

Fear on Steroids

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Trinity Lutheran Church
Wahiawa, HI
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Grace, mercy and peace be yours from God our Father, Jesus our suffering Lord and Savior and the Holy Spirit who lights up our lives with faith and hope. Our sermon text for today is a combination of these seven verses:

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

Ps 4:8 In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.

1Pt 5:6-7 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, ⁷casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you.

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

Is 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.

Is 26:3 You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in You.

Jn 14:1 "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me.

Let us Pray: Lord Jesus, at this time when the world appears to be crashing down on all humanity, we take comfort that You are still on the throne of grace, mercy, forgiveness and love. May Your Holy Spirit work thru the words spoken to remove all fear and doubt in our hearts. In Jesus name, AMEN

Wednesday's Lenten sermon was about chickens, and I am going to continue the theme of chickens as I review with you the story of "Chicken Little."

Chicken Little was walking along when an acorn fell on his head. He thought the sky was falling. So off he went to tell the king. Along the way he saw Henny Penny and told her and she joined in; then they met Ducky Lucky and told him and he followed too. Along the way there were others who joined in the trip to the king.

After sharing the news that the sky was falling, the king pondered the situation and joined in the parade back to where a piece of the sky fell and hit Chicken Little in the head.

The king laughed when he found the acorn and let them know that the sky **was not falling** and that all was safe. After all he was **the king** and in control of his kingdom.

As you heard the opening texts, our King Jesus does not want us to be afraid and worried. We live in His kingdom and He rules over all things.

We need to remember that Christ is in control: Matt 28:18

"And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Jesus is so in control of this world that He tells us in Rm 8:28

"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

Fear is nothing new to us. We can all remember times when we have been afraid of the dark, or afraid of a storm, maybe even a tsunami or as happened here a while ago a missile attack alert. Not to mention the wars that some of you served in.

Since early 2000 we have been presented with a number of "fear" based issues:

2000 – Y2k computer issue "we will all die"

2001 – Anthrax is being mailed "it will Kill us"

2002 - West Nile virus "will Kill us"

2003 SARS

2005 Bird Flu
2006 ECOLI
2009 Swine Flu
2012 The Mayan Calendar
2014 Ebola Virus
2015 Measles
2016 Zika Virus

By God's grace we survived all of these – that grace is still with us today.

And now we have 2020 Corona Virus that “will Kill us.”

I am NOT, let me repeat this, **I am Not saying** that it isn't a scary time.

I am saying that we need to do what the medical profession and the government says we should do.

But what everyone needs to know is that our King is still on His throne. The element that is missing in all the news casts, in all the special reports, is that **Christ conquered fear when He rose from the grave.**

The issue before us is the assault that this devilish disease has on each of us. Yes – I called it a devilish disease. Satan's plan is to place into our lives anything that will cause us to be detracted from the love and faithfulness of our Lord. The tool that Satan is using now is fear.

We look around and see a world that is afraid. It's like fear is on steroids. It's like armed robbers are forcing us to empty our emotional and spiritual bank accounts while staring down the barrel of impending doom.

1. Fear that we will catch it and die
2. Fear that we will give it to those we love and they will die - because of us
3. Fear that we will go stir crazy at home.
4. Fear that food will run out and starve to death.

In the early 2000 there was fear of WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction), but what we have now is WMF – **Weapon of Mass Fear**

Jeremiah said “We know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” Jer 28:19

I know that times are really crazy right now. All we need to do is look around and we can see that our world is filled with so much fear, anxiety and uncertainty - some of which may be pitching a tent in hearts. Every day seems to bring with it another crashing wave of disheartening news or unanswered questions. And even the death of someone due to Covid 19.

Our Lord tells us In 1Thes. 4:13

“But we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.”

Those who die in Christ do not die but live forever and are ushered directly to be with the Lord. That’s what happened to the “Good Thief” who died with Christ on that day. Because of Christ’s death and resurrection we have the assurance of eternal life, that’s why death does not immobilize us. Paul encourages believers who had lost loved ones, 'not to grieve' like the rest of men who have no hope.

In these troubled, anxious and uncertain times - Paul would tell us who follow Jesus, 'not to live' like the rest of men who have no hope. That this is not a time for us to live in fear, anxiety and panic - because we do have hope, a living hope through and in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 Tim 1:7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped. Therefore my heart rejoices, and I praise Him with my song. – Psalm 28:7

Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and forevermore. – Psalm 125:1,2

Jn 14:1 “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God believe also in Me.

Prov 3:5&6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight

Ps 100:5 For the LORD is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations.

Ps 56:3 (David also wrote,) “When I am afraid, I put my trust in You O God”

And when we do that it frees us up to minister to those who are in need:

1. Fear paralyzes, but thru faith in Christ we bless others (Gal. 3:6-9)
2. Fear hoards, but because of our faith in Jesus we share (Eph. 4:28)
3. Fear curses bad fortune, but because our Lord reigns we gain wisdom to understand the times (1 Chron. 12:32)
4. Fear resigns itself to fate, but because we have a resurrection faith, we give the reason for our hope (1 Pet. 3:15).

I want to challenge you in the coming weeks to spend more time dwelling on the passages I am sharing today and to other passages than you do watching the news or following all of this social media panic. And see what happens; see if you are not experiencing more peace.

Give reason to our hope as people hear us pray, live and minister in faith.

In Jesus name, AMEN

And now may the peace of God which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and mind free from worry and fear. AMEN