

Covid, Revisited

Psalm 121 Rev 6:1-8 Matt 24:3-8, 21-22, 32-35

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Unfortunately, we are all too familiar with **COVID-19** -- aren't we? This *worldwide pandemic* has affected us all: at work, at home, at school, in our activities, and even here at church. You may have even had COVID personally, or know someone who has! **COVID** *has disrupted our lives!*

It has been almost 2 years now; **COVID** seems to have started in *January of 2020*, and spread quickly around the world. By January 21st of last year, it was on United States soil. By mid-March, it was declared a *worldwide pandemic*.

In March of last year our *worship services* were first affected. The authorities said that we had to wear masks, and we could only worship in groups of 50 or less. Within days, that number was down to groups of 10 or less. Here at Trinity, we responded in various ways; always intent on staying open and taking safety precautions.

It now appears that **COVID** may be *on the rise* again as the virus mutates. There are alpha, beta, gamma, delta, lambda, and maybe 13 other variants out there¹.

THIS IS A GOOD TIME to review some Biblical truths, to re-center ourselves, to orientate our thinking, and to put this *worldwide pandemic* in its proper place according to a Biblical, Christian worldview. **Covid is serious, but it's not the most important thing.** God has taught us how to respond to things like this and how to understand them in His Holy Word. Today let's revisit some truths from Scripture as we continue to deal with **Covid**.

¹ <https://hms.harvard.edu/news/present-future-covid-variants>

First, COVID is a Sign of the End.

We heard about the **Four Horsemen** today in the reading from the book of Revelation. The **Fourth Horseman** of the Apocalypse is **pale**² in color; the text actually says that its **greenish** in color – like when we say someone who is sick looks “*green around the gills.*” Here is the passage from Revelation:

When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a pale horse! And its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with **PESTILENCE** and by wild beasts of the earth. Revelation 6:7-8

This **Fourth Horseman**, which is **pale and green** in color, brings all kinds of destruction on the earth, including **pestilence**.³ This pestilence includes all kinds of sickness and disease, including epidemics and pandemics. We are currently getting a front row look at this **green horse**, **Covid** is a **Sign Of The End**⁴.

The **Signs Of The End** are meant to lead you to repentance. Jesus revealed the signs to us so that we would know that Judgment Day is coming and so that we would be ready. **The only way to be ready is to repent of your sin, confess it to God, and believe that you are forgiven because of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

While Covid may have a 2% death rate, sin has a 100% death rate. We die both physically and eternally because we break the **COMMANDMENTS OF GOD** in our thoughts, words, and deeds. We cannot escape that on our own. There is no mask to protect you from sin; social distancing doesn't help curb temptations. Sin is 100% fatal for every single one of us.

² The color of this horse in the Greek text is “*chlorus*” (= English Chlorophyll, which is essential in *photosynthesis*, allowing plants to absorb energy from light and stay green). It's the ghastly greenish complexion of a decaying corpse. This is the color of Death itself. It was the word that people use to describe sick people.

³ Pestilence is “a fatal pandemic disease”

⁴ Remember that the “Signs of the End” are **global and historical** – they affect all nations in various ways and to varying degrees and at various times throughout the entire end times period → from the Ascension to the Parousia. **Covid** is the latest example. There have been many “pestilences” throughout history. Here are top 10 Pandemics in history, where millions of people were affected and/or killed around the world: Polio, Typhus, AIDS, Malaria, Cholera, Smallpox, Yellow Fever, The Black Death (Plague), Influenza, and Tuberculosis. <http://www.healthcarebusinessstech.com/the-10-deadliest-epidemics-in-history>

But God sent His Son Jesus to take your place under sin. Death came to Him on the cross so that you will live! God's wrath consumed Him so that you only get God's grace and goodness. Jesus took your sin and its guilt, and in His resurrection from the dead, you are set free, you declared “not guilty!” and you are given eternal life!

Whenever you hear about the **Covid**, let it remind you of these things! Covid is a *Signs Of The End*, and it is meant to remind you of Christ's sudden return, to lead you to repentance, and to trust that you are forgiven because of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Second, Trust in God through COVID

There is a difference between **LIVING IN FEAR AND NEAR PANIC** and living in caution and being safe. Those who live in fear and near panic have no hope and no trust in a loving, caring, and watchful Heavenly Father.

In many ways, Jesus taught us that we live in a dangerous world that has many trials, tribulations, and dangers. **ALL FOUR** *Horsemen of the Apocalypse* can take your life. These things don't surprise us. As God's People, who trust in Christ, we believe in the Promises of God. You have a Father in Heaven who watches over you, cares about you, and is at work in your life for your good. You can let your light shine in this pandemic; you can live in faith and trust in God's Word and promises. Be cautious and safe, but don't **FEAR AND PANIC**.

PSALM 121 is a good place to reset and reboot. In Psalm 121, God stresses and highlights His promise to love you, care about you, and watch over you. *Let me show you... take a look at the bookmark.*

Psalm 121

¹ I lift up my eyes to the hills— where does my help come from?

² My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

³ He will not let your foot slip— He who *watches* over you will not slumber;

⁴ indeed, He who *watches* over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

⁵ The LORD *watches* over you— the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

⁶ the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.

⁷ The LORD will *keep* you from all harm— He will *watches* over your life;

⁸ the LORD will *watches* over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

Notice that six times in this Psalm, God promises to watch over you. **SIX TIMES⁵!** The same Hebrew word is used all six times: and it's the word that means *to watch over something special with constant vigilance*.

If you are really having a hard time with fear and worry about Covid, then spend some time with the Word of God and in the promises He makes to you through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a difference between being ...

- ⇒ Cautious, but not **FEARFUL**.
- ⇒ Careful, but not **PANICKED**
- ⇒ Alert, but not **RATTLED**

Check your heart on this! There are many things in this world that can take our lives – be sure to put Covid in perspective. We don't live our lives in fear of death – we live our lives to the glory of God as we love Him and serve our neighbor. Be cautious and safe; but don't live in **FEAR, PANIC, OR WORRY**. *The LORD will keep you from all harm— He will watch over your life; the LORD watches over your coming and going both now and forevermore.*

COVID reminds us that nothing in this world is stable or reliable, everything is fleeting and changing. We live in a dangerous world. **Someday, something will end our lives.** Our only hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of the world. He does not change, He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Because we have that hope, we don't live in fear of death and dying; we live in peace glorifying of God as we love Him and serve our neighbor.

As we live through this pandemic,

- ⇒ May you live with an attitude of repentance, recognizing the Signs of the End and knowing that the Lord will soon return; and
- ⇒ May you Lift up your eyes to the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth, your Father in Heaven, who promises to love you, care for you, and watch over every detail of your life. Amen!

⁵ This same Hebrew word “watch/keep” (shamar), is used 6 times in this Psalm (highlighted in red font here), and it means “to tend to something special with constant vigilance”. It is a comforting promise and a wonderful picture of God's care for you --- and it is emphasized 6x in 8 verses!!