

## Fear Not

ETS: Jesus told His disciples to “Fear Not”

ESS: Why should we “Fear Not”

OSS: I want people to follow this command

PQ: If you are afraid, why?

### ME

There is so much to be afraid of!

- Coronavirus is what is on everyone’s mind right now.
- The first person reported to have died from the Coronavirus was a man in Wuhan China on **January 11, 2020**.
- The virus has spread to the United States
  - As of yesterday, **March 14, 2020: 51 people** have died in the United States from the virus.

In two months, we have gone from 0 to **51 deaths** from this new virus in the US in the last two months.

There is so much to be afraid of!

- The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that as of **January 18, 2020**, there have been 15 million cases of flu, **140,000 hospitalizations**, and **8200 deaths** in the US this influenza season 2019-2020
  - 54 of those deaths have been children

- That was 2 months ago, so there have obviously been more!
- About **90 people die every day** in the U.S. from **vehicle accidents**.
  - Every day, almost **30 people in the United States die in drunk-driving** crashes — that's one person every 50 minutes.
- In **2018**, an **estimated 1,735,350 new cases of cancer** will be diagnosed in the United States and **609,640 people will die** from the disease.
  - So, approximately 100,000+ have died from cancer in the US since **January, 2020**
- About **647,000 Americans die** from heart disease each year—that's 1 in every 4 deaths.
  - So, approximately 105,000+ have died from heart disease in the US since **January, 2020**.
- Stroke kills about 140,000 Americans each year.
  - So, **approximately 23,000+ have died from stroke** in the US since **January, 2020**.
- In **2017**, diabetes was mentioned as a cause of death in a total of 270,702 certificates.
  - So, **approximately 45,000+ have died from diabetes** in the US since **January, 2020**.
- The CDC estimates that **83,000 people die of Alzheimer's** in the US each year

- So, **approximately 13,000+ have died from Alheimers** in the US since **January, 2020.**
- From **2017** statistics, Number of deaths from chronic lower respiratory diseases (Emphysema, Bronchitis, COPD, asthma) in US: **160,201**
  - So, **approximately 26,700 + have died from chronic lower respiratory diseases** in the US since **January, 2020.**

There is so much to be afraid of-even if you are YOUNG!

Injuries are the leading cause of death among Americans aged 1 to 44 years, according to the CDC

- Each year in the United States, one person dies from an injury every 3 minutes, resulting in 214,000 deaths.
  - Injuries include Fire, Drowning, suffocation, environmental causes, ATV's or animal drawn vehicles, etc.
    - So, **approximately 35,000 + have died from an injury** in the US since **January, 2020.**

There is so much to be afraid of!

WE

It is so easy to be **afraid!**

## I struggle with fear

- Fear of **future**...for my son and his children
- Fear of **finances**....will I have enough to retire (SS not going to be around or very much!)
- Fear of **failure**....

## I bet YOU struggle with fear!

- Fear of catching **coronavirus**
- Fear of losing income due to **stock market plummets**
- Fear of losing your business due to things closing down
- Fear of running out of **toilet paper!**

Without the coronavirus scare, you may struggle with fear!

- Fear of the future
- Fear of finances
- Fear of failing in your marriage, your business, your schooling

We all have different fears—especially at different stages of our lives.

**GOD**

## Series: “Questions Jesus Asked”

- Jesus would ask questions of people!

### Why ask questions?

- Questions demand an answer
- Questions make us think

IF you are afraid, ask yourself “Why am I afraid?”

- Why am I afraid of **catching** this **virus**?
  - Am I **afraid** of **dying**?
    - If I am afraid of dying, why am I afraid of dying?
      - Am I afraid of where I’ll go if I die?

IF you are afraid, ask yourself “Why am I afraid?”

- Why am I afraid of the stock market plummeting?
  - Am I afraid I’ll not have money for retirement?
    - How much money do I need to retire?
    - Am I living beyond my means now?
    - Have I not been wise in investing?

Jesus would often ask people questions to get them to confront their responses, feelings and actions.

The question Jesus asked today is in **Mark 4** (The second Gospel in the New Testament)

Background:

Jesus was becoming very **popular!**

- He **healed** Peter's **mother-in-law** (very impressive)
  - That night, healed ***all*** who were **sick...drove out demons**

Apparently, the **next day** the crowds show up ready for **more miracles** and **healings!**

- Apparently, Jesus healed people **all day**, drove out demons

**Mark 4:35–41 (HCSB)** “**On that day** (The day when Jesus had been doing a lot of healing), **when evening had come, He told them, “Let’s cross over to the other side of the sea.”**”

- **Location: Capernaum:** a village on the **N shore** of the **Sea of Galilee**
  - **Sea of Galilee**
    - A **freshwater** lake nestled in the hills of northern Palestine.
      - **13 miles long** north and south and **8 miles wide** at its greatest east-west distance.

- Because of its location, it is subject to **sudden** and **violent** storms that are usually of **short duration**.

