

Sermon Outline for FBC Apr. 26, 2020

Today the message is entitled “Beyond the Fear!”

The past few Sunday’s have shown us how much God loves us and that God came to walk amongst us to teach us how to live. Barb’s song reminds us that in the middle of all our fears, God promises to be with us. We can trust God to walk beside us “through it all.”

As I watch the daily regime of updates on COVID 19, and the financial markets “short-string yoyo” activities, the protests and the violence, I see a world that is being inundated with fear.

People ask me “what should we do?” “What can we do?” “How do we survive this downward spiral in our world?”

My observation of mankind’s history and my belief in God, who cares so much about us, leads me to look “Beyond the Fear”. We need to think more at what we will be and do after this time passes. Fear disables our abilities to overcome, dashes our hopes for the future!

Mankind’s history is full of times like ours, where the world appears to be self-destructing and the thinking is that there is no hope for tomorrow.

One such time we read of in the Bible, in the Old Testament, in the book of Chronicles (between 2 Kings and Ezra).

We see the people of Judah and Jerusalem in a tough spot. Large armies of Moabites and Ammonites had come to destroy them, and they were struck with fear. For them it was like the end of the world. They turn to the only one who can save them – they cry out to God!

The Spirit of the Lord comes upon Jahaziel, son of Zechariah – a Levite, and speaks to King Jehoshaphat and all the people in Judah and Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 20: 17 NIV

17 You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you.”

God had promised to protect those who believe in Him. Here God was once again reminding those people that He will be with them, through it all.

We read from the Old Testament section of the Bible where the prophet Isaiah (between Ecclesiastes and Jeremiah), tells the people how God promises to keep the people safe when they are facing terrible trials.

Isaiah 43: 1-3a

1 But now, this is what the Lord says— he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.

When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.

3 For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior;

God had saved these people, through a world flood and crossing through the Red Sea. God was also going to save 3 boys from dying in a fiery furnace (found in the book of Daniel). Why?

Because they turned their hearts and minds back to God! They revived or found their faith in the living God who made them and loves them.

So far, we have been reminded that God is with us during our hardships. Therefore, we should be able to stand firm during this pandemic if we realize that God stands with us, through it all.

This reminds me of the apostle Paul’s letter to the Philippian people who believed in Jesus. When our lives are full of turmoil, fear, and uncertainties, we need to read these verses repeatedly. The book of Philippians is found in the New Testament section of the Bible, between the books of Ephesians and Colossians.

Philippians 4: 6-7 NIV

6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

God promises us peace. A peace that is beyond anything we could imagine or accomplish ourselves.

But what about tomorrow? What does God say about tomorrow and the days, months, and years after that? Is there a time “beyond the fear?”

I believe that there is life after the pandemic. God has always shown us that there is a way through all trials. It might be difficult, and it surely will change the way we live but mankind will live.

God wants us to persevere and to learn from this time of struggle. For those who survive, your job going forward is to not forget those who do not make it through. You are to live life to the fullest, and teach those who will listen, about the God who walks with us and is alive today.

We persevere so that others can be inspired to trust God in the good and bad times. Trials develop perseverance when you continue on even when it seems hopeless. We will grow through this time!

James spoke of this in his book found in the Bible, New Testament between Hebrews, and Peter.

James 1: 2-4

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.

4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Allow God to guide your steps, hang on to Him to get through this troublesome time and then we will be “beyond the fear”!

Poem: Step by Step (Barbara C. Ryberg)

He does not lead me year by year

Nor even day by day.

But step by step my path unfolds;

My Lord directs my way.

Tomorrow's plans I do not know,
I only know this minute;
But He will say, "This is the way,
By faith now walk ye in it."

And I am glad that it is so.
Today's enough to bear;
And when tomorrow comes, His grace
Shall far exceed its care.

What need to worry then, or fret?
The God who gave His Son
Holds all my moments in His hand
And gives them, one by one.

Benediction: Romans 11: 33-36 NIV

33 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

*How unsearchable his judgments,
and his paths beyond tracing out!*

34 "Who has known the mind of the Lord?

Or who has been his counselor?"

*35 "Who has ever given to God,
that God should repay them?"*

*36 For from him and through him and to him are all things.
To him be the glory forever! Amen.*

Let's pray!

Bibliography:

The Experiencing God Study Bible (Broadman & Holman Publishers, Nashville, Tennessee, 1994)

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Story of the Two Frogs – source unknown.

Barbara C. Ryberg, Step by Step – cut out from an old pre-printed Church Bulletin – date unknown.