"DON'T FEAR MAN, BUT GOD!"

Matthew 10:26-33
10/29/2017

INTRODUCTION:

***Don't fear man, but God!**

I. Don't Let the Fear of Man <u>DISCOURAGE</u> You
Because God will vindicate you in the end (v. 26)

II. Don't Let the Fear of Man <u>SILENCE</u> You
But boldly proclaim God's truth for all to hear (v. 27)

III. Don't Let the Fear of Man <u>INTIMIDATE</u> You
Because man does not control your eternal destiny - God does! (v. 28)

IV. Don't Let the Fear of Man <u>DISHEARTEN</u> You
Because God is in sovereign control of your life and cares for you
(v. 29-31)

A. He <u>remembers</u> you (v. 29)

B. He <u>knows</u> you (v. 30)

C. He <u>values</u> you (v. 31)

V. Don't Let the Fear of Man <u>EMBARRASS</u> You
--If you deny Christ because of fear, He will deny you! (v. 32-33)

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INTRODUCTION:

All of us at one point or another have feared:

--persecution
--unpopularity
--hardship
--ridicule
--conflict
--confrontation
--rejection
--threats

NOTE: The repeated references to NOT being AFRAID:*"Fear them not" (v. 26)*
"Fear not them" (v. 28)
"Fear ye not" (v. 31)

Note the following list of verses which say *"Fear not"* -

***Don't fear man, but God!**

I. Don't Let the Fear of Man <u>DISCOURAGE</u> You
Because God will vindicate you in the end (v. 26)

"Therefore" - In light of the <u>persecution</u> mentioned in VV 17-25, believers are exhorted to not fear.

This verse actually was stated in a context where Jesus said, *"Beware of the <u>leaven</u> the Pharisees, which is <u>hypocrisy</u>"* (NOTE: Luke 12:1-2)

Jesus is saying, Don't be intimidated by the self-righteous, fake & phoney hypocrites who persecute you and false accuse you in the name of "religion" (EX: the RCC Inquisitions), because God's day of Judgment will one day expose their wicked lives.

To be treated with injustice can be discouraging until you realize that this day of reckoning has not arrived yet.

God will vindicate the righteous! All the talk and abuse inflicted upon believers will be handled by Christ. The shunning, sneering, isolation, coldness, ugliness, abuse, and mistreatment by neighbors, fellow employees, family or carnal believers will be dealt with by God. Let God defend you and take vengeance.

The cloak that the persecutors put upon their evil will be stripped off one day.

"Those in the world's eyes who now look like winners will turn out to be losers, and those who seem to be losers will be winners" (MacArthur, p. 220)

People may cover, conceal, camouflage or hide their sin under a cloak of "spirituality" but one day God will reveal the secrets of men (Ro. 2:16)

Nothing is hidden from God's eyes (Heb. 4:13 - *"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."*)

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov. 28:13)

It is within man's depraved and evil nature to keep skeletons in their closet, and when anyone comes close to perhaps opening that door, they react - and react violently!

II. Don't Let the Fear of Man <u>SILENCE</u> You
But boldly proclaim God's truth for all to hear (v. 27)

"Fraternal orders and lodges . . . have secret rites and ceremonies" (MacArthur, p. 220), but Biblical Christianity is not a secret religion!

In other words, what you learn in private, proclaim in public!

That which God teach us in our quiet times (devotional times), He intends that we not hide it under a bushel, that we not keep it to ourselves, that we do not selfishly hoard it; but that we give it away!

The fear of man has resulted in many closed mouths. We worry more about what others will think about us, than we do about what God thinks of us.

"Speak ye in light (for all to see) . . . ***preach ye upon the housetops*** (for all to hear)"

God approves of street preaching; yea, even commands it!

We are often so intimidated that we become "closet Christians."

Some excuse themselves from witnessing by saying:

1. *My faith is "personal"*
2. *I will let my "life" speak for my faith*
3. *I might say the wrong thing*

We have an urgent message; a universal message (it's for all).

Our message is too great to keep to ourselves; Our message is too important to keep closed up; our message is too needed to not say anything about!

Paul said: *"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel!"* (I Cor. 9:16)

ILLUS: Hugh Latimer & King Henry VIII (MacArthur, p. 222)

III. Don't Let the Fear of Man <u>INTIMIDATE</u> You
Because man does not control your eternal destiny - God does! (v. 28)

"Them" - unbelievers (perhaps instigated by Satan)

"People can kill the body" - (not outside of God's sovereign control, however - Deut. 32:39; Mt. 10:29-31) ***"but after that*** **[they]** ***have no more that they can do"*** (Lk. 12:4)

Any harm man does is only temporary.

Satan can't touch the soul.

He himself will be helplessly cast into hell, he sends no one there.

"Rather fear him" - Fear God (not Satan). It is God (specifically, Jesus Christ who holds the *"keys of hell and of death"* (Rev. 1:18)

The word ***"fear"*** means not only to have a <u>reverence</u> (respect) for God (because of who He is) but also to <u>tremble</u> before Him; to be <u>terrified</u> by him (because of what He can do) (II Cor. 5:11)

God is to be feared.

Deut. 6:13 - *"Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve Him, and shalt swear by his name."*

I Sam. 12:24 - *"Only fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart, for consider how great things He hath done for you."*

Ps. 33:8 - *"Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him."*

Eccles. 12:13 - *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."*

I Pet. 2:17 - *"Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king."*

Rev. 14:7 - *"Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."*

Rev. 15:4 - *"Who shall not fear thee, O lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."*

When I was pastoring in NY, there was a shooting at the Brooklyn Family Court which produced panic, causing many people to run for their lives (and rightly so!). If people feared God as much as they fear man, they would flee to God for salvation!

