

# Fearing Man & Fearing God

**Text:** Matthew 10.28

**Theme:** When we forget to fear God, we will inevitably fear man in many ways

## **Introduction — book on my shelf:**

- What Do You Think of Me? (And why should I care?)
- meant to help us find freedom from the fear of man
- what others think of us, how we think they must view us
- freed to not be manipulated or controlled by others views of us
- liberating to see yourself through Christ's eyes, not eyes of man and sinful concepts

## **Thought this appropriate on this Lord's Day**

- as we recognize seniors going on in life, especially away from home
- scrutinized, viewed, and opinions formed of you seniors, no matter what school you attend
- you have a choice to make, if not already made
- whose voice will you listen to?
- that of man? How you dress, wear your hair?
- values you hold, where you grew up, how you grew up?
- or that of the Lord Jesus Christ?

## **How will that decision be made?**

- based on who you fear most and if you fear each properly
- think of it this way:
- if there were no God, most awe-inspiring, scary thing ever: another person
- when we forget about God, when we forget to fear Him, we will fear man in many ways

*Let's consider...*

### **I. THE FEAR OF MAN THAT BINDS US**

- fear of man might be the danger they pose to us
- violence seems almost the norm of our day
- whether verbally abused, physically abused, or just plain murdered, it is everywhere
- while it may help us seek safety & protection, this fear binds us
- but not just physical harm that fear of man induces
- most of will never face that, but others produce all sorts of fear within us

#### **1. What do you think of me?**

- clothes I wear, in style, fashionable
- or do you seek to stand out as different, just to impress them anyway?
- car you drive, books you read, music you listen to, movies you watch
- all strongly based upon what others think

#### **2. Lots to be afraid of out there**

- what others think of us drives so many of us
- we're anxious to make a good impression
- we are nervous when we speak for fear of offending someone's sensitivities
- fear of public speaking still ranks highest among so many other fears
- why? How we sound, how we look, how we come across, what we're saying

- why is this such a fear?
- because people are scary
- they can be cruel, heartless, manipulative, over-bearing, controlling and more
- if you please them, they will bless you...with what?
- their favor? Their approval? Their acceptance?
- if you offend them, cross them, spurn their “power” they shame, hurt and curse you
- so yes, these things bring fear into our hearts and minds
- we’re overwhelmed with the threat of not being accepted
- we’re bound up in shackles of our own choosing for fear of not being liked

### 3. You’re not alone

- Jesus, in sending out the 70 to preach the good news, knew this would be a problem
- these men would want approval of men, to like what they had to say
- Jesus also knew opposite would be the case
- so Jesus warned them
- **Matthew 10.16–18 — “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles.**
- you and I hear this and think: Well, that’s easy! What’s there to fear, right?
- what did Jesus say to His disciples as they were ready to be “fed to the wolves”?

*Well, to answer that, let’s consider...*

## II. THE FEAR OF GOD THAT FREES US

- before Jesus gave His final answer to our question, He gave them more
- **Matthew 10.21–23 — Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death, and you will be hated by all for my name’s sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next, for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.**
- and then one closing truth:
- **Matthew 10.24–25 — “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.**

### 1. What frees us up?

- you hear all these terrible sounding things
- I’ll not deny it: what Jesus has described those who tell the gospel will go thru is daunting
- some of you have faced it
- you try to speak to a family member one more time, pleading to come to Christ
- they get angry, some might yell in your face, or perhaps cut you off as family entirely
- what frees us from the fear of man in these kinds of situations?
- **Matthew 10.28 — 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.**
- key to faithfully proclaiming the gospel to anybody is this: don’t be afraid of them

### 2. Your soul is safe

- your soul is kept safe in Christ Jesus

- when you understand this treasure and delight in it alone, you are free
- yes, people who oppose us are scary; I'd be silly to say otherwise
- but the God who opposes them is far more frightening than they can imagine
- He does not hold that fear over you for you are His in Christ Jesus

### **3. Be overwhelmed by God's greatness and goodness**

- learn to grow in the fear of the Lord
- learn to bathe in His goodness
- learn how to rejoice in His greatness
- learn to spend time simply in awe of His work, His Son, His salvation, His glory
- the heart that is overcome by the goodness of God can never be overcome by threats of man
- can man honor me? God will honor me more
- can they give me riches? God has already blessed me with every spiritual blessing possible
- can they judge me, carry out vengeance against me? God's are fiercer yet & eternal as well
- and yet, for all who are in Christ Jesus, His fierce vengeance will never, ever be against you

### **4. Free to love others**

- learning to fear God far more than man lets us love others as we ought
- otherwise, we just spin our wheels seeking their approval and acceptance
- we try so hard to be our children's friends rather than loving them as their parents
- we want to be liked by co-workers so we compromise our convictions & values
- none of that is loving; it's selfish and nearly narcissistic
- whatever affection, acceptance, or approval man offers: Jesus offers more
- whatever shame, rejection, or judgment they threaten: Jesus spares you from eternal hell

### **Conclusion – Seniors, BIC graduates, people known as Albion**

- ask Spirit to search you today
- have Him reveal people in your life you fear because they threaten you somehow
- let Him expose sins you commit to earn their nod of approval
- prepare yourself now for frightening moments by dwelling on greatness & goodness of God
- He is your desire now
- one day, He will fulfill that completely beyond what you can imagine forever