themselves, but rather thinking through what is being mandated, if there are any mandates, or what possibly could be mandated. It seems many are pushing back against mandates themselves rather than what possibly could be mandated, and not considering if the mandate could possibly be a good thing or not. Let me give another example such as masks, if I were of the opinion they do nothing to protect us from the virus, and I'm not of this opinion, would it be worth doing it anyway for the remote possibility of saving someone's life, maybe even your loved one's life? I would stand on my head if I thought it would save a soul no matter how ridiculous I thought it was if for the slightest chance that something good could come out of it. I think we would all say, yes, if it saved one single life. We must begin to look beyond ourselves. In fact the cross is a reminder that sometimes that which appears foolish is the way to choose.

1 Corinthians 1:18

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Another element to mandates is that we already have mandates on the books called laws. We are all mandated to obey the speed limit because it's a danger to our lives if we do not. Again not all mandates are evil, and we must not be hypocritical in being so willing to accept some, and not be at least open to have conversations about others. So again I'm not saying there may not be a time of pushing back against what is being mandated, but we certainly should be open that mandates in most situations could be good things knowing the human heart as we do.

One other thing to consider, many have stated they don't like the idea of being mandated to be vaccinated by their employer or corporations of service such as airlines for instance, but we must consider both sides. Remember the signs on restaurant or convenient store doors that say, "No shoes, no shirt, no service!"? The business owner has the right to decide the stipulations of service because that is their freedom, and the customer has the right to choose a different store for business or comply to the stipulations such as wearing shirt and shoes. It is the same way regarding the vaccine. If an airline or corporation want to use their freedom that way in creating stipulations regarding this virus, they can do so because that is their freedom, it is their business, and your freedom is to do business or find

employment elsewhere if you choose not to comply. The real issue I believe, that must be considered, should be in the realm of what is the government, if any, wanting to mandate and does that infringe on constitutional rights.

Fear: Isn't Always A Bad Thing

Many will use faith as a defensive against certain measures that are being recommended in the prevention of the spread of Covid-19. Making silly statements such as “I don't need this or that because I have faith! And when God is ready for me then I'm ready to go!” On the surface that may sound righteous, but underneath it is motivated by self-righteousness because the attitude it is shared with gives that self-righteousness away. For example, if someone gets the vaccine or wears the mask, there stands the risk they will be either politicized by many or they are not acting in proper faith and trusting God. This is simply not how faith works.

Faith can be seen over and over again not in the absence of fear but in the direct context of fear. When Jesus says, “Don't be afraid!” He is directing the focus of His hearer back to Himself when the context may give good reason for fear. The storm on the Sea of Galilee was a fearful thing without Christ, and the disciples growing in their faith was still fearful even

when He was at hand. The truth is we need to be afraid of this virus. It is a natural and even wise thing to be afraid of the virus. In the same way, it is a natural and wise thing to be afraid of an electrical storm because it is dangerous and even deadly. Our faith should lead us through this horizon of fear because we realize Christ is present with us, and this should invoke worship even in a fearful context, but it does not necessarily remove the context of fear. Consider again the Apostle Paul,

Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Notice, in a fearful context of prison, Paul let his faith recognize the Lord's presence, and this caused him to worship in an unexplainable context. It would be silly to think that Paul shouldn't be afraid of prison or what the authorities were capable of, but we see Paul's victory over this fearful context in and through His faith in Christ.

It must further be noted that fear can at times be used of God as a good thing to recognize our limitations so that we can look for answers beyond ourselves. Do you think Jonah might have been afraid when the

great fish grabbed him? But as I stated earlier our ego gets in the way to try to hide our fear which are derived from unknowns and lack of control, therefore, our ego must be dealt with and often can only be dealt in forcing us to seeing ourselves in light of our fears. Fear at times can be a good thing to push us beyond ourselves and into the arms of God.

