

WEEK 33:

FEAR OF MAN TRAP

PRIMARY SCRIPTURE:

Luke 12:4-12

RELATED SCRIPTURES:

Deuteronomy 1:17, Psalm 8:3-6 + 118:5-9,
Proverbs 29:25, Isaiah 2:22 + 51:7-13, Jeremiah 1:8,
John 12:42-43, Galatians 1:10-11, 1 Peter 3:13-15

“There’s no doubt that a lot of our younger adults, younger Christians, teenagers are getting pushback and criticism and disdain for their faith that just wasn’t true 20 or 30 years ago, and I don’t want to say that’s not real. It’s just when you look across the world there are plenty of places where the church is thriving... though it’s very embattled, far more opposition to the gospel there... We must neither panic on the one hand nor assume persecution is always good on the other.”

- Tim Keller

“For much of the twentieth century, especially in the South and parts of the Midwest, one had to at least claim to be a Christian to be ‘normal.’ During the Cold War, that meant distinguishing oneself from atheistic Communism. At other times, it has meant seeing churchgoing as a way to be seen as a good parent, a good neighbor, and a regular person. It took courage to be an atheist, because explicit unbelief meant social marginalization. Rising rates of secularization, along with individualism, means that those days are over.”

- Russell Moore

PERSONAL STUDY:

Read Luke 12:4. Is there anyone in your life right now who threatens, intimidates and/or tries to manipulate you with fear? (Consider overt examples like a boss who threatens to fire you or more subtle examples where someone makes you feel guilty or pressured to do what they want.)

Read Luke 12:5. What is Jesus’ first logical argument against fearing man? What things in your life numb you to the eternal reality of God and His hugeness? What specific things cultivate a Godward posture in your soul?

Read Luke 12:6-7 and Psalm 8:3-6. How does God’s love, care and notice empower His children to stand courageously in the face of intimidation, threats and persecution?

Read Luke 12:8-12, Daniel 3:8-30. In what area do you feel the most pressure to deny Jesus right now? (Denying Jesus might look like not obeying his commands, or not upholding what He says to be true about the universe, or just outright denying your belief in or your commitment to Him.)

Read 2 Timothy 2:24-26 and Luke 22-23. What does it look like to disagree with gentleness even in the face of violent opposition? What stands out to you about how Jesus handled violent opponents in his final hours on earth?

SERMON NOTES:



LIFEGROUP DISCUSSION:

Are you more tempted to back down from cultural opposition or get excited about the opportunity to fight and debate?



Read Luke 12:4 and 8-9. Where do you feel the most cultural pressure to distance yourself from Jesus? What root desires make you susceptible to this pressure?

Read Luke 12:5-7 and Psalm 8:3-6. What happens if we don't understand God's might, holiness and fearsomeness?



What happens if we don't understand that God cares about us despite His majestic awesomeness?

Read Luke 12:4 and 2 Peter 1:3. What are you most afraid of people taking away from you? How does active awareness of who God is, what He's done for you and what He's given to you free you from the fear of man?



Read Luke 12:11-12 and 2 Timothy 2:24-26. What's the difference between being filled with the Spirit as God's witness in the midst of an oppositional culture and trying to maintain political power in a culture war?