

For nearly a year, the world has been completely dominated by Covid-19, a highly infectious virus that has resulted in adverse health and economic effects not seen since the Spanish Flu in 1918. Everything in our daily lives which we once took for granted has now been challenged.

We should remember that viruses and bacteria have existed since the creation when everything was made perfect. Initially, all viruses and bacteria were beneficial, but man’s sin changed everything. Romans 8:22 reminds us that the whole of creation groans and travails because of man’s sin: pain, illness, and death have become normal, replacing the joy, health and life anticipated by Adam and Eve in Eden. *The curse of sin changed everything!* Plants, animals, sea-life, bacteria, etc all changed from being in harmony to being at enmity.

Some viruses and bacteria moved from being beneficial to attacking their host, and over time many have adapted to defeat man’s attempts to eradicate them. We see this in antibiotic-resistant bacteria in healthcare facilities and the annual vaccine for the latest winter flu. Recently we have seen a stark and abrupt adaptation of the Covid-19 virus to a much more infectious and particularly virulent strain that has all the hallmarks of posing a serious risk to global health and suffering to those infected. We are to expect such changes but how should we respond?

The government’s mantra has been ‘we are following the science’, especially when determining their responses to this grievous global pandemic. Science has statistically plotted the spread of the disease, and helped develop vaccines and treatments, but clearly it cannot eradicate the problem. Many scientists deserve credit for their work in response to this worldwide threat, but the greatest failure has been to leave God out of the equation. God governs and sustains His creation, but He also allows times of testing and of judgement. Do we give up when hard times come, or do we look to God to be our strength, shield, and salvation?

The fundamental flaw of evolutionary thinking is to believe that everything happens by chance, with no-one in control. A pandemic is therefore bad luck, and its consequences are simply survival (or otherwise) of the fittest. Thankfully, we have an alternative understanding when we acknowledge that God overrules history. Regarding this pandemic, is God impotent? The answer is clearly *No!* Has God challenged man’s self-confidence and open sinfulness? The answer could be *Yes!* Has mankind acknowledged God and prayerfully turned to Him with repentant hearts? Sadly, in general, the answer is *No!*

Last year, the government restrictions meant that we could not host our planned meetings, and the speakers have agreed to present their talks this year (if circumstances allow). The current infection rate does not augur well for the removal of restrictions that would allow our meetings to resume, but hopefully by June the situation will be better.

As soon as we know more information regarding dates for meetings, speakers, etc, we will be in contact via the emailing list. Please stay tuned for updates and continue to pray for the work of CMNW.

Planned meetings for 2021:

Saturday 5 th June	2 meetings at Whitehaven taken by Matthew Pickhaver (BCT) – full details to follow
Saturday 11 th Sept	2 meetings at Carlisle taken by Philip Bell and Lucien Tuinstra (CMI) – full details to follow