

Engage

Thursday 4 March 2021

God, COVID-19 and us

Thinking Christianly about the pandemic

Over the next few studies we will be looking at some of the questions raised by the COVID-19 pandemic and how, as followers of Christ, we might respond. As a framework for our thoughts we will be using Tom Wright's book, *God and the Pandemic* (SPCK, 2020). For a brief introduction see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F7IToM-hFEo> or, if you have a bit more time, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mqV8igW9COg&t=237s>.

Jesus, be the centre (Reading the Gospels)

Read Mark 1:14f; John 9, 11:1-44, Hebrews 1:1-4

1. Do you believe that God is in control? What does that control look like?
2. The heart of God's power is the self-giving love of the incarnate Son. How does this help us understand what we mean by God being in control? How does Jesus direct us to rethink the notions of kingdom, control, and sovereignty in relation to his death on the cross?
3. What is the significance of seeing our current crisis through the lens of Jesus and his ministry?
4. Jesus said, "Don't be disturbed; the end is not yet" (Matthew 24:6)? How might certain teachings about the 'end-times' contribute to our reaction in our current situation? How might such teaching shift our focus from Jesus?
5. What is the significance of Jesus weeping in John 11? How does Jesus' compassion for the weak inspire us to be compassionate for those who are suffering now (e.g., job loss, loss of loved ones, health crisis, loneliness, etc.)? Can you think of any concrete ways that you can show compassion during the pandemic?
6. Identify at least three things that you learned from this section that help you to understand how God may be present in the pandemic and how he may lead you to serve as one of his people.
7. Read the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9–13) and then meditate on the following six points: God's name, God's kingdom, God's will, God's provision, God's forgiveness, and God's deliverance. Write your own prayer in light of the pandemic.

Next time: Reading the New Testament