

Columbus Street church of Christ

Sunday Bulletin

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I Will Not Fear

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties” (Psalm 139:23)

When I was young, as I passed a cemetery, I would muse about the people I knew that were buried there. I did not think much about death and what is beyond the grave, only about the person I once knew who was there. As I aged a little my thoughts changed into fear. I pondered what it would be like to be in that coffin in the ground? That is when death began to frighten me. I would try to avoid looking at the cemetery as I passed by, turning my attentions to the radio, conversation with a passenger or just look the other way to avoid the frightening thoughts of being trapped in the grave conscience and aware unable to escape. I was unable to escape my fear of dying.

Now I am old, I am a Christian and as I pass by the cemetery, I think of the majority of lost souls that once occupied those empty shells buried beneath the earth. They remind me of the need to tell others about Jesus before they too meet death. I wish I had read the words of the wise man Solomon when I was that young man, it would have kept me from years of irrational fear. *“⁶ Remember your Creator before the silver cord is ^[b]loosed, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the well. ⁷ Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.”* (Eccl. 12:6-7). Now, as a child of God I do not fear death at all, I only fear God, the Owner of my soul who sent His Son, Jesus my Lord to die for my sins and to rise up from the grave. It is His empty tomb that teaches me not to fear death and speaks in my ears, tell them about Jesus before it is too late!

I love these words of the hymn titled “Because He Lives”: “Because He lives, I can face tomorrow. Because He lives all fear is gone; Because I know He holds the future. And life is worth the living, just because He lives.” Brothers and sisters, death is

Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

nothing to fear for through death comes victory. That is when, “I’ll see the lights of glory and I’ll know He reigns”.

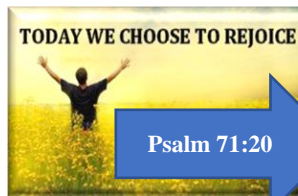
As the song says, “all fear is gone”. But I must say to brethren who fear death, why? Why would anyone who knows Him who holds the future, fear death or any other thing? It was Jesus the resurrected Savior who said, “¹ *Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.* ² *In My Father’s house are many ^[a]mansions; if it were not so, ^[b]I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.* ³ *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also*” (John 14:1-3), the same said, “*But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!*” (Luke 12:5). Why would anyone who knows Him fear, why would anyone who was baptized into Christ live in torment, the result of fear. John wrote, “*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love*” (1 John 4:18).

Is fear a sin? Yes! What caused all those Israelites from twenty years old and above to fall in the wilderness? Fear of being killed in battle (Num. 14:3). What saved Joshua and Caleb from the same fate? Faith! They said, “*Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they^[c] are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them*” (Num. 14:9). Fear caused the disciples to cower in Jerusalem instead of proclaiming a risen Christ (John 20:19-25).

John wrote, “***But for the fearful, and unbelieving . . . their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death***” (Rev. 21:8 ERV; Emphasis mine). In his commentary on this, James Burton Coffman notes, “But it is not of natural fear and timidity that John speaks; it is that cowardice which in the last resort chooses self and safety before Christ.” He nails the core problem of fear—at the end, it can cause us to reject God in favor of self-preservation.”

Fear hides the power of God from our spirit, as we fear, the high standards of eternal life are gradually eroded away to the point that we grow to accept any escape. Fear destroys innocence, and in the process creates more fear, skepticism, guilt, and anxiety. Fear destroys the will, gradually removing the barriers of faith in the power of God, and in His ability to keep His promises. Fear inhibits our incentive to do the will of God.

Consider that, “. . . God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Tim. 1:7). Know this full well: The consequence of fear, is to live in fear and to live in fear is to live in sin. My friends, the only thing I fear is that when the Lord returns, He will say “go away, I never knew you” and “Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 7:20, 25:41). Because of my faith I refuse to live in fear so that I may, “. . . boldly say: “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?” (Heb. 13:6). Thus, I would rather cut off my hand, foot, pluck out my eye, than to be cast



“You, who have shown me great and severe troubles, shall revive me again, and bring me up again from the depths of the earth.”

into hell’s fire (Matt. 18:8-9). I do not say this glibly but out of fear of God.

I will not fear the Day of the Lord, for I humbly submit for your conscience that I am diligent to make my call and election sure, and as Peter said, “¹¹for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. ¹²For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth” (2 Pet. 1:10, 12).

Remember this, like faith is contagious, so is fear. Is COVID-19 contagious? Of course, it is. Like any virus, fear is spread to others by Christians who gather together expressing fear. Some have said that because Jesus was “fully man”, that He feared death. I emphatically deny that Jesus had doubts, uncertainties, lack of knowledge, and He did not fear dying. But Jesus did fear. He feared in the same sense that we should, “. . . serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Heb. 12:28). Jesus said, “I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father” (John 16:28). He knew and so do I.

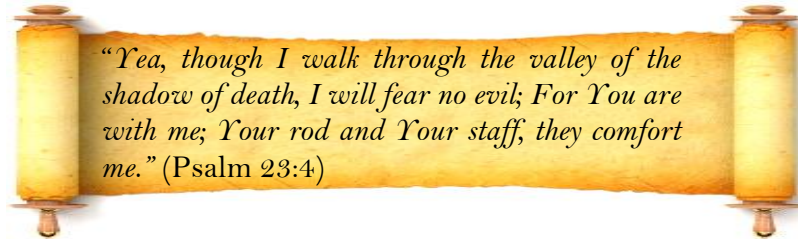
Two times in my recent life I faced death. But without fear for I knew in those hours that with certainty, without doubt—what lay beyond. I don’t prefer to die, rather I would like to see my grandchildren grow, marry, and have opportunity to help them all remain faithful. In this I am not alone. I have stood beside others who faced the certainty of death, without fear in their hearts. A sister, Lorain Fisher said just before death, “I am ready to see my Lord”. The fact is the scriptures are replete concerning death and what lies beyond—this is where our faith comes from and hope that is necessary to face death, or any other thing without fear.

To those who are tormented by the fear of death, uncertainty, and the unknown, I say: learn of God’s love manifested through the gift of his Son in the flesh, and claim the boldness which lies in a faith in God and a hope which lies in the resurrection.

Does the scripture say in vain, “*The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord shall be ^[a]safe*” (Prov. 29:25)? I pray you can say, “*God is our refuge and strength, a^[a] very present help in trouble. ² Therefore we will not fear. . .*” (Psa. 46:1-2).

In Love

David Scarpino



Welcome One and All!

Our faithful Creator is worthy to be praised in this assembly. All praise to Him who reigns above in majesty supreme! He gave His Son to die, for all mankind, that He might redeem all. Our blessed Redeemer suffered and died for our sins and is now risen and sitting at the right hand of God as only Head of the church. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, knowing that He is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9). “*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!*” (Isaiah 6:3)

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction” (James 1:12)

Times of Our Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	9:50 AM
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00 PM

What Jesus Said I Must Do to Be Saved?

Hear the gospel-----	John 6:45
Believe the gospel-----	John 8:24
Repent of sins-----	Luke 13:3
Confess Christ-----	Matthew 10:32
Be baptized-----	Mark 16:16
Remain faithful until death-----	Matthew 10:22