



The Harvester

*Preparing Souls
To Serve The Lord!*

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Compassing Christ's Course Through the Chaos

Brian R. Kenyon

We are certainly living in chaotic times. It is almost surreal to contemplate what is happening in this world today. The events and the way people are responding to these events are “unprecedented.” Just think of the new, common vernacular of the day (“social distancing,” “asymptomatic carrier,” “BLM,” etc.). Most have probably never heard these terms, and the ones who have, only rarely! During times like these, it is good to reflect on God, Scripture, and the nature of this world in view of the current chaos in order to navigate through it.

Observing the Chaos

“Covid-19” (along with other terms for it) became a household name in March/April 2020, resulting in large part from its controversially being designated a pandemic and the agenda driven media’s coverage of it. No matter how a person considers the real danger of the covid-19 virus and/or the effect of the increasing mandates to wear masks, he can find pages of ample documentation to support his view. Then, just when the country was coming to grips with the corona virus, the disturbing George Floyd video surfaced. Even if Mr. Floyd were a violent criminal, there is no way that police officer should have had his knee on Mr. Floyd’s neck for any length of time (since he was already in handcuffs face-down on the pavement). No one can predict how the legal proceedings will end, but it will likely be a powder keg of more chaos!

Chaotic coverage has also led to chaotic responses to both events. Though the actual events are quite different, the reasons for reactions to them have much in common. First, both involve the agenda-driven media’s sensationally reporting only the worst in each situation. Of course, with the Floyd case, there is plenty evil to see without any further commentary. The connections and assumptions, though, that the media have made only bring out the worst of each situation. Very few African American men are murdered by police brutality, yet it is portrayed as if most people of African decent in America are targeted by most Caucasian law enforcement personnel. Concerning the corona virus, comparatively few even get sick, nonetheless die, from covid-19, yet it is portrayed almost as if it were supernatural and that everyone is doomed to die from it. There has always been violence and rumors of destruction throughout human history, yet God informs His people not to assume the worst (cf. Mt. 24:6).

Second, both covid-19 and racist approval of police brutality are said (or at least implied) to be mostly spread by invisible, “asymptomatic carriers.” This is the main cause of fear (whether real or imaginary) for the virus. People all over the world are being drilled that people do not have to be sick in order to spread the virus. In fact, they say, it is these people who are the most dangerous. That is why people are being told to self-quarantine and/or wear masks in

public. Yes, there is a slight possibility of “asymptomatic” spread, but not in the cosmic portions that are being emphasized. People are also being told that racism is an inherent part of most, if not all, Caucasian cultures within the United States. Even if these cultures show no signs, they are “asymptomatic carriers” because they are Caucasian. Much of this in both cases reveal classic examples of “If you hear it long enough, it must be true.” God said His people should examine the evidence first, then make conclusions (cf. Pr. 18:13, 17; 1 Thes. 5:21-22). Again, “asymptomatic carriers” are a possibility with viruses but very rare according to some in the medical profession. In fact, it is so rare that few people outside that field ever heard the term that is now commonplace. If racism is a heart issue (and it is cf. Pr. 23:7; Mt. 15:18-20), can it really be “asymptomatic”? True, a person can be so deceived, he does not see it, but if he truly has no hate in his heart, he cannot be racist. He may do or say things from “cultural norms” that were formulated by racists (and when he becomes aware of these, he should stop), but that does not make him a racist. Christians are not to “judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment” (Jn. 7:24).

Third, because of the above, both situations encourage people to assume the worse in others. With covid-19, all people are assumed dangerous (i.e., an “asymptomatic carrier”), and must be considered as unclean as the Old Testament leper (Lev. 13-14). In fact, some in

the pandemic have convinced people they are dangerous to themselves—a person cannot even touch his own face! If people do not wear the recommended personal protection equipment, they are labeled arrogant and unloving to their neighbors. Concerning racism, all Caucasians are now looked upon by more people as being racists until proven otherwise. Reports indicate some municipal governments/employers forced subordinates to wear “Black Lives Matter” apparel if they wanted to keep their jobs. This proposed default assumption of the worst in others is in opposition to love (1 Cor. 13:4-7)!

Fourth, both situations deliberately push for and result in severe economic damage. The covid-19 virus was deemed (almost supernaturally) too dangerous for anyone even to go outside, not to mention engage in “non-essential” work. Most businesses shut down partially and some completely, with no date of reopening in sight. “Stimulus packages” are nice, but will definitely increased national debt (cf. Pr. 22:7). The rioting and looting following Mr. Floyd’s murder was (and continues to be) devastating to many big cities in America. Making matters worse, many local governments did not resist the destruction but stood by and watched. Obviously, a Christian can still be saved if he losses his job or suffers property loss (cf. Rev. 2:10), but having these blessings in a stable government helps him “lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence” (1 Tim. 2:2).