Freedom From Being Politicized

Furthermore, it seems that everything in our society is driven by politics these days. If you get vaccinated or wear a mask, you are seen as liberal to many, or if you don't, you are seen as conservative. Well, we must quit buying into the political atmosphere and political categories that has become America. We must go back to making choices based in what is morally right, the best way to love our neighbor, looking at becoming the most informed we can with what access we have, and not buying into the political noise of what is and isn't acceptable to this party or that party. We must always remember we are citizens of Heaven first and first most. Our ultimate allegiance is not to the culture wars of America, but of the progression of the message of love in the Gospel of Jesus, as New Creatures in Christ.

Personal Decision

So how do we make the right decision? Well, with anything we have to start with two basic premises:

A.) All we can do is all we can do.

B.) I don't know what I don't know.

None of us are mind readers or all-knowing, but if we are pushed to make a decision at where we are we can all do that from what we know up to that time, and we all must weigh the risks in light of that knowledge. So I'd like to pose some helpful hints that we as believers should consider in making our decisions:

- ***Do the Research & Trust Qualified Professionals:***

I must admit this is hard to do when you hear so much back and forth through the outlets offered to us. But we indeed have a responsibility to ourselves and to the ones we love to investigate, investigate, investigate. Be open to hear where people get their sources of information and be willing to research the information. Look to people you trust both locally and in all levels of resourceful outlets. We all look to professionals to give us information we either don't have access to or is not our field of study. We look to theologians for answers we are unable to obtain, and we look to medical professionals for insight on what is best for our health, but we also

have to be willing to sift through their own biases as no one is without bias. This is why two medical professionals can give two different opinions about the same evidence because as with anything it may not be entirely about the evidence so find people you trust, who want to stay as close to the evidence as possible, and do the homework because your family, your friends, and yourself are worth it.

What must not be done is accepting as true information that which is coming from an unqualified resource. How many of us have heard a rumor over and over say at the coffee shop, social media posts, the barber shop, or beauty parlor, and once we have heard it enough times we begin take it to be true. We must not be that naïve. We must look to the qualified resources when it goes beyond our limitations of understanding the evidence to seek the truth. One resource I have looked to in regards to the vaccine has been Francis Collins who is a brilliant scientist, medical doctor, and faithful believer to the Lord Jesus who is the Director of the National Institutes of Health.

- ***Look to how you can love your neighbor the best***

In situations of panic and emotion the first person we want to often consider is ourselves, but we are mandated to love our neighbor as ourselves

in the second of the two great commandments. So when we are making a decision we must make it on researched information, but then approach what is the best way to love others. For instance, if wearing a mask or socially distancing is the best way to keep a loved one safe then it would be common sense to do so even if we find ourselves not at risk. We must look beyond ourselves because all our risks are not equal, and so we must consciously think of others in the matter. As I stated earlier, I don't think standing on my head would save a life, but if there was the slightest chance it would then make a fool of me because that person's life would by far be worth it.

Philippians 2:3-5

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

- ***Be a Good Steward of Life***

We often think of stewardship in regards to money or finances, but life and time is our greatest commodity. I recently saw a meme that said the main difference between money and time is that with money you always know how much you have.

I do believe our days are numbered,

Psalm 139:16 -All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

but I do believe we are called to be good stewards of life because we never know when our days are at their end. We are also called to be good stewards in what our days are dedicated to, and to those around us as much as it is in our power, because as stated earlier, we are to love our neighbor as ourselves.

I think of the Apostle Paul writing to the church in Philippi who said...

Philippians 1:21-26

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

We must look in all ways and in all situations how we can preserve life because life is a precious gift from God, but also life is a mission for the Kingdom. I am not afraid of death, but I by no means want to die because I am a 42 year old man who is married to a very special lady with what I believe to be many more years of service to the Lord and His Kingdom here

on earth. Therefore, I want to do all that I can by means of personal responsibility to myself and to others, in light of the good science that is available to me, to take measures to preserve my life and make it useful for the Kingdom.

- ***Commit Yourself and Decisions to Prayer***

I think of the old joke when a person was sick regarding whether he should go to the doctor or just pray about it, so he asked his pastor. The pastor said both because they don't oppose each other. God made the scientist whose mission is to do the science and that's good, but also God made prayer for personal consultation.

