LIFE IN LOCKDOWN

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It is notable that the countries that have fared the worst in this pandemic, parts of Western Europe and North America are also countries which like to tell the rest of the world how to run their affairs.
Category: Observations

Just a few thoughts inspired by the thought of another national lockdown.

It Could Be Worse

There have been memes on social media pointing out that compared to the world wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945, a lockdown for Covid isn't really all that bad. In our contemporary world, the sufferings of people in the ongoing wars in Central Africa, the mistreatment of the Rohingya, or the Chinese cruelty to the Uighurs are far worse than what we are living through in the UK.

Comparisons Don't Matter

If someone is going through a tough time, pointing out that it could be worse doesn't really help anyone. The stresses and strains that will be caused by lockdown are real and we shouldn't minimise them. People will lose their jobs, families will continue to be separated and the mental health impact of all this will be with us for years to come. This is not to say that we shouldn't go into lockdown - I'm not qualified to make that judgement - but we shouldn't minimise its impact.

Modern Myths Are Dying

We have tried to convince ourselves that human beings have transcended nature; that our science and technology would protect us in all situations. The thing is that it never could and we've had that clearly demonstrated.

Related to this is the myth that human beings are rational, scientific beings. The sight of people indulging in all sorts of behaviours that are guaranteed to spread the virus at risk to them and their families knocks that concept on the head. Similarly, the way in which science has been politicised, with people choosing simple narratives that suit their viewpoint, rather than face up to complex and uncomfortable truths is very instructive. We are above all tribal creatures, bound by group ties and identity. Science and logic comes a poor second place to all of that.

The irony of people tweeting their disdain of science on smartphones - a product of the science they claim to abhor - is palpable.

Another myth is the one of Western superiority. It is notable that the countries that have fared the

worst in this pandemic, parts of Western Europe and North America are also countries which like to tell the rest of the world how to run their affairs. Whether or not we learn any humility from this state of affairs is open to question (I'm not hopeful), but the rest of the world won't be listening to us the way that they once did, anyway.

We Need a Wholistic Gospel

The New Testament presents the gospel in many different ways. Jesus won victory over the powers of evil on the cross. The Father is reconciling all things in heaven and earth through Christ's death. Individuals can be forgiven and restored to a right relationship with God. In Western evangelicalism, we have tended to focus on the third of these aspects. I am not saying that this is not important - it is. But in a pandemic which is worldwide and which shows the way in which a fallen creation is at war with itself, we need a gospel message which is broader than just the individual. Yes, I realise that individual foregiveness is both a product and a building block of the reconcilliation of creation. Through the cross, God is going to fix this broken world and in the process, he will fix me too, if I trust him.