

Living with the Plague #3 – March 29, 2020
Three Things to Know
Romans 8:18-39

I. **The new Plague (COVID 19) has thrown the world into chaos. But as Christians, we live in what Jesus said in Jn.16:33.** We have been meditating on what it means to have “peace in Him” based on his overcoming the world.

- A. Life-threatening trouble is normal in this fallen age.
- B. But Courage and Peace are available in Christ.
- C. Because the world has been overcome by the Cross.
 - 1. The Cross/Resurrection/Ascension bring forgiveness, eternal life, no fear of the ultimate trouble—death itself.
- D. *So, peace in Christ is not the absence of trouble, or an anesthetic that deadens our senses, but the presence of a certain sort of knowledge, which produces a certain kind of life, based on confidence in a personal relationship with Christ.*

II. **When it comes to trouble, suffering, grief in this age, remember these 3 things. Rom. 8:26-39**

A. **Prayer in Christ is the most important thing we do—period. 26-27. (from last week).** We are getting all sorts of instructions, orders, and warnings regarding what to do and not do about COVID 19. But none of these is as important as prayer in Christ’s name. Three things from last week:

- 1. We are weak and ignorant about what to pray for.
 - a) Praying is a reminder of our constant dependence on God for everything.
 - b) *It is our weakness that prompts our prayer.*
- 2. So, the Spirit helps us.
 - a) He helps us Clarifying, translating, interpreting in ways we cannot comprehend (groanings too deep for words)
- 3. Based on his perfect knowledge of our minds and wills...and His.
 - a) *It is rare to know exactly how God intends to answer a prayer or even if we are praying accurately.*
 - b) *So, He gives us what we would have asked for if we knew what He knows.*

B. **Providence in Christ is the most practical blessing we have. 28**

- 1. In Every detail: All things work: the groaning, suffering mentioned in 18-25
 - a) God’s providence = his personal control of every detail.
 - b) This is how Jesus lived and taught us. Matt.6:25-34; **10:29-31**
 - c) All things—not just some things.
 - (1) Specifically, the suffering, things we do not understand.
 - d) Work together (choreographed by God)
 - (1) The things themselves are not necessarily good, but God uses them for good.
 - e) *He choreographs the chaos.*
- 2. According to His Plan. “advanced planning” Eph. 1:11; Pr.16:1, 9
 - a) His purpose = prothesis = advanced planning, preplanned methods and goals that God is doing. **Acts 2:23-24; 4:26-27**
- 3. Which is our ultimate resurrection: 29-30. Phil.3:20-21
 - a) Conformed to the image of his Son because the sovereign work has begun. (all past tense)
 - b) Foreknown; Predestined; Called; Justified; Glorified (resurrected)

C. Compassion in Christ is the most Secure promise we claim. 31-39

1. Love of God in Christ = the Father's unbreakable, eternal compassion for his people is the Love he has for His Own Son.
2. Because God sacrificed his Son to get us, there is nothing that will stop his plan for our glorification. (give us everything he intends to).
3. Nothing in the creation can undo or remove what we have in Christ.
 - a) We are chosen (elect)
 - b) We are justified (declared good)
 - c) We are prayed for—By God the Son!!
 - d) Already glorified (resurrected) in the future. Col.3:1-4

III. It's All *In Christ*. Peace in a troubled world is only really available in Christ.

- A. People who love God and have come to Christ. Jn.1:12-13; 6:29; 20:30-31
 1. In the Bible, loving God means coming to Christ.
 2. not just acknowledge His existence Jas 2:19.

IV. Two good things about living with the Plague.

- A. It forces us as Christians to unpack what we believe, see where our real hope is.
 1. Do I really believe that I have already died and my life is hidden with Christ in God? Col.3:1-4
- B. It focuses the world on the reality of death and the promise of the gospel. **John 20:30-31**
 1. It's not that people die early, but that we die at all. And Jesus Christ is the answer to that ultimate Plague—death itself.