

PANDEMIC!

#2 – WHY DOES GOD ALLOW DISEASE AND SUFFERING?

I. In the Beginning, Paradise on Earth

- *We were created for a special _____ with God* – Beginning with Adam and Eve, we were created for a special and personal relationship with God that the rest of creation would not have.
- *How? We are created in God’s _____*

	<p><i>How is man created in God’s image?</i> Different from the rest of creation, only man has God’s image: a God consciousness, a moral consciousness, higher-order intelligence (logical, reasoning, problem-solving, creativity, sophisticated communication) and potential for love relationship with God and others.</p>
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- *Adam and Eve (and us!) had the _____ for an “Eden life” (Genesis 2:8)* – This life could have been paradise on Earth – the “Eden life!”

II. People Using Free Will, Caused Creation to be Cursed

- *We are free to accept or reject _____* – We are free to choose right and wrong morally, and reject His guidance. But with free will comes responsibility.
- *When we choose God’s right, He gives us _____. When we choose wrong, there are _____* – When we obey God, we receive both natural and supernatural blessings, but when we disobey God, there are negative consequences for us and often others. This disobedience is called sin.

To Adam He said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil, you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.” Genesis 3:17-18

- *Adam and Eve’s disobedience had cosmic _____* – Because Adam and Eve headed the human race, when they ate the forbidden fruit, God announced a cosmic curse on creation. It is the curse that causes creation to produce “thorns and thistles” – including natural disasters and disease – with great death and suffering. God didn’t cause it, we did. Our continual sin multiplies the suffering. Don’t blame God. Look in the mirror.
- *Our own _____ adds to the chaos* – Sin destroys our relationship God with eternal consequences. Sin damages and distorts our God-image, making it harder to know and do what is right and respond to God. Sin also causes great pain, suffering and chaos in our lives and the lives of others.
- *If God loves us, why does He allow _____?* – By God giving us free will, that very freedom requires that we experience both the good of our right decisions and the bad of sinful decisions. Otherwise, it isn’t true freedom. Also, we never would learn the spiritual purposes of right and wrong decisions and grow closer to God.

III. The Curse and Chaos are God’s Wake-Up Call

(The Lord said) “I will send wasting famine against them, consuming pestilence and deadly plague; I will send against them the fangs of wild beasts, the venom of vipers that glide in the dust.” Deuteronomy 32:24

- *The current Covid-19 China virus is a wake-up _____* – Whether God sent it or just allowed it, it is a wake-up call to turn back to Him. We need God’s guidance, protection, and blessings

as individuals, a community, and a nation. Is it just a coincidence that the areas hardest hit by the China virus in our country (such as New York, west coast) are areas farthest from God in beliefs and lifestyle?

- **Man's efforts to deal with the crisis are shockingly** _____ – As we look to the government and science to quickly solve the problem, we find that in spite of our knowledge and progress, it is insufficient. When we have pride and independence in our own efforts, we will be disappointed. This is not an attack on the brave medical personnel who battle the virus to save lives. We need to ultimately look to God and still do everything we can with God's help to battle the pandemic.

(The Lord said) "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."
II Chronicles 7:14

- **We need to seek God before it's too** _____ – The answer to our world's problems lies in coming back to God. We need to 1) humble ourselves, 2) pray, and 3) seek His face. We need revival!

Answers: I. Relationship; image; opportunity. II. God; blessings, consequences; consequence; disobedience; suffering. III. Call; inadequate; late.