The Harvester

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Fifth, popularly suggested remedies to both situations do not get to the real solution but lend themselves to further chaos. The primary solution to the virus is not “hazmat suits” for the entire population but a healthy immune system. The human body, including its immune system, is “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psa. 139:14). People, including Christians, must take better care of their bodies so they can effectively function as God designed. However, for many, due to various reasons beyond their control, a healthy immune system is not an option at this point. Thus, many will not feel safe again until a vaccine is developed and widely distributed. Concerning, Mr. Floyd’s murder, “defunding” law enforcement is certainly not a viable solution and has already resulted in more chaos. The only ultimate solution to racism (no matter its level of symptoms) is the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Living, teaching, and evangelizing the Gospel will influence the tearing down of any sinful barrier between relationships with God and fellow man (cf. Mt. 5:13-16; 28:18-20; 2 Cor. 10:3-5).


Keeping Christ’s Compass

So what can Christians do in the midst of all this chaos? As mentioned above, although the vehicles may be different, trouble in this life is nothing new (Job 14:1; Eccl. 2:23), even chaos (2 Chr. 36:17-20; Mt. 24:4-35). Here are some things God’s people can do to safely navigate their way through the chaos. First, remember that God exists and the Bible is His inspired word (Gen. 1:1; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Since most *Harvester* readers know this already, space will not be used to formally prove these truths. Since these are true, Christians can take comfort in knowing that God is in control (Isa. 41:10; Lk. 18:27). Christians can also know that God’s word contains all the answers to life’s situations (2 Pet. 1:3). While staying informed is good, Christians would benefit by spending more time studying the Bible and praying than by constantly watching the news and scrolling through social media (cf. Phil. 4:6-8).

Second, realize the devil is real. He is described by several terms (cf. Rev. 12:9). The most common are “Satan,” which basically means adversary (Job 1:6, 12; Mt. 16:23), and “devil,” which basically means slanderer (Mt. 4:1; 1 Pet. 5:8). The devil’s main weapon is deception (Rev. 12:9; 13:14; 20:8). He deceives people away from the truth (Jn. 8:44; 2 Thes. 2:9-12), and he deceives to separate people from God and from one another (Gen. 3:1-13; Isa. 59:1-2; Acts 20:29-30; 1 Tim. 1:20). Through all the present chaos, Christians must not allow the devil to separate them from God or from one another by becoming complacent in Bible study and worship, by becoming indifferent to the responsibility of loving and serving others, or by becoming radicalized in unscriptural extremes that result in apostasy (cf. 2 Tim. 4:10). Now more than ever, Christians must “put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Eph. 6:11)!

Third, resolve to “let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Mt. 5:16). Despite the hype, covid-19 and racism are real. Christians can have a real influence for good in both situations. They can help comfort and encourage (from a distance) those in their communities who have the virus and their families (cf. Mt. 25:34-40; Gal. 6:10). Christians must also model Jesus in their spheres of influence when it comes to helping resolve racism. They must first examine themselves and repent if they are in the sin of racism (Mt. 7:3-5; 1 Cor. 10:12). Christ’s church should lead the way in showing God’s love for all. Chaotic times often turn people’s attention from worldly instability to seeking better security. Christians have what these people seek (2 Cor. 4:7)!

Conclusion

May the chaos characterizing 2020 never happen again! As it continues, though, may God’s people keep the course His compass has set that they may reach His peaceful eternal shore (2 Tim. 4:7-8). 

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	1:00-4:15	Old Testament History (239)	Kemp	3
Tuesday	8:30-12:00	World Religions (275)	Wheeler	3
	1:00-4:15	Between the Testaments (220)	Wheeler	3
Wednesday	8:30-12:00	Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (203)	Patterson	3
	1:00-4:15	Biblical Greek I (222)	Kenyon	3
Thursday	8:30-12:00	Hermeneutics (100)	Beals	3
	1:00-4:15	Life of Paul (262)	Brownlow-Dindy	3
Friday	8:30-12:00	Hebrews (210)	Atnip	3
	1:00-4:15	Ezekiel and Daniel (214)	Richardson	3
Extension Classes				
Thursday	6:00-8:30	Romans (261) (Tenth Street church of Christ, Apopka)	Brownlow-Dindy	2.5
Thursday	6:00-8:30	Between the Testaments (220) (Orange Street church of Christ, Auburndale)	Bauer	2.5
Thursday	7:00-9:30	TBD (contact the office) (Wesconnett church of Christ, Jacksonville)	Kenyon	2.5