

Unpacking the Preach

Date: 12th July 2020
Sermon Title: Do not's for the family: do not be afraid
Bible Passage: Matthew 8: 23 - 27

Introduction

- What is your biggest fear? Why?
- Here is a list of things people fear most - do any of these resonate: dentist, snakes, flying, spiders and insects, enclosed spaces, dogs?

Recapping the Preach

Take time to read the passage again, perhaps read it a few times from different versions:

- Have you ever been caught in a severe storm? How did it make you feel?
- If you could summarise this passage in one word, what would it be?
- What does this passage tell you about the character and nature of Jesus?
- Was there anything in the passage or preach that you found yourself resisting, pulling away from or wrestling with what is being said?

Stu described the difference between good fear (for example fear of the Lord, fear that warns us of danger) and bad fear (fear that leads to sin, doubting God, disobedience to God). He then went on to ask the question what would it be like to live without bad fear?

- How would you describe 'the fear of the Lord' to someone who is not a follower of Jesus?
- In what ways is the fear of the Lord evident in your life?
- What would it be like for you to live without bad fear? What difference would it make?

Stu went on to describe the story. First the disciples follow Jesus and the fact that following Jesus can lead us to fearful situations. Second that the storm sprang up suddenly and the disciples were gripped by fear. Then their response: Lord save us! We are going to drown. Don't you care that we're going to drown (Mark 4:38). Their words reveal: their fear because of lack of control, their eroded understanding of the goodness of God, their forgetfulness of all that Jesus has done.

- Do you agree with these reflections about their words? What else might their words reveal?
- How significant is Jesus' words, 'O you of little faith'?
- Have you ever felt that a storm was raging around you and Jesus was just sleeping in your boat?
- What other metaphors does the story bring to mind?

Stu made the conclusion that it is possible to live without 'bad fear' when we live in the light of the resurrection and filled with the Spirit. As one pastor said, 'when death is defeated, well then there is nothing left to fear'.

- Do you agree the statement, 'when death is defeated, there is nothing left to fear'?
- Do you think it is possible to live without 'bad fear' in your life?

In closing Stu suggested 3 practical applications to live a fearless life: nurturing an awe of God, do not focus on fear, remember God has a future for us.

- Which of these do you need to work on?

Response

- Is there anything from the preach and passage that you will be taking away to reflect on or work on?

Prayer pointers

- Take time to share fears that you have and pray for one another.
- Pray for our world and that as disciples we may be a non-anxious presence in the world.
- Pray for the our church family that we will grow in living courageously, following Jesus.

Additional resources:

If you need some additional resources the below websites are useful:

- <https://www.gotquestions.org>
- <https://enduringword.com>
- <https://www.biblica.com>
- <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/>