

FEAR < LESS

DEFEATING FEAR DURING THE VIRUS

Valley Forge Baptist • March 22nd, 2020
Pastor Scott Wendal • Psalm 97

Near the end of the period called the Tribulation, Jesus said...

"Men's hearts [will] fail them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth..."

Luke 21:26

The Corona Virus or COVID-19 has brought a universal fear to most of the nations of the world. But there is a greater enemy than any virus or disease that can bring physical death and that is the second death. The apostle John graphically described the second death...

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Revelation 20:14-15

Jesus Christ came into this world not primarily to deliver us from the common cold, or flu, or viruses, or cancer, or heart disease. He came to deliver us from the eternal penalty of sin. He came to forgive us of our sin against God and restore our broken relationship with Him. One day we will be delivered from all sickness, disease, and death in heaven.

Psalm 91 was written to help us navigate through uncertain times and give us hope that God is still in control of the world. Those who abide in the presence of God can claim three reassuring promises.

1. We can find Protection in the middle of _____, v. 1-4, 11-13

There is no way to isolate yourself or your family from every danger in life. To dwell on every danger in life is to live in fear.

The Psalmist answers the questions...

A. Who will be protected from danger? v. 1

Those who “dwell” – it means to remain or to sit beside. It has the idea of permanence. We can live in the conscious presence of Christ.

“the secret place” – a cove, a secret hideaway.

“the shadow of the Almighty” – sheltered by God. This carries the idea of closeness and intimacy with God.

Sheltered in the Arms of God

*I feel the touch of hands so kind and tender;
They're leading me in the paths that I must trod.
I'll have no fear for Jesus walks beside me;
For I'm sheltered in the arms of God.*

*So let the storms rage high; the dark clouds rise;
They don't worry me;
For I'm sheltered safe within the arms of God.*

Hillary Scott

B. How will we be Protected from Danger? v. 3-4

- 1) Our God will personally deliver us, v. 3a
- 2) He covers us under His wings, v 4

Look specifically at what protects us – His truth. God's truth.

It has been amazing at the onslaught of the Corona Virus information coming at us. Facts, opinions, guesses. We're not always sure who to trust?

Uncertainty brings worry, fear, panic, and anxiety.

How do we respond in uncertain times?

We find our protection in the Lord and believe His Truth.

1. God is Sovereign.
2. God knows the future.
3. God loves us.
4. God protects us in His will.
5. God has angels to protect us, v. 11, Hebrews 1:14.

If this protection is true, then why do bad things happen to good people (like Job)? v. 13. Bad things do happen to God's people, but we know that if it does happen, then God has allowed it to happen as a part of His will.

2. We can experience Peace in the Middle of _____, v. 5-10

v. 5 – terror, arrows; v. 6 – pestilences. They can come in the day or at night. We all have a danger sensor. Sometimes it is too weak and sometimes it is too strong – or oversensitive. If your danger sensor is oversensitive, then it is time to meditate on God's truth. Meditate about God and who he is and what He has done and is doing. Meditate on His protection. Think about all of the mighty things that God has done in our midst – even recently so many people getting saved and baptized.

His Truth is our shield and buckle. Whether there is turmoil in the country or the world or in your life, God's truth will give you great peace.

3. We can learn to trust in the middle of _____, v. 14-16

v. 14a – Because He loves me.

v. 14b – Because He knows my name.

Six Incredible Promises for Fearful Times:

- 1) I will deliver him, v. 14
- 2) I will set him on high, v. 14
- 3) I will answer him, v. 15
- 4) I will be with him in trouble, v. 15
- 5) I will deliver him and honor him, v. 15
- 6) I will satisfy him, v. 16

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

1 John 4:18

What are my Next Steps?

1) Come to Christ.

The greater danger to your life and heart and soul is not a virus, but sin and its eternal consequences.

2) Do NOT allow fear to rule your life.

Instead of fear, find your way to shelter – God is your shelter. Overcome fear with faith – with trust.

Yes, we are to take protective physical measures. Social distance. Wash hands, etc. But stay connected to your church family – children, teens, singles, church, online devotionals, ABF, and online services.

3) Run to the Scriptures.

4) Be an Ambassador for the Lord.

Be honest about your fear and describe to others how the Lord has helped you overcome your fears. _____ with others how you are not dominated by fear because of your faith in Jesus Christ.