Fearing God takes faith today! (one day it will not! - Rev. 6:16-17)

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (Ps. 111:10; Prov. 9:10)

The most spiritual people in history had this testimony, that they feared God.

--Joseph feared God (Gen. 42:18)
--The 70 elders of Israel were chosen because they feared God (Ex. 18:21)
--Job feared God (Job 1:9)
--The virtuous woman feared God (Prov. 31:30)

The person who fears God will:

> --delight in God's Word (Ps. 112:1- *"Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments."*)
>
> --walk in God's ways (Ps. 128:1 - *"Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways"*; cp. Prov. 14:2 - *"He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD: but he that is perverse in his ways despiseth him."*)
>
> --be blessed (Ps. 128:4 - *"Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD"*; Ecc. 8:12 - *"Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him;"*)
>
> --be taught God's will (Ps. 25:12 - *"What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose."*)

This statement teaches us these truths:

1) Man is not merely a "body"

2) What matters most is what happens after death. Losing one's soul is to lose all (Mk. 8:36-37)

3) God is to be feared, not man

4) God decides where you will spend eternity

"Destroy" - not annihilation; but removal from the presence of God. To perish; to give our to eternal torment and misery (the same word is used of demons who fear this destruction - Lk. 4:34)

Paul uses this word to speak of *"eternal destruction"* (II Th. 1:9)

"the soul" - the word is often used synonymously with "spirit" (as here)

The soul is that immaterial part of man that gives him life, and that lives forever!

"Soul and body" - the "body" will one day be reunited to the soul at the resurrection of the unjust (Jn. 5:29; Dan. 12:2; Rev. 20:5)

"In hell" - not "hades" but "Gehenna" = meaning the "Lake of Fire" (cp. Rev. 20:15; 21:8)

"Gehenna" refers to a place of burning.

Martin Luther (the reformer) said:

"Let good and kindred go
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still;
His kingdom is forever"

IV. Don't Let the Fear of Man <u>DISHEARTEN</u> You Because God is in sovereign control of your life and cares for you (v. 29-31)

A. He <u>remembers</u> you (v. 29)

"Two sparrows **[little birds]** ***sold for a farthing"*** (1/16 of a day's wages - perhaps like $5.00). They gave a greater discount for five sparrows, namely - two farthings (Lk. 12:6)

"Without your father" - without your heavenly Father's knowledge and will.

He does not forget about the existence of one sparrow (Lk. 12:6) and yet we often view Him as unconcerned or disinterested about our lives.

It is a comfort to know that nothing will happen to us, nor will anyone take the life of a child of God without our Father allowing it! He's in control!

"In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me" (Ps. 56:4)

"The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?" (Ps. 118:6)

". . . the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:6)

B. He <u>knows</u> you (v. 30)

The average hair count on the human head is said to be about 100,000.

Posted on February 12th, 2014 by the Bauman Medical Group
You are born with about 100,000 scalp hair follicles to start with, but it varies with natural hair color. Blondes have an average of 150,000 hairs, the average redhead has 90,000. Those with black or brown hair average 100,000 to 110,000 hairs.

There are about 5 million hair follicles on the adult human body and men have a few hundred thousand more than women. These follicles are distributed fairly evenly throughout the body, with the exception of our hairless palms and soles.

The average human head (an average scalp measures approximately 120 square inches or 770 cm^2) has about 100,000 hair follicles (Gray 2003). Each follicle can grow about 20 individual hairs in a person's lifetime (About 2007). Average hair loss is around 100 strands a day.

This verse teaches that God is omniscient (cp. Ps. 139).

If God cares enough about us to number our hairs; if He is aware of the number of insignificant hairs, are we right to think that we are not important enough to think about? Are we right to doubt His wondrous love when we are unjustly treated?

When God protects His own, He protects them down to the individual hairs. (Wiersbe, p. 39)

C. He <u>values</u> you (v. 31)

"Fear ye not, therefore" - Because of God's interest in us, His continual watchcare over us; His sovereign supervision, His genuine concern. . . He says you don't need to live in fear.

God's people excel the worth of multitudes of birds! We are valuable

(precious) to God.

V. Don't Let the Fear of Man <u>EMBARRASS</u> You
--If you deny Christ because of fear, He will deny you! (v. 32-33)

Paul confessed, *"For I am <u>not ashamed</u> of the Gospel of Christ"* (Rom. 1:16)

"Confess me" - to <u>say the same thing</u> about Jesus that the Bible says about Him.

Confession before men is a manifestation of true salvation.

"Before my Father" - Jesus will say of those who testify of him: "Father, they belong to me, they believe in me."

"Before My Father" - Jesus also said that He would confess us before the holy angels of God (Lk. 12:8). Why? So that they will know who to gather up at the Rapture (Mt. 24:31; cp. Mk. 8:38; Lk. 9:26)

We can deny Christ by <u>word</u>, <u>act</u> (*"works"* - Titus 1:16); or by <u>silence</u>.

To be <u>denied</u> by Jesus will be the greatest loss!

For Him to say, *"I do not know them"* or *"They do not belong to me"* will be the height of tragedy.

NOTE: Peter denied Christ (Mt. 26:34, 75) but later repented and then boldly and fearlessly acknowledged Him (Acts 2-5).

The Anabaptist Balthazar Hubmair did the same.

No one is a possessor of Christ who is not a confessor of Christ.

"The fear of man bringeth a snare (a lure into a trap - an eternal trap!) *but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe"* (Prov. 29:25).

CONCLUSION: