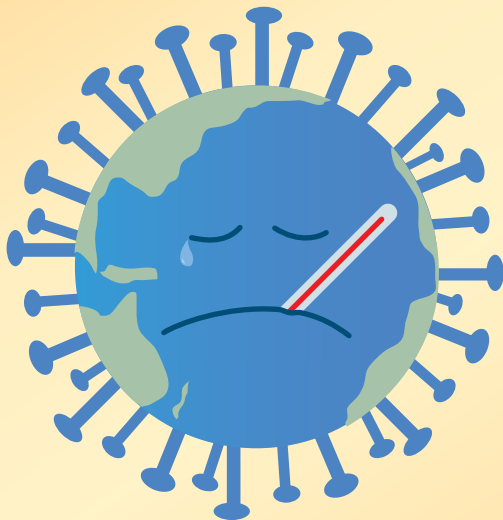


*Hope* <sup>♥</sup>



for a sad and  
suffering world.



## Can you picture life twelve months ago?

Could you have predicted that life everywhere would change this dramatically, in such a short time? For most of us, the COVID-19 pandemic has come as a shock.



COVID-19 has ravaged the world. It's caused governments and individuals anxiety and great concern. It's forced all of us to stop and take notice.

So far, COVID-19 has caused the death of over 668,000\* people worldwide and has infected over 17 million\*. Financially, it's costing economies trillions of dollars.

Governments have stepped-up their surveillance and control over their citizens. Jobs have been lost and businesses forced to close. Families have been separated, yet confined to their homes. People have been locked up and locked down. Liberties and freedoms have been restricted and removed. Financial stability and security seem shaky. Confidence is replaced with cautiousness and vulnerability. It's been life changing for all, and each one of us has been affected in our own personal way.

(\*Source: World Health Organisation as at 31/07/2020)

The initial panic, alarm and disbelief may have dissipated but what's left is confusion, concern, anger, frustration and uncertainty.

*What now? What's next?*

*When will it end? Is there still hope?*

So many questions, so much down-time to think...

## **Contemplation and comparisons**

Contemplation of COVID-19 has brought to mind SIN, and the many comparisons (similarities) between the two. Both have affected and are infecting all nations. Both are caught by people from all walks of life. Both have deadly consequences if not dealt with correctly. Both allow people to be asymptomatic—they have the disease, but have it unknowingly, they show no symptoms.

*So why consider SIN at this time...*

Well firstly, because like the pandemic, SIN affects and infects each of us personally (we were born with it). Secondly because the danger of SIN being left undiagnosed and untreated, is far worse than any case of COVID-19 (and we know how devastating COVID-19 can be!). And finally because unlike COVID-19, SIN already has a cure available. It's available now, it's available to all and that gives hope. **Hope to a sad and suffering world.**

## The diagnosis

Let's look at Paul the Apostle as an example.

Before Paul was saved, he was a very religious person. A classic asymptomatic sinner. Paul had the ideal list of religious credentials to accompany his name. Paul said of himself in *Philippians 3:4–6*, *'Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.'*

Because of his heritage and accomplishments, Paul thought he was acceptable before God. But this wasn't the case. All of his goodness and good works, (just like our own), were as 'filthy rags' in the sight of God [*Isaiah 64:6*].

See, God isn't as concerned with our outward appearance; as He is with our heart—our inner person. It's our heart—our inner being, our thoughts, our intents, our motives, that God focuses on and judges us by.

[*1 Samuel 16:7*] *'But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.'*

Paul was asymptomatic of his sinful heart, until the Lord revealed it to him on the road to Damascus. *[Acts 9]*. Where he believed, repented and accepted Christ as his Saviour.

Paul's religious peers were the ones who crucified the Lord Jesus Christ—their promised Messiah—the one they were waiting for to save them. Their own ambition and pride had blinded them to the truth of their deeds. These were a people very religious on the outside, but inwardly, they still had the deadly virus of SIN infecting their hearts. SIN which would condemn them for eternity, if they didn't diagnose it and deal with it appropriately.

Then we have the fake believers; the ones who say they believe and go and do 'wonderful works' for the Lord, but inwardly are self-righteous, religious people still lost in their SIN. These will be the 'many' who on Judgment Day say to the Lord Jesus *[Matthew 7:22]* 'Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?' And Jesus will respond... '*And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (sin).*' *[Matthew 7:23]*. Scary stuff if you fall into that category!

*Jesus said, 'I came not to call the (self-) righteous, but sinners to repentance' [Luke 5:32].*

## The despair

SIN is deadly and dangerous. While COVID-19 has infected and cost hundreds of thousands their lives already, SIN has infected all of mankind—that's billions of people.

*'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;...'* [Romans 3:23]. *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have SINNED'* [Romans 5:12].

Unlike COVID-19, the worst thing about SIN is it's 100% fatal if not dealt with correctly.

*[Romans 6:23a] 'For the wages (payment) of sin is death...'* Not only a physical death, but a spiritual death, which means eternal separation from God in a place *'prepared for the devil and his angels'* [Matthew 25:41] called Hell.

*But don't despair, there is Hope.*

## Hope

Remember the cure? The cure for SIN is already available. It's found in the Bible. *[Romans 6:23b] '...but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord'.*

The cure for SIN is available to anyone and everyone. But it's not to be taken lightly. It requires a sincere repentance of our SIN and true belief and faith in what Christ did for us on the cross. God is not mocked,

and remember He sees our heart—He knows the true believers from the fake believers.

*'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name' [John 1:12]*

*'For God so loved the world (of people), that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life' [John 3:16].*

Some think that to be cured from SIN, you must 'join a church', 'get baptised', 'do good works', 'give money to charity' etc. But the Bible doesn't say that. No. It says **'believe'**.

*'For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved (from their sin)' [John 3:17]. 'He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned (because he is a sinner and has sinned) already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God' [John 3:18].*

*Luke 13:5 states, '...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish' and [Acts 17:30] 'but now (God) commandeth all men every where to repent.'*

## Here's how...

The Bible tells us in [Romans 10:9–10 and 13] 'That if thou (your name) shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus (that he is God and that He died to pay for your SINS), and shalt believe in thine heart that God (the Father) hath raised him from the dead, thou (your name) shalt be **SAVED**' (from eternal condemnation and punishment). For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' For whosoever (that means anybody from anywhere) shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

There is only one cure for SIN. It's the Lord Jesus Christ. [Acts 4:12], 'Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.'

[John 14:6] 'Jesus saith unto him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.'

It's not by religion.

It's not by church membership.

It's not by baptism.

Baptism is '...the answer of a good conscience toward God...'  
[1 Peter 3:21]

And it is definitely not through good works...



*'For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast' [Ephesians 2:8-9].*

*'For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness (he was made a child of God by believing). Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace (by God's grace), but of debt. (that is God would be indebted to them) and that will never be. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.'* [Romans 4:3-5].

The cure from SIN is by the grace of God, not works. *'And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.* [Romans 11:6]

Yes, if we are true believers; (God's children by faith), then we will do good works... (Read [James 2:14-18]. *'[v:17]...Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.*) ...but we become Christians and deal with the deadly disease of SIN by faith.

*[Romans 1:17b] '...The just shall live by faith'.*

Faith in what though? Faith in Christ's work on the cross alone, being enough to save you from your SIN. It's not through anything we have done, but through Christ and Christ alone.

## God's concern

**God is concerned about you.**

God loves you so much (unconditionally) that He doesn't want you or anyone else to die physically and eternally from SIN. That's why He made the cure for SIN. Because He sees and knows our hearts and knows we are destitute without Him.

*[2 Peter 3:9] 'The Lord is ... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.'*

*[Ezekiel 18:23, 32] 'Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? (v:32) 'For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye'.*

The Lord God gave His very own precious Son for us, to be the cure from our SIN. Did we deserve it? No. Did we ask for it? No. But He gave him anyway because He loves us that much!

## Will you consider

I pray that you don't contract the COVID-19 virus, but I pray even more fervently, that as you and I have already been infected with the virus of SIN that you'll take and use the cure available to you.

So as we have some extra time to think these days; why not consider what Jesus said He came to earth for *'... to seek and to save that which was lost'* [Luke 19:10].

He pleads with all of us to trust Him as the cure for the deadly consequences of SIN. He concludes the Bible with an open invitation to all: [Revelation 22:17] *'And the Spirit and the bride say, COME. And let him that heareth say, COME. And let him that is athirst COME. And whosoever (that is you) will, let him take the water of life freely.'*

He loves you. He has covered the cost for you. He has made the cure. He won't force you to take it—He gives you the choice. The choice to believe and accept or the choice to reject and therefore suffer the consequences. It's your move.

*'...Ye must be born again'* [John 3:7b].

Please **TRUST IN HIM TODAY**. Be cured and be saved from the eternal consequences of SIN.

**Have hope in the One who loves you.**



All scripture quoted from KJV Holy Bible.

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