

ISSUES & ANSWERS

Bible Answers to Contemporary Issues

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Did God Send the COVID-19 Coronavirus?

When a tragedy strikes, like the Coronavirus, there's always a lot of debate about the meaning of what's happening. Is this a judgment? Are we being punished? Did God send this? Lately, I've been seeing news coverage and responses from various religious leaders about God's role in the Coronavirus. I've spent time in prayer and in conversation with Bible scholars and here's my response, along with a brief Bible study to help you find peace in this time of turmoil.

Question: Did God send the Coronavirus?

Answer: No. Sickneses and diseases are not all caused by God because of our sin.

That raises a second question, "So why did God allow this?" I think this is the wrong question. When we ask did God cause this, or did God allow this, we are trying to assign blame for what's happening. Something MUST have caused this horrible thing, right? Wrong.

Instead of asking why, let's ask HOW. How can God use bad situations, including this pandemic? The answer to this question is one that brings HOPE!

I believe God uses times, like pandemics, **TO REVEAL HIS GLORY IN US.**

In John 9:1-3, Jesus tells us that not all disease is because of sin, but it is an *opportunity for God to reveal His power*. In 2 Corinthians 4:7-11, we see that our ability to remain, to stand firm despite pressure, reveals the power of God at work within us.

Let's look at truths about God that will help us understand why we should ask HOW God can use a situation like the coronavirus To Reveal His Glory in Us, instead of asking why this happened.

God Heals and Desires Healing

God does not want to hurt us; He wants to heal us, and He wants us to be involved in healing others. His Glory is Revealed in and through us through this healing.

Look at Exodus 15:26. God says, "*for I am the Lord, who _____ .*" How does that apply to us today?

God's healing is eternal. What does Psalm 107:20 tell us?

God's healing comes with forgiveness of our sins. Which verses in Psalm 103 speak to this promise? In Isaiah 53:4-5, the prophecy states: "*by his wounds we are _____* ." We know Jesus died to heal our spiritual illness, have you ever considered that the healing is physical as well? How does this apply to your life?

Jesus "**healed all the sick.**" (Matthew 8:16) All they had had to do was come to Him. How can we approach Jesus and ask for healing?

What does Peter say in Acts 10:38?

Jesus calls the Church is called to fight against sickness. Look at Matthew 10:8. What commands are given, and why are we to follow those commands?

What gifts do we receive according to 1 Corinthians 12:9?

Jesus wants us to be concerned for the sick. What does He tell us to do for them in James 5:14?

We cannot heal others by our own power, and we cannot heal ourselves by our own power. All Power and GLORY in healing is **God's Glory!**

God Is LOVE

If asked to define who God is to someone else, we might eventually run out of words for His greatness and GLORY. But the actual truth lies in three simple words: God is Love. Not only is the truth of God summed up in those three words, the theme of love is prevalent throughout Scripture, from creation to revelation.

What words would you use to describe God?

What does 1 John 4:7-8 say?

According to Exodus 34:6, God is:

Look at Psalm 86:5 and 86:15. What do those verses tell us about God?

Part of God's love for us is His ability to forgive. What does Number 14:18 say He forgives, and why does He do it?

In Jeremiah 31:3, we read God's words to His people. He loves us with an _____ and He draws us with _____.

According to 2 Chronicles 5:13: "*He is good; his _____.*"

Here is a TRUTH you can take to heart. God's love is infinite and eternal. It has no end and no beginning. It is bigger than anything we can imagine and any trouble we might face. GOD IS LOVE.

God Brings Good

God can bring good from any evil or suffering we might face. Look at Joseph's story as an example. Definitely a time of trouble. But Joseph remained faithful to God, and God used him and his situation for great good. Joseph said,

The Lord allowed Joseph to be sold as a slave by his brothers and imprisoned. Yet through this, Joseph came to rule the Egyptians and save them from starvation during seven years of famine. Later Joseph forgave his brothers:

"You intended to _____, but God intended it for _____ to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (Genesis 50:20).

This is far from the only instance in the Bible when God took a bad situation and brought good to the people in a way that **Revealed His Glory** and there are many scriptures that speak to God using every situation for the good of His people.

Deuteronomy 23:5 says God can turn a curse into a blessing "*because the Lord your God _____.*"

Romans 8:28 tells us, "*And we know that in all things _____ of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*"

When we face troubles and suffering, He blesses us: "*Blessed are those who mourn, for _____*" (Matthew 5:4) and "*Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the _____*" (Matthew 5: 10).

Jesus approached the issue of good and bad head on. When He and His disciples met a man who was born blind, the disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus told them that sin had nothing to do with it, "this happened so that the works of God might be _____" (John 9:1-3). Because of his blindness, the man met Jesus, was healed, and in the end, he saw the truth more clearly than the religious leaders who were blind to the power and presence of God.

So what good could God bring out of the Coronavirus? I see it all around, and I hope you do too.

- I see Followers of Jesus people worshiping wholeheartedly and more than ever before.
- I see new souls finding God's LOVE through the increased church presence online.
- I see God's people learning compassion for others and helping however they can.
- I see people learning to depend on one another and to help when help is needed.

- I see faith and love growing stronger in this time of crisis.
- I see people turning their lives over to God, relinquishing control and asking for His wisdom and guidance.

Let's look once again at 2 Corinthians 4:7-11: *"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that _____ is from **God** and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, **so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.** For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body."*

- We are hard pressed, our lives are disrupted, jobs are temporarily gone, and those we love are ill – but **we are not** _____ because of God's abounding LOVE.
- We are perplexed and confused about what is happening – but **we are not in** _____ because God can work all things for good.
- We are persecuted in the press for having faith in God instead of in science – but **we are not** _____ because God is with us.
- We have friends and loved ones who have been struck down and affected by this illness, but they and **we are not** _____ because God heals and desires healing.

We are a living testament to God's Glory.

We carry the life and death of Jesus within us.

Even now, right this minute, God is **REVEALING HIS GLORY IN US.**

Discussion Questions:

1. Scripture says God's healing is eternal. What does that mean for us?
2. In what way did Jesus' sacrifice bring us healing?
3. God never changes. His love has been constant since the beginning of time. How do you see God's love displayed in your life and the world around you?
4. What are your favorite words to describe God? How do those descriptions of Him in your mind affect your relationship with Him?
5. What is your favorite Bible story where God used a bad situation to bring great good?
6. What good do you see happening around you right now that brings GLORY to God?