TITLE: Fear Not

TEXT: Pro. 10:10; Mt. 10:28-30; Josh.1:9; Isa. 41:10,13; Ps. 46:1-3; Mt. 25:25-34; 2 Tim. 1:7; 1 Jn 4:18; 1 Cor. 8:7-13; Phil. 4:6-7

 INTRODUCTION: This morning I want to talk about something that has really spread to unprecedented proportions within our nation and the world as a whole today and that is fear.

 Fear of the Pandemic of Covid 19, fear of all the social unrest and division within our nation today, Fear of the uncertainty of our times

 Most often the Greek word used for fear in Scripture is:.

 phobos: panic flight, fear, the causing of fear, terror*/phóbos* ("fear") means *withdraw* (*separate* from), i.e. flee (remove oneself) and hence to *avoid* because of *dread* (*fright*).]

 This is certainly a definition of the fear Covid-19 has caused within many in our nation today. *withdraw* (*separate* from), i.e. flee (remove oneself) and hence to *avoid* because of *dread* (*fright*).

**Webster fear** 1a **:** an unpleasant often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger**:** anxious concern **:** [solicitude](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/solicitude)3**:** reason for alarm **:** [danger](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/danger)

 Contrast with the word concerned-

**Concerned:** anxious, worried-- concerned for their safety Concerned citizens protested the mayor's proposal.

Both fear and concern can be either positive or negative emotions…

 For a child the fear of pain can be positive to keep them from sticking their hand in a fire.

 It can be a negative emotion if they don’t fear the punishment if caught and go ahead and steal the candy bar form the store.

 So this morning I want to look to Scripture to find the balance between a healthy and an unhealthy fear.

There is only one thing that we are called to fear as Christians in the Word of God and that is God Himself!

**Proverbs 10:**[**10**](http://biblehub.com/proverbs/9-10.htm) **The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom..**

Jesus says in: **Mt. 10:**[**28**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/10-28.htm)**-30 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.**

 **Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.**

 Jesus says we all need to have a healthy fear of God but then goes on with words of comfort…

[**29**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/10-29.htm) **Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care.** [**b**](https://biblehub.com/niv/matthew/10.htm#footnotes)[**30**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/10-30.htm) **And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.** [**31**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/10-31.htm) **So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.**

 What was Jesus instruction to us? Fear God, have an awesome respect for Him but fear nothing else! God has our back!

 One thing that we need to understand is that fear is a primary tool and scheme that the devil will use against us to try to separate us from God and from doing God’s will.

 After Moses had died and Joshua was given the task of leading the Israelites into the Promised Land, a Bountiful land described as a land flowing with milk and honey but also a land possessed by many hostile nations with armies and weapons a lot more formable than what Israel has at the time. Joshua might have found fear enter his heart because of those facts.

 So God has these words to speak to Joshua in: **Joshua 1:9 ESV Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”**

 Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

The understanding of this fact enabled Joshua to boldly then lead the Israelites across the Jordan and see all the nations driven out and conquered before him.

 In the midst of the Great depression the unemployment rate was over 25%. ¼ of all Americans were out of work. Great fear gripped the nation. There were long food lines and many lost their homes and farms…

 It was in this environment that Franklin D Roosevelt made a campaign speech to America in 1935

 “*I am certain that my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency I will address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our people impel. This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today.*

 *This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has met with that understanding and support* *of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.*

The words memorialized in Roosevelt’s address are: *The only thing we have to fear is fear itself…*

 And from a Christian perspective this is a great statement of fact and of our faith… The only thing we have to fear is fear itself

There are many admonitions to us from God within the pages of Scripture to “fear not”.

**Isa 41:10 fear not, for I am with you;
    be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
    I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.**

 One reason that we should not become fearful in this world is because of this promise of God…**fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.**

**Isaiah 41:13 ESV I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, “Fear not, I am the one who helps you.”**

 **Ps 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.** [**2**](http://biblehub.com/psalms/46-2.htm) **Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,** [**3**](http://biblehub.com/psalms/46-3.htm) **though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.** [**c**](https://biblehub.com/niv/psalms/46.htm#footnotes)

 **God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.** [**2**](http://biblehub.com/psalms/46-2.htm) **Therefore we will not fear!**

 Do you realize that fear is the great displacer of our faith?

I don’t believe we can be fearful and faithful at the same time.

 One will always displace the other…They are like oil and water—they do not mix!

Example: When I was a manager for Dahls foods I used to work the closing shift most of the time. We tried to run a tight ship especially where payroll was concerned. 90% of our help was part time. Most evenings help like baggers and cashiers were younger people. By definition they needed a lot of supervision..

