

SERMON | June 14, 2020
Living with Courage and Hope #2
Ivy Rose & Impalas: Fear of Others Unafraid

So we will be wrestling with managing fear, anxiety & worry the next few weeks. I pray that each of us will receive and employ new & old strategies that are rooted in scripture and prayer to lead us to be the people of God – embodying love and peace to all we meet.

There is much that God has done for us in giving us our own protection system... truly a gift from God in our brain... the Amygdala, which acts kind of like a 'smoke detector'. It triggers our internal/chemical/physical stress response ... fight or flight. This is a wonderful thing... but just as a smoke detector can go off at the most inappropriate time, our bodies also perceive & respond to our thoughts and feelings that can get out of wack... causing stress & anxiety at inappropriate times or manifesting in ways that impact our quality of life.

Most of you know of my pups... Ivy Rose & Zachary. They are Chihuahuas... small dogs...about 6 pounds. However, they respond to people very differently. Zachary is the gentleman greeter, complete with wagging tail and approaching you with a smile on his face.

Ivy is also a greeter of a different sort, but more like a Sentry sounding the alarm.

Another way of managing fear is to anticipate... kind of like the Squirrel storing nuts. We've seen plenty of examples of 'squirreling away' ... paper towels, toilet paper, pasta, canned veggies, etc. In a sense it is our imagination running away and so we protect ourselves (control the situation) by overstocking. In fact, the word FEAR can represent the catastrophized issue: False Events Appearing Real.

One method of intervention often used by therapists is a exposure therapy... facing your fear. May not be appropriate in every situation but it does provide an opportunity to learn facts, build relationship and develop positive experiences.

My DOG story... after a bite, new dog,

The scriptures, too provide spiritual guidance for addressing fear... over 400 times fear is mentioned. It has been addressed by God with humanity throughout time.

So we know the most common of phrases... DO NOT BE AFRAID... Is 41:10

Praying the Scriptures is a key strategy to being present and remembering God is with us. PG 35

David, responsible for much of the psalms or their inspiration, got his start singing to Saul. Eventually, Saul became suspicious and jealous and sought after David. David ran and hid in caves in En Gedi.

The characteristics of many of the psalms (songs) are to cry out, question, and conclude with a word of assurance and hope. Music is one such strategy that soothes my soul. It is also an anchor in our faith tradition.

Share Bev Powell... Lord's Prayer & Amazing Grace.

So praying/singing scriptures help us to re-engage our imagination... and anchor our belief that God is with us.

So in summary... let us manage our response to events...avoid False Events Appearing Real; face the real facts... learning, growing in knowledge; sing & pray the scriptures knowing God is with us.

Pray: wrap arms around yourself..

Hear the words... as if from the Lord himself...

Don't fear because I am with you Don't be afraid for I am your God

I will strengthen you...I will help you

I will hold you in my righteous strong arm;

Lord, help us feel your peace & not be afraid

SING with me... Amazing Grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me I once was lost but now am found am blind, but now I see.

Amen.