

Tyndale Thought for the Day

8th May 2020



“Please pray that God will slow the spread of this virus”. Seen on a website recently. In one sense it’s what we’re all praying. Why would we not ask God to slow the spread of the virus?

For many, that will be enough, never mind what old curmudgeons like me think. Still – questions; “if God can slow the virus, why didn’t he prevent it in the first place?”; “if God does slow the virus, how will we know?”; “maybe God already has slowed it, or is slowing it; maybe this is as good as it gets...”.

At which point atheists have a field day. For them the very idea of a supreme being who can be asked to affect our circumstances is bizarre. For believers, well... plenty of folk can identify specific answers to prayer; plenty of folk can’t. Prayer is more than, other than, the words that are used. Prayer is, clearly, a mystery.

Maybe the questions, doubts, “atheism”, are part and parcel, with faith, of the mystery. But back to the prayer, “please pray that God will slow the spread of the virus”; plenty of us can pray a prayer like that because they see God at work, not so much in miraculous events, but in the scientist, the statistician, the doctor or nurse, the supermarket check-out operator, the refuse collector. So let’s pray, that a vaccine will soon be found and made widely available, that in the new world there will be less greed and poverty and more kindness. Let’s pray that God will slow the spread of the virus and hasten the coming of His peaceable Kingdom.

Michael Docker