

A BETTER WAY: Week 6

Engaging a Culture of Fear with Confidence

Matthew 10:26-31

1. Summary

We live in a culture plagued with fear. Fear of being alone. Fear of what we don't know about others' intentions. Fear of what we don't know about our future. Fear of losing everything. Fear of being insignificant.

In Matthew 10:26-31 Jesus gives us good news that in him we don't have to be afraid. We're not alone; we're with Jesus. The unknown will be revealed about others and ourselves. We can't lose everything because our souls are eternal. We are of great significance to God.

What's more, Jesus can replace our fear with confidence. Confidence that the eternal God is with us in life and death. Confidence to love others rather than to fear them.

2. Introduction

a. Welcome

- i. Baptism today
- ii. Next series: Spiritual Formation

b. Series setup - A Better Way

- i. Week 1: Distress - Compassion
- ii. Week 2: Individualism - Hospitality
- iii. Week 3: Power - Wisdom
- iv. Week 4: Self-Preservation - Sacrifice
- v. Week 5: Hatred - Endurance

c. Today: Stories of Fear

- i. My journey of recognizing fear
- ii. Fear of being alone
- iii. Fear of the unknown - about others (enemies) and ourselves (future)
- iv. Fear of losing everything
- v. Fear of being insignificant

d. What do we do in a culture like this with stories like this?

- i. Not easy to answer, but we get some grounding in Jesus.

3. Jesus gives us good news.

a. You don't have to be afraid.

i. Four Reasons (Four "Don'ts) (Good News for You)

1. **You're not alone; you're with Jesus (26a).**

- a. Living alone
- b. Isolated in relationships
- c. Don't fit in
- d. Jesus is your companion.

2. **The unknown will be revealed (26b).**

a. About others schemes

- i. Personal: "they're talking about me"
- ii. Culture: differences scare us
- iii. Culture: news outlets exploit - you need our info!
- iv. Parties exploit - conspiracy & misinformation
- v. **Isaiah 8:12-13.** Do not call everything a conspiracy that these people say is a conspiracy. Do not fear what they fear; do not be terrified. You are to regard only the Lord of Armies as holy. Only he should be feared; only he should be held in awe.

b. About your future

- i. FOMO
- ii. Gospel
- iii. **Ephesians 3:2-6 NIV.** Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers

together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

3. **You can't lose everything because your soul is eternal (28a).**

- a. Fear of loss = work, voting, avoid hard conversations
- b. Hostility is certain. Martyrdom is possible. But that's it.
- c. Loss in this life isn't ultimate.
- d. Eternity changes everything.

4. **You are not insignificant; you are of great worth to God (31).**

- a. More than lots of birds.
- b. He has recorded every hair on your head (30).
 - i. Knows you far better than you know yourself.

b. You can have confidence.

i. Two directions (Two "Do's")

1. **Upward: Your fear of people can be replaced with fear of God (28).**

- a. Irrational for rational
- b. God can destroy your soul.
- c. AND ... God is with you in life and death.
 - i. Sparrows don't fall without him.
- d. **Psalm 147:11.** The Lord values those who fear him, those who put their hope in his faithful love.

2. **Outward: Your fear of people can be replaced with love for them (27).**

- a. **1 John 4:18.** There is no fear in love; instead, perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment.
- b. Carry the good news of the kingdom of heaven into the world. Compassion, care, love for everyone.
 - i. Light/housetops = beyond Israel

1. Israel mission of vv 5-25 now turns outward
 - a. To everyone who will acknowledge Jesus (32).
 - b. To anyone who welcomes God's messengers (40-42).

4. Series Conclusion

- a. Series Summary - A Better Way: Engaging Culture like Jesus

- i. Week 1: Distress - Compassion
- ii. Week 2: Individualism - Hospitality
- iii. Week 3: Power - Wisdom
- iv. Week 4: Self-Preservation - Sacrifice
- v. Week 5: Hatred - Endurance
- vi. Week 6: Fear - Confidence

- b. A Final Word

- i. **1 Peter 2:11-17.** Dear friends, I urge you as strangers and exiles to abstain from sinful desires that wage war against the soul. Conduct yourselves honorably among the Gentiles, so that when they slander you as evildoers, they will observe your good works and will glorify God on the day he visits. Submit to every human authority because of the Lord, whether to the emperor as the supreme authority or to governors as those sent out by him to punish those who do what is evil and to praise those who do what is good. For it is God's will that you silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing good. Submit as free people, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but as God's slaves. Honor everyone. Love the brothers and sisters. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

5. Baptism Setup