

## CORONAVIRUS - SEPARATION

Death is always wrong. Every time I encounter a death, or hear of a death, I am always disappointed and feel a deep sense of wrong – death just feels wrong. There is a part of me that just wants to cry out, “This is wrong!”.

The strange thing is though, that it is not death itself or the process of dying that feels wrong; aging and dying seem natural and normal. No, it is the finality of death that feels wrong. It is the finality, the coming to the end of a relationship, that I will never see that person again that feels wrong.

If I was being honest, it is the **SEPARATION** that death brings that feels wrong, not the dying.

And this feeling of separation has been made much worse by the Coronavirus outbreak. People we know or people we have heard about who have died and who we will never see them again – separated for the rest of our lives. And for those who are mourning it has been made much worse, because we cannot be near them, we cannot comfort them, we cannot hug them. And even if someone we know has not died, there is still the impact of self-isolation and social-distancing that has amplified feelings of **SEPARATION**.

But does God – in His splendid self-isolation of heaven – understand or care? As we shed tears for deaths that should not have happened, and as we refrain from hugging our loved ones, does God really understand and care?

Well, during the Easter period, Christians remember Jesus’ Crucifixion on Good Friday and Jesus’ Resurrection on Easter Sunday. But there is a day in-between, the Saturday, called Holy Saturday. And as the old hymn says, “*His body bound and drenched in tears. They laid Him down in Joseph’s tomb. The entrance sealed by heavy stone, Messiah still and all alone*”. Jesus lay dead and all alone in the tomb on that Saturday. He was separated from his family and friends, but most of all he was separated from his Father in heaven. And God the Father felt and knew **SEPARATION** from His son, His only son, Jesus.

When we are tempted to despair, when all we want to do is cry out, “This is wrong!”, then know that God Himself has felt this very same way, and understands and cares. But also know that Jesus’ separation from his Father was to end our separation from the Father and from each other.

Therefore, in the same way that we know the lockdown will end, and that we will be reunited with each other, so we know that Jesus’ Resurrection promises an end to all **SEPARATION** forever.