

THE CORONAVIRUS FEAR AND CHRISTIAN COURAGE

HOW GOD'S GRACE PROVIDES SUFFICIENT STRENGTH

*"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear;
but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."*

~ 2 Timothy 1:7

1. The Present Fear

- a. Fear *~def.* The anxious expectation of evil or impending danger.
- b. 80% of churchgoers lived with moderate-high levels of fear (2 yrs ago)
- c. ~156,400 cases / ~5833 deaths; pandemic; national emergency; closures; stock
- d. People fear death, lack, loss, judgment - Heb 2:15, 1 Tim 6:17, Rom 8:15
- e. FDR – *"the only thing we have to fear is fear itself"* (Fear can be bigger than the disease)
- f. Fear paralyzes, breeds contempt, selfishness, and shaken unstable minds.

2. Christians and Pandemics

- a. The Bible has chapters of life saving instruction toward sicknesses – Lev 13:46, 15:13
- b. Courage *~def.* Strength without fear in the face of danger; bravery.
- c. Early Christianity grew through plagues b/c Christians ran forward when others fled
- d. Christians cared for the victims (even non-Christians) = faced death to help the weak
- e. Christians went to work during Bubonic plague (Luther), Ebola, Spanish flu ...
- f. Christians provided care and salvation to the living, and gave hope in the face of death.
- g. *"When people are dying, they most need spiritual ministry which strengthens and comforts" the soul.* 95% of infected will live, but all of us get infected with fear/despair

3. God's Spiritual Provision

- a. It is not a fresh healing ... "by his stripes", Ps 41:1-3, 91:11, Mt 8:17 not your promises.
- b. Fear can be a direct challenge to your faith. God's grace is sufficient - 2 Cor 12:9
- c. Fear is a spiritual problem not resolved merely by removing the danger.
- d. We have a greater hope than healing ... 2 Cor 4:7-11, Rom 8:18
- e. 2 Timothy 1:7 - The spirit of fear of condemnation, judgment, pain, death
 - i. Power – Instead of hopelessness, we have hope through the gospel of Christ.
 - 1. The power of God's grace is found in the hope of resurrection and glory.
 - ii. Love – Instead of separation, contempt, prejudice; the love of God toward us.
 - 1. The love of God toward us teaches us love toward others.
 - iii. Sound Mind – We're not blind or delusional, we know some things about God
 - 1. We sorrow not as those that have no hope – 1 Th 4:13
 - 2. Be careful for nothing – Phil 4:6-10
- f. Keep your hands busy doing right, hearts toward the weaker body, mind of Christ.

4. Grace and Sickness

- a. Will it happen to you? It might. God has called you to do something: minister his grace.
- b. Ministry is bearing other's burdens - bear infirmities of the weak – Rom 15:1, 1 Th 5:14
- c. Be strong in his power, his love, and his grace – Eph 6:10, 1 Cor 16:13-14, 2 Tim 2:1