

The Greatest Fear In Our Culture Today

Setting the scene:

Acts 19:11-22, Mark 4:35-41, Proverbs 9:10, The book of Ephesians

- Our enemy can't _____; he can only _____.
- There is something to _____ besides _____ itself.

The three stages of faith:

Acts 19:11-22, Matthew 16:13-27, James 2:18-24

1. We believe in a _____ god.
(This is a god that _____.)
2. We listen to a _____ god.
(This is a god that _____.)
3. We kneel before our _____ God.
(This is a God that _____.)

Two questions that changed everything:

Acts 19:11-22, 1 John 1:9, Matthew 7:17-27

1. What have I done with the _____?
2. Do I trust God with just my _____, or with my _____?

The Greatest Fear In Our Culture Today

Setting the scene:

Acts 19:11-22, Mark 4:35-41, Proverbs 9:10, The book of Ephesians

- Our enemy can't **CREATE**; he can only **COUNTERFEIT**.
- There is something to **FEAR** besides **FEAR** itself.

The three stages of faith:

Acts 19:11-22, Matthew 16:13-27, James 2:18-24

1. We believe in a **MAGIC GENIE** god.
(This is a god that **SERVES ME**.)
2. We listen to a **COSMIC CONSULTANT** god.
(This is a god that **WORKS FOR ME**.)
3. We kneel before our **LORD** God.
(This is a God that **I SERVE**.)

Two questions that changed everything:

Acts 19:11-22, 1 John 1:9, Matthew 7:17-27

1. What have I done with the **NAME OF JESUS**?
2. Do I trust God with just my **ETERNITY**, or with my **DAILY LIVING**?

Life Group Study Questions

For the week of November 8, 2020

(Questions and Scriptures for further study & discussion)

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. This weekend we learned about fear. When you were growing up, did you have any childhood fears (i.e. heights, clowns, being lost, monsters, the dark, weather, bugs, snakes)?
2. The enemy can't create; he can only counterfeit. Oftentimes we see the enemy tempting us with good things that are counterfeits of God's truth. The enemy can use many things to counterfeit the good gifts from God. As a group, make a list of some common counterfeits you see today (i.e. love and lust, holiness and happiness, generosity and greed).

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Reflecting back to an earlier story in the book of Acts, Ananias and Sapphira made fatal decisions that were rooted in their fear of the wrong source. Read Acts 5:1-11 and make note of the different sources of fear.

Acts 5:1-11 New International Version (NIV)

Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. ² With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.

³ Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? ⁴ Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God."

⁵ When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. ⁶ Then some young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him.

⁷ About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?"

"Yes," she said, "that is the price."

⁹ Peter said to her, "How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also."

¹⁰ At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

In the passage above, there are three groups of people (Ananias and Sapphira, the Church at large and Peter). Indicate what they feared and what the result of their fear was.

People	Source of their fear? God or Man	Result
Ananias & Sapphira		
The Church		
Peter		

Reflecting on Ananias and Sapphira's story, why do you think caring about how others see us plays such a major role in our decision making?

What impact did the power of God have on the fear of God in the Church?

Can you think of a time when your fear of God increased because of someone else's misfortune?

Peter was no stranger to denying God. His fear of approval from people, caused him to deny he knew Jesus on three separate occasions. How might Peter's own personal denials of Jesus have influenced his response to Ananias and Sapphira (John 18:15-18, 25-27)?

John 18:15-18, 25-27 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁵ Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, ¹⁶ but Peter had to wait outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the servant girl on duty there and brought Peter in.

¹⁷ "You aren't one of this man's disciples too, are you?" she asked Peter.

He replied, "I am not."

¹⁸ It was cold, and the servants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.

²⁵ Meanwhile, Simon Peter was still standing there warming himself. So they asked him, "You aren't one of his disciples too, are you?"

He denied it, saying, "I am not."

²⁶ One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?" ²⁷ Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.

Can you think of any ways the fear of God has equipped you, changed you or helped you?

2. This weekend Chris defined true faith, not as just trusting God with our eternity, but giving God our tomorrow. In the verses below, make note of anything pointing us toward a daily trust and obedience in God.

James 1:22-25 New International Version (NIV)

²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³ Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵ But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

Luke 9:23-24 New International Version (NIV)

²³ Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.

Psalms 128:1 New International Version (NIV)

¹ Blessed are all who fear the LORD,
who walk in obedience to him.

As you look at the three verses above, what three phrases are most helpful for you to be able to live for tomorrow and not just eternity?

The people of Ephesus realized the power of God and brought their old way of life (scrolls of sorcery) out and burned it. Can you think of any place in your life where you struggle with the “old you” because you are viewing God like a cosmic consultant or magic genie (i.e. a dating relationship, how you view money, anger, lust, pride, tone of voice, power)?

3. The enemy would love to use fear to keep us from moving toward God. How does Romans 5:1-5 help us remain confident and experience God’s love?

Romans 5:1-5 New International Version (NIV)

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

TAKING IT HOME

Which point from this weekend’s message or Life Group study is most important for you to remember?

PRAYER REQUESTS

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