

COVID_19

HOW TO PREPARE

FOR NEXT WAVE

Numerous countries were forced to bring back localised Corona Virus quarantines or widespread shutdowns. Scientists believe another pandemic of a different kind will happen during our lifetime.ⁱ Whatever you think about the measures the world has taken to fight the virus, you could still be the next victim. Are you prepared?

A doctor said:

“... I long that these patients, whose respiratory systems are being decimated, have spent some time asking themselves spiritual questions before they’re wheeled through the doors of an ICU. As at this stage, it’s often too late.”

Get prepared by taking a spiritual health check:ⁱⁱ

Question 1: Are you in control of tomorrow?

Yes	No

Question 2: How would you describe your life?

Stable, Strong, Long	Uncertain, Frail, Short

Question 3: Are many things gifts from a higher power?

Yes	No

Question 4: What do you do now?

Despair	Believe

Check for the correct answers overleaf:

Question 1: Are you in control of tomorrow? **No.** While it is right to plan for your life, it is wrong to be presumptuous or arrogant about it. Health, relationships, travel, work, etc., cannot be taken for granted. They are really gifts you have no control over. The world's most widely distributed book confirms:

Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. (James 4:13-14a)

Question 2: How would you describe your life? **Uncertain, Frail, Short.** Compared with the universe, you are like a mist that appears for a while and then vanishes. Just like the steam of your boiling kettle, in no time you will be gone. The world's most translated book agrees in the same passage:

"What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." (James 4:14b)

Question 3: Are many things gifts from a higher power? **Yes.** That higher power is really the deciding factor in your plans, not you. Things like fun, family, friends, falling in love, food, fitness, are ultimately all gifts not givens. The world's most influential book explains further who that higher power is:

Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." (James 4:15)

You may ask: But what about the bad "gifts"? If there is a God, as the Bible describes him in the book of James, why does He allow so much suffering? Why does He not stop it? The world's bestseller says that God is good and perfect. When He made the world, it was only good. But something happened that brought about spiritual and physical death, pain, suffering and chaos: the first people disobeyed Him. They fell for the lie of God's enemy.

Satan promised them that by doing what he said, they would be like God. Then there would be no more need for the one who made them (Genesis 3). Since God is love He gave all people free will to be either in or out of a relationship with him. However, such decisions have consequences that frail human beings who dare to rebel against the One who gave them life cannot fully understand. That's why the details of our suffering remain a mystery for now. One thing is certain: if God who is flawless was to stop all misery, He would have to destroy all of us, because the evil we condemn lurks in everyone and sadly is often lived out.

Question 4: What do you do now? **Believe.** Believe in the Good News! It is summarised in one word: **grace**, an undeserved gift! Human beings deserve death. That is the punishment prescribed by God for disobedience towards Him. In Jesus God died on our behalf! There was no other way to satisfy the demands of His Justice and Love. In spite of the fact that "dead" people can do no more deeds, religions claim that by doing good we can pay the punishment for our rebellion against God and perhaps establish a new relationship with Him. They have a wrong, very low view of the Giver of Life. Religions also overestimate the strength of human beings to bring about lasting change.

To do good is good, but not good enough. Some people correctly desire to bring about peace on earth and care for the planet. However, everyone is falling short of what is needed and has to do better. To become better than we are now, is possible only if someone better than us enters our lives to rescue and help us. That is exactly what Jesus offers! Out of love for us, *He died so that you and I could be forgiven for the presumptions and the arrogance of our past. We regarded God's gifts as givens and acted like the man described in the book of James. He thought he had control over tomorrow and could live in his own strength, whilst ignoring the God who sustains him each minute.*

But Jesus also rose again to give us hope in the face of death. By his resurrection he says, "I will get you through death. Trust me. Invite me into your life now and I will forgive you and help you live in the best way possible. Afterwards you will be with me in eternity." The best is yet to come! That future hope is based on a past certainty. From the Bible and secular history, we know that *Jesus lived and taught and had a band of followers. He was tried in a Roman and Jewish court and sentenced to die on a cross. He was seen alive after three days!*

You are very important to God and deeply loved by him! *We plead with you to get ready now before the next wave or pandemic hits! Please ask Jesus into your life now and you will be prepared for whatever is to come. If you do, get in touch so you can receive further help. Alternatively, investigate this all-important matter. Take a course here: www.christianityexplored.org. Get in contact to ask any question you like. Our prayer is that you find hope and real answers to the questions Covid_19 has asked us all:*

info@christianityexplained.net

ⁱ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-52775386>

ⁱⁱ The publisher is heavily indebted to Rico Tice, associate minister at All Souls Church, Langham Place, London, UK. He introduced the original spiritual health check here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZW4KKCM67c&feature=youtu.be> **All words spoken by Rico Tice, including the Bible references, are in italics cursive font throughout this article.**