
Sermon Notes

August 5, 2018

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Pray With Jesus: When You Are Scared

Psalm 55

Fear Is In The Air

- ❖ We live in a time and place where much discussion and decision making is driven by a broad range of anxieties and fears
- ❖ What do you do, how should you pray when you are overwhelmed by fear and anxiety?
- ❖ Psalm 55 offers a “how to” primer on entrusting our fears to God
 - do you “manage” your fears?
 - or do your fears “manage” you?
- ❖ David uses Psalm 55 to show us how to pray and how to find peace when we are scared

Flight, Fight, Distrust

- ❖ Pondering all the “what ifs?” can lead to the oppressive kind of restlessness David refers to in v. 3

- ❖ 3 possibilities: run away, dig in your heels or develop a deep distrust of others
- ❖ In the first five verses of Psalm 55, David uses almost every Hebrew word there is for fear
 - anguish, terror, fear, trembling, horror
 - the oppression of the wicked (dropping trouble on David and holding grudges)
- ❖ David’s “preferred” option (vv. 6-8)
 - perhaps a majority would choose “flight” over “fight”
 - though David would prefer to “fly away”, he still calls down a curse and wishes death upon his enemies (v. 15)
- ❖ David **HAS** been betrayed by a close friend
 - betrayal is a serious, painful wound
 - Jesus and Judas
 - David’s betrayal leads him to imagine a scenario in which he envisions the entire city plotting against him

Resolution

- ❖ David shows us how to handle our fears and how to find peace by surrendering what we can’t control to God (vv. 16-17)

- call out to God in prayer
- make your issues known to God
- expresses confidence that God hears you
- ❖ Sometimes we are more inclined to run to our friends with our problems than we are to run to God
 - friends may “validate” or even **magnify** our fears
 - take it **TO THE LORD** in prayer!
 - help your friends by pointing them to God
- ❖ God is on His throne! (vv. 18-19)
- ❖ *Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you* (v. 22)
- ❖ Knowing the difference between your “circle of concern” and your “circle of influence”
 - circle of concern = the people and situations you are concerned about
 - circle of influence = those things in your circle of concern that you actually have some measure of control over
- ❖ David urges you to take everything that is beyond your circle of influence and hand it over to the One whose

- ❖ Is David’s testimony in v. 23 **your** testimony?
- ❖ Jesus gives us a perfect pattern and picture of how we can pray Psalm 55 when we are scared
 - we can allow fear to paralyze us
 - or we can **PRAY WITH JESUS** and ask God for His help in surrendering what we cannot control to Him, moving forward in faith and trusting Him

Personal Application

1. What are you most afraid of? Why? Do you think most of your fears are “what ifs” or actual fears?
2. Have you ever had a fear you got over? If so, how?
3. What are some things that might cause you to irrationally mistrust others? What should you do about that?
4. In v. 17, why does David say that he cries out to God evening, morning, and noon? What principle can you draw from this that will help you overcome your own fears?
5. Do you have burdens that you need to cast upon the Lord? How will you go about doing that?