Or the man depending on God to rescue him from the flood so he turned down the nearby fisherman as the floodwaters rose who came by in a boat. Then a little later turned down a rescue team in a rescue raft, and finally turned down the helicopter that dropped down a rope ladder. The man died and stood before the Lord and with much critique ask the Lord why didn't He save him like he knew he would, and the Lord responded, "I sent the fisherman, rescue raft, and the helicopter! Why didn't you have the good sense to use it?"

The point is we often are looking for grandiose answers to life's biggest questions when they already are before us. I believe in all things we must commit our decisions to the Lord for insight and guidance because a lot of times the answer is right there in front of us, but we are looking beyond them to the more fanciful idea in which we imagine God will come through for us. This is where we have often bought into religious fantasy, and lack wisdom.

Wisdom comes from God,

James 3:13-18

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness

therefore we must be diligent in our prayer life to look to Him for wisdom in how to navigate uncharted waters, and commit our decisions to the Lord in prayer because it is on our knees in which we see the farthest and have the right attitude in our hearts in which to approach any matter of

concern.

- ***Trust in the Lord***

Finally, the most important bit of advice is to learn daily to press the weight of your life in the Sovereignty of the Lord's control. So much in our life is beyond our control, and daily we are reminded of it. Who would have thought a few years ago that we would literally be living through a worldwide pandemic, yet here we are in this reality. Our goal daily, pandemic or not, is to learn to trust, be open to learn, and let God provide for us in all things, contexts, and situations.

Proverbs 3:1-8

My son, do not forget my teaching,
but keep my commands in your heart,
for they will prolong your life many years
and bring you prosperity.

Let love and faithfulness never leave you;
bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.
Then you will win favor and a good name
in the sight of God and man.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make your paths straight.

Do not be wise in your own eyes;

fear the Lord and shun evil.
This will bring health to your body
and nourishment to your bones.

Learning to exercise faith and trust in God is where we find rest for our souls and nourishment to our body. The passage assures us that our trust in Him will lead us down straight paths directed by Him in which He will provide what is need to make right decisions in light of truth and to love others as ourselves. We must remain humble, stay away from evil thoughts and patterns of behavior, and we will find what we are looking for which can only be found in Him.

Listen to this poem by Bernhart Paul Holst:

Whoever plants an acorn seed,
With faith that it will fill a need;
Who seeks for potence in the sod,
He lives in hope and trusts in God.

Whoever plows 'and tills the soil.
And plants the seed with earnest toil;
Who waits on nature to reward,
He lives in hope and trusts in God.

Whoever guides a youthful mind,
That it might power and wisdom find;
Who aims that sin be overawed.
He lives in hope and trusts in God.

Whoever teaches men to know.
That they must reap whate'er they sow,
Who stands for truth, unshorn, unshod,
He lives in hope and trusts in God.

Whoever leads a mighty host.
To save a cause that's almost lost;
Who pleads for right, 'gainst every odd,
He lives in hope and trusts in God.

Whoever keeps the faith secure.
Though death may hover at the door;
Who is alert, though others nod.
He lives in hope and trusts in God.

Conclusion:

So in conclusion, was God behind the Corona virus? I would say not,

but obviously He did permit it to come about, and this could be telling for two reasons. One, God lets us experience what we say we want, and humans have spoken from the beginning that we want a world centered around ourselves without God. Therefore, God allows the ramifications of this Fallen World not to be interrupted. Secondly, God may be in the process of reminding us that we need Him because our limitations are being revealed in light of these present events which in the end could protect us from a greater futuristic disaster.

Let me be clear, I am not saying I have covered all the concerns, or addressed all of the issues, but I hope this discussion or reflection will at least peaceably get a conversation going and make us think beyond what we are thinking in the present. To consider things we may have not and to help lead us into making the best informed decisions we can for the Kingdom of God not from politics. To learn how to better love our neighbor as ourself, and to quit vilifying everyone who disagrees or takes an opposing position than we do. Everyone is trying to grapple with this enormous natural event, and we do this at different speeds and with different access to the right information. Let us, therefore, practice what we have been teaching on and learning from in the series on Love reminding ourselves that Love is

Patient, Love is Kind, and we obey because Love is our King.