**Reality:** Sometimes you have to **take a break....even Jesus needed to take breaks....**

- Jesus didn't have **trick-out black Esclades** He and disciples could hop in and speed away
  - Jesus' **common way of** escaping crowds was to get into a **boat** and get away

**36** So they left the crowd and took Him along since He was already in the boat. And other boats were with Him.

- Jesus was ready to go!

**37** A fierce windstorm arose, (very common on the Sea of Galilee) and the waves were breaking over the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped.

- **Mark**, the author this Gospel, was not there
  - **Mark's main source** was probably Peter
    - **Peter** was a die-hard, **experienced fisherman** who fished on the Sea of Galilee
      - When **Peter told Mark** that this was a "**fierce windstorm**" it was a fierce windstorm!

38 But He was in the stern, sleeping on the cushion....

- Maybe Jesus was “Play sleeping”?.....
- Maybe Jesus was really sleeping!
  - If He was, He was very **exhausted** from **healing** and **teaching** all day!

Storm must have been **severe**.....even for **experienced fishermen!!**

- “....So they woke Him up and said to Him, “Teacher! Don’t You care that we’re going to die?”
  - **They** had already **determined** their **fate!**
    - They had decided that, unless Jesus woke up and intervened, they were going to die!

**YOU** may know exactly what they are feeling!

- You have prayed about something and Jesus seems to be “**Sleeping**”
- You have-**or are-questioning** whether God really **cares!**
  - You may have prayed “**Don’t you care God**”?

Today, the President designated this a **National Day of Prayer** for the virus situation

- On Twitter, I saw that many people have **mocked** the idea of prayer
  - “What’s prayer going to do to fix this?”

- “How can prayer help?”
- Or, “If no one dies after today, then I’ll believe prayer helped”

You may feel that way about praying today for the situation!

You may have questions like:

- Does God really care that people are dying?
- Why is God asleep as the storms of life are hitting us?

Two premises:

- **God does care**—which is why He provided deliverance from your rebellion against Him
- **God doesn’t always act in our timing**
  - Sometimes God allows us to go *“To the end of our rope”*

*Prayer ISN’T about making God DO something; Prayer is about submission to God’s will!*

- If you don’t believe me, look at how Jesus prayed!

When the **STORMS** of life hit, the **WORST** thing you can do is **give up on God!**

- You are **NOT PUNISHING God** by **turning your back** on Him
  - *God doesn't need you!* ....which is precisely what happens next is so incredible!

Jesus could have **ignored** them, but....

<sup>39</sup> He got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Silence! Be still!" The wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

- Again, notice "**there was a great calm**" – Everything was dead silent!
  - One moment the boat is **swamped**, the next it is dead **silent!**

Then Jesus asked a **two-part question**: <sup>40</sup> Then He said to them, "Why are you fearful? Do you still have no faith?"

Why are you fearful?

- **fearful** = **Deilos** = **timid/cowardly**
  - **Adjective** describing them!

Why are YOU, (people who claim to follow ME, people who claim to believe that I am the Messiah,) fearful?

- Jesus is asking **WHY** they are allowing a **STORM** to **SCARE** them!

REASON they were fearful...

- **REASON:** The **boat** was **taking** on **water**
- **REASON:** They thought they were going to **drown!**
  - **REASON:** They thought they were going to **die!**

The second part of Jesus question is biting: Do you still have no faith?"

- NOT, "Do you have no faith"
  - Do you **STILL** Have no faith?

Why would Jesus ask such a **harsh question** to a group of **scared people?**

**Timeline:**

- They are **newly-minted** followers of Jesus!
- Jesus has just recently **finalized** the **group of 12**
  - They had seen Jesus **heal** people and **cast out demons**, *but never seen Him deal with nature!*
    - Naturally **thought** there was a **limit** to His **power**

Now, they had **just seen Jesus rebuke the wind**, and tell the sea, "Silence! Be still!" AND the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

Having just seen Jesus' power over nature, **they ask a question to each other!** <sup>41</sup> **And they were terrified and asked one another, "Who then is this? Even the wind and the sea obey Him!"**

If I took a **poll**, chances are the **majority** of you are scared to death of doing what I am doing---*speaking in front of people!* If that is you, you may have....

- **Glossophobia:** Performance anxiety, or the fear of speaking in front of an audience.

There are a lot of fears people have:

- **Acrophobia:** The fear of **heights**. People with this phobia will avoid mountains, bridges, or the higher floors of buildings.
- **Claustrophobia:** The fear of **enclosed** or **tight** spaces.
- **Arachnophobia:** Fear of **spiders**.

There are all sorts of **phobias** like....

- **Dentophobia:** Fear of the **dentist** or dental procedures.
- **Pogonophobia:** Fear of **beards**
- **Soceraphobia:** Fear of **in-laws**
- **Leukophobia:** Fear of **color white**
- **Octophobia:** Fear of the figure 8

- **Hydrophobia**: fear of **water**.
- **Xenophobia**: Fear of strangers or foreigners

These followers of went from one fear to another fear!

- 1<sup>st</sup> Fear: Afraid they were going to die!
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Fear: Afraid of WHO Jesus really was!