 If you keep people busy they usually can stay out of trouble.

 If teenagers stand around with nothing to do they will find ways to get into trouble. So in the evenings if things slowed down a lot on the front end and the older guys I had watching things run out of jobs to keep the younger guys busy I would start sending people home early. Problem sometimes was that it would then get busy later on and the remaining employees would have to work a lot harder. So sometimes my front end watchers would get creative on keeping people looking busy.

 We had a new bagger working on one of these particular nights. Everything on the front end was done so the guys I had running the front end for me told this kid to go over to the salad dressing isle and shake down the salad dressings.

 Salad dressing like Italian dressing is made up of water, oil and spices. I don’t care how hard you shake them up in about 5 minutes they will separate in the bottle again.

 I come out of the back room and see this kid going down the salad dressing isle shaking the heck out of the bottles and then putting them back on the shelf. I watch him for a few minutes then ask him what he is doing. With a big prideful smile he says I’m shaking down the salad dressing. I look up front and see my guys laughing their heads off. So I say to the young man “and a fine job your doling”. I just shake my head as I pass by the guys that had him do it.

 No matter how hard he would shake those bottles they would not stay mixed.

 Fear and faith and faith and fear are the same way! They will not mix! One will displace the other….

Jesus teaches this principle in:

 **“Mt. 25:25-34 Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?**

**26Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? 28And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, 29yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. 33But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.**

 Worry, anxiety is the direct result of fear..

 So Jesus says: Don’t worry but trust God…

**2 Timothy 1:7 ESV For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.**

Example: Heard a story about a man that had had Covid-19 and had fully recovered. Got a second Covid test that showed he was clear of the disease and for his work he even had an antibody test to make sure is was immune. He goes into a store not wearing a mask as he feels he cannot get it or spread it and a lady about 20 feet away from him walks up to within about 3 feet of him and starts screaming at him about his not wearing a mask.

 Do you think that lady maybe had let fear consume her? Or was she being reasonable?

 I don’t know that either individual was a Christian or not. If they were possibly they were both in the wrong. They lady for letting fear consume her and the man for possibly not thinking that others would not know his personal history.

**1 John 4:18 ESV There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.**

A verse of Scripture maybe we all need to take to heart whenever we are tempted to become fearful about anything as a Christian..

 **Joshua 1:9 ESV Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”**

As Christians we should never let our hearts become fearful because fear will displace or weaken our faith.

 But there are times when we should be concerned.

 A Christian should always show concern for others.

 **There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.**

 Paul talks about this love further in 1st Cor. 8 when talking about the weaker Brother or sisters conscience..

**1st Cor. 8: 7-13** (NLT) **However, not all believers know this. Some are accustomed to thinking of idols as being real, so when they eat food that has been offered to idols, they think of it as the worship of real gods, and their weak consciences are violated.** [**8**](http://biblehub.com/1_corinthians/8-8.htm) **It’s true that we can’t win God’s approval by what we eat. We don’t lose anything if we don’t eat it, and we don’t gain anything if we do.** [**9**](http://biblehub.com/1_corinthians/8-9.htm) **But you must be careful so that your freedom does not cause others with a weaker conscience to stumble.** [**10**](http://biblehub.com/1_corinthians/8-10.htm) **For if others see you—with your “superior knowledge”—eating in the temple of an idol, won’t they be encouraged to violate their conscience by eating food that has been offered to an idol?** [**11**](http://biblehub.com/1_corinthians/8-11.htm) **So because of your superior knowledge, a weak believer for whom Christ died will be destroyed.**

[**12**](http://biblehub.com/1_corinthians/8-12.htm) **And when you sin against other believers by encouraging them to do something they believe is wrong, you are sinning against Christ.** [**13**](http://biblehub.com/1_corinthians/8-13.htm) **So if what I eat causes another believer to sin, I will never eat meat again as long as I live—for I don’t want to cause another believer to stumble.**

 Again, fear shows a lack of trust in God but concern is an attribute of God and a manifestation of Love.,

 We live in a very troubled world today. The devil has taken fear to new heights in our world.

 As Christians God has called us to not be agents of fear but agents of His grace within our world…

 How can we do that?

Paul says this in: **Philippians 4:6-7 ESV Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

 If our nation and our world need anything today we need the peace of God…..

 How do we get that? **Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.**

 The result if we do…**And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

Church, In all the turmoil of the world in which we live today take comfort in God’s Word to us today and everyday…

The only thing we have to fear is fear itself…

**Isa 41:10 fear not, for I am with you;
    be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
    I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.**