

Tyndale Thought for the Day

14th September 2020



New restrictions come into force from today, with slight variations across the United Kingdom. The hope must be that by following them Covid 19 will be reduced in scope and effect over the coming weeks, to ease the passage through the winter months.

It is difficult, though. This has all been going on for a long time. Talk is of 'Covid fatigue' and the effects on the economy, mental and physical health and social well-being is already evident.

We live in what has for a long time been known as a 'free country'. Probably, one imagines, citizens of the old Soviet Union, as well as today's North Korea, would be much better able to live with these restrictions. They are, presumably, not much worse than what they are, or were, already used to.

At the height of the USSR's power its leaders would often trumpet its success by pointing to full employment and more-than-adequate housing. The model was attractive to some in the West who saw *our* freedom as – one phrase used at the time was 'freedom to be unemployed'.

Later it became clear that the success of the Soviet economy was a myth and our freedoms were not to be taken for granted. Now? Frankly no one knows what happens when a free society introduces restrictions (beyond what's previously been accepted to keep order). Freedom, though, in Christian terms, isn't so much the freedom to *have* or *get*, or *do what you want*. It's the freedom to give.

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