“And they were terrified”

- “**Terrified**” = **Phobos** = Lit: **Mega fear!**

They went from cowardly fear (“we are going to die) to MEGA Fear: “Being terrified!”

WHY did they go from being **cowardly** afraid to being “**Terrified**”?

- They realized that **Jesus’ power extended** to the ability to control the natural **elements** of the world

Two groups of people:

- Those who claim to believe Christ is the Savior
- Those who don’t believe Christ is the Savior

**Group 1:** Those who claim to believe Christ is the Savior

- Jesus question: “Why are you fearful? Do you still have no faith?”

IF you truly believe that:

- There is a God
- You have rebelled against God
- You need to be delivered from God’s judgement on your rebellion
- Christ died for your rebellion
- Christ took the punishment that you deserve

IF you truly believe that:

- Christ is God’s gift to humanity
- Deliverance is available to all who personally receive God’s gift (Jesus Christ) as their deliverer

Then **“Why are you fearful?”**

- You have **no need** to be **fearful** of **death**—You have been given eternal life through Christ!
- You have no need to be **fearful** of **God’s judgement** on your **rebellion**—Christ took your place.
  - You are **“holy and blameless”** in God’s sight through Christ!

If you are afraid, either you....

- Are just playing a game and have NEVER been truly transformed by Christ
- Stopped focusing on Christ and have started focusing on yourself!

**Group 2:** Those who **don't believe** Christ is the Savior

For you, Jesus' **second part** of the question applies: Do you still have no faith?"

Why don't you believe?

- Argument: I don't have enough evidence
  - Me: What kind of evidence will it require?
  - ME: What kind of evidence do you demand to believe anything?
    - Will you accept **eyewitness** evidence from multiple sources and multiple groups of people?
    - Will you accept **empirical** (physical) evidence like an empty tomb?
    - Will accept evidence from **multiple sources** regarding the person Jesus?

If you don't believe, then when (Not if) you lay dying, what is your answer to:

- Where are you going after you die?

- Is it just like a light switch and then you cease to exist?
- What was the purpose of your life?
  - Is life ultimately meaningless?
- Why did you exist to begin with?
  - Are you just a cosmic accident?

## WE

Two types of People:

- Those who live in **fear**
- Those who live in **peace**

Jesus did what He did to teach the disciples!

- Allowed **storms** to happen to teach them about His power over nature
- Allowed **sickness** and struggle to teach about His power over sickness
- Allowed Himself to be **crucified** and to **raise** again to teach them about His power over sin and death

Jesus did what He did to teach the disciples so that after the resurrection, they...

- Lived in **boldness** not fear
- **Faced difficulties** in life with hope, not fear
- **Faced death** with confidence, not fear

Two types of People:

- Those who live in **fear**
- Those who live in **peace**

As we have been facing this pandemic, HOW have you been reacting?

- Fear or peace?

When you face the struggles in life—you get that terminal diagnosis—How are you going to react?

- Fear or faith?

I had a classmate whose father passed away yesterday.

**With her permission**, I want to share what she wrote throughout this journey regarding her father:

**March 11:** My dad has had two very difficult days. Please lift him up in prayer that he will be able to sleep and not be in discomfort. Thank you for praying for his stomach issues, those have subsided. We sang some of his favorite hymns to him today. This truly is the most difficult thing I have ever gone through. Our Lord hears and answers prayers!

**March 13:** “The past several days have been so heartbreaking. Our dad is slowly shutting down. He is ready to meet his Savior. This is so gut wrenching for me and our family, yet we know our Lord has a perfect plan. What a glorious reunion it will be when my dad meets his Savior face to face and embraces my brother. We lift him up to our Lord. Although a part of me is dying, I’m thankful to have had the best dad ever, role model, pastor and more. Please keep our family in your prayers. It won’t be goodbye, it’s till we meet on the other side.

**March 14:** “UPDATE ON MY DAD.....to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. Our dad has been united with his Heavenly Father and his son Eric and with all those that came to know Christ through his testimony and love for the Lord. He will hear” Well done thy good and faithful servant”. I love you dad. I will always be your baseball girl and your biggest fan! Until I see you again.”

When you face the struggles in life—you get that terminal diagnosis—How are you going to react?

- Fear or faith?

If you are in **Group 1:** YOU claim to believe Christ is the Savior BUT you are living in fear

- Jesus question to you is: “Why are you fearful?”
  - Is your faith real or faked?
    - If “Real” then “Why are you fearful?”

If you are in **Group 2**: You **don’t believe** Christ is the Savior

- Jesus question to you is: “Why do you still have no faith?”

What are you afraid of?

- Afraid of admitting you need a deliverer?
- Afraid of admitting you are accountable for how you live your life?
- Afraid of what people will think
- Afraid of what you might need to give up?

Is your PRIDE worth it?

Is your FEAR worth it?

YOU will never experience PEACE or HOPE when you face life’s realities as long as you are running away from God!

STOP living in fear!

**PQ: WHY are you Afraid?**