

Living with the Plague, Part 1 – March 15, 2020

WH notes

Romans 8:18-25

I. John 16:33. The Lord says not to panic about the condition of the world, but to trust him.

- A. In the world we have trouble.
- B. But take heart (deliberately look at it differently).
- C. Because I have overcome the world: this is the gospel.
 1. His death (removing sin)
 2. His resurrection (promise of eternal life)
 3. His ascension (certainty of his lordship over history)

II. Paul applies the Lord's message (the gospel) to suffering. Rom.8:18-25

- A. The coming glory renders the present suffering inconsequential. 18
 1. He compared it with the glory to come and said it wasn't even in the same category. Heb. 12:2
 2. This is why he uses the word for birth pangs.
 - a) The pain is unbelievable and the process is dangerous.
 - b) *But the result is new life and it is beyond worth it.*
 3. The sort of suffering able to be experienced here is not simply balanced by more joy in heaven. The glory there so eclipses this grief that they are not in the same category of experience.
- B. Because the whole creation will be resurrected 19-22. (Matt.19:28)
 1. The futility and decay have a purpose—hope of redemption.
 - a) *How so? fallen humans do not think about God until they see the futility and decay of this age. The futility and decay remind us that life must be more than we see.*
 - b) *The goal is knowing and walking with the Lord. The futility and decay in our world remind us constantly.*
- C. Which means we can live with endurance based on anticipation (hope). 23-25
 1. Patience = Greek word = endurance = bearing up under hardship, staying at our posts.
 2. *Endurance must be based on Hope, which can only be based on Grace in Christ. Endurance does not result from threats,*
 - a) *Hope based not on our performance, but on Christ's life, death, resurrection and ascension. This eternal hope is based on Grace*

III. Because we know the Lord, we can do the following 3 things during this crisis.

- A. **We can keep calm and carry on.** (poster in UK 1939 prior to blitz)
 1. Wait with endurance 23, 25
 - a) Greek word = to remain ready and waiting expectantly.
- B. **We can join our culture in groaning and serving. Jer.29:7**
 1. The world groans, and so do we. 20-23
 - a) We especially because we have the Holy Spirit
 2. We are expats in this world, but still committed to the health and welfare of our surrounding community.
 - a) Embrace the new hygiene protocols to protect the weak.
 - b) Flex with the scheduling and programming changes all over our country.
 - c) Look for practical ways to help those incapacitated by illness.
 - d) Continue giving to the Lord's work, which will increase in practical need over the next year (probably)
 - e) *Share your toilet paper...*
- C. **Above all—We can remind ourselves and the world around us of the promise of the gospel.**
 1. The Lord came and died of a much worse thing than COVID 19—so that we could live courageously, looking beyond this age by his grace.
 - a) This is how he overcame the world and it is how we live as overcomers in the world.