

Paralyzed by Fear

Matt. 28:4

Introduction:

- A. Fear can be helpful.
 - 1. Need a wholesome fear of God. (Matt. 10:28).
 - 2. Need a wholesome fear of danger – physical and spiritual.
- B. Fear can be harmful.
 - 1. Fear can make us cowardly (Rev. 21:8).
 - 2. Fear can literally paralyze one (Text)
- C. Fear has paralyzed many of us in various areas of responsibility.

Discussion:

I. Parents Are Often Paralyzed by Fear.

- A. Afraid to insist on “old morality” (Eph. 6:4; Gal. 5:19-21) – afraid of being left-out socially.
- B. Afraid to make children attend services – afraid they will grow up to resent it.
 - 1. What about school?
 - 2. What about work?
 - 3. What about good health practices?
- C. Afraid to have rules and enforce them by discipline – afraid will alienate children
 - 1. Cannot measure effectiveness by present reaction (cf. Heb. 12:7-11)

II. Christians Are Often Paralyzed by Fear.

- A. Afraid to “take part in service” – afraid of mistakes.
 - 1. Super-critics add to this fear.
 - 2. Be careful to do it right – but do it – humans will make mistakes.
- B. Afraid to speak the whole truth to our brethren and neighbors (cf. Acts 20:27)
 - 1. Afraid it will cause controversy.
 - a. Early church survived controversy (Acts 15:2).
 - b. Paul’s and Peter’s friendship survived controversy (Gal. 2:11-14; 2 Pet. 3:15).
 - 2. Afraid it will drive people away (cf. 2 Tim. 4:1-2)
 - 3. Afraid they will reject our efforts (cf. Acts 20:26).
- C. Afraid to “take sides” in controversies – afraid of accusations of bias.
 - 1. Some controversies do not have right and wrong side. (Paul & Barnabas).
 - 2. Many other’s do have a right and wrong side – should take right side (2 Tim. 4:16, 17).
- D. Afraid to say what is needed – afraid will say wrong thing (Ecc. 3:7; Acts 18:9).
 - 1. It is true that more say too much than too little (cf. Jas. 1:26).
 - 2. It just as bad to say too little as it is to say too much (cf. Acts 18:9; Boy on wagon, at school)
- E. Afraid to aggressively pursue the work of the church – afraid will slip up and get it wrong.
 - 1. So afraid of supporting the wrong preachers – support none.
 - 2. So afraid of helping dead beats – do not help the deserving.
 - 3. So afraid of using wrong tools of edification – use none.

Conclusion:

- A. Take necessary precautions to do all things right – then do them!
 - 1. God will bless your efforts to do his will.
 - 2. God will forgive your mistakes (1 John 1:7-2:1)
- B. Don’t be afraid of obeying the gospel – afraid will not hold out to the end.