

Jesus Christ: The Resurrection

John 11:17-27, 38-53

Introduction

I would like to go 24 hours without hearing “Covid” or “Corona.” But in order to do that, I would have to quarantine myself and not turn on the **TV** or **Internet**. That pandemic is dominating our attention and our whole society is living in fear. There are three letters difference between “pandemic” and “panic.” I’m not making light of the virus, but I am questioning our response. I can’t do anything about the **pandemic**, but I want to do what I can to alleviate the **panic**. And I can do that by preaching the **Gospel** of Jesus Christ and administering the **Sacraments**.

The Source of Fear

What is the source of fear? *And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Genesis 2:16-17).* The main result of the fall is **death**—spiritual and physical. And death is the main **fear** people have. We’re not afraid of getting sick. We’re afraid we might die or spread the disease to someone else who will die from it. While this is a real concern, does it have to be a fear? Should we live in fear and allow it to dictate our lives? It’s one thing to make common sense concessions out of concern and caution. But it’s something else to live in fear.

What Scripture Says About Fear

What does **Scripture** say about fear? (Read **John 16:33; Philippians 4:4-7; Psalm 23:4; Isaiah 41:10; Matthew 6:34**). Jesus wants us to have **peace**, because He has overcome the world. St. Paul says we aren’t to be **anxious** about anything but **rejoice** in Christ’s **peace**. The psalmist says that even when death is looming, he finds **comfort** in God’s **care**. Isaiah says that God will **strengthen** and **uphold** us. And Jesus also says not to **worry** about what **may** or may not happen.

The Cure for Fear

This is all good advice, but just how do we do it? How can we carry out the directives given us in Scripture concerning fear and anxiety? *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love (1 John 4:18).* How do we access this perfect love? (Read **1 John 4:10-12**). God loved us and sent His Son to be the **propitiation**, or **satisfaction** for our sin. By paying the price for and forgiving our sin, He frees us up to love Him and one another. When we are participating in His love, we don’t have to live in fear.

Resting in Jesus

We participate in this perfect love when we **rest** in Jesus. We rest in Him when we remember that He is the **RESURRECTION** and the **LIFE**. As He told Martha, this is not just about the **RESURRECTION** at the end of time. This is about being resurrected **now**. Then, to show what He meant, He raised her brother from the dead. Am I saying that Jesus won’t let us get sick and die from this virus? No. And Jesus doesn’t mean that when he says in **verse 26** that those who believe in Him *shall never die*. Eternal life begins when we believe in Jesus. We, who are **dead** in our sins are raised to a **new life** in Jesus Christ. in this

new life, we no longer need to fear **anything**, because God cares for us and this life no longer has any say over us. *And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell (Matthew 10:28).* No matter what happens in this life, God is in **control** and, as Isaiah says, He will **uphold** us with His *righteous right hand*.

Means of Grace

That's why it's so important to maintain the service of **WORD** and **SACRAMENT**. When we hear the **Word**, He breathes life into us and helps us live **above** the fears of this life. When we receive the **body** and **blood**, He gives us the grace to **boldly** live for Him no matter what. Partake in the **peace, joy** and **love** of the **RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST** today.

*May the peace of God,
Which passes all understanding,
Keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
