

Being Afraid

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Preacher: Rev. George Sinclair

[0 : 00] Father, we confess before you that we're not always aware of what's going on inside of us. We don't always recognize when we're anxious. We don't always recognize when we're afraid.

Father, we confess before you that some of our fears and some of our anxieties are just almost like part of who we are, and we don't even recognize it at all about us.

We're just blind about it. Father, we're so glad that we have this opportunity to be in your presence, together as your people and your children, those who are Christians and choirs and all sorts and conditions, but that we get to be together in your presence, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to hear your word, and we give you thanks and praise, Father, that your word is a gentle mirror that you hold up to us so that we can begin to understand who we really are, who we really are in the real world where you're God, and that you provide a means by which we have a bit of a window to know you better.

And so, Father, we ask that you would be very continuously kind and gentle with us and pour out the Holy Spirit upon us, that we might be in your presence and receive from your word and respond in a worthy manner.

And, Father, we are so grateful that you desire for us to be free in Christ. And these things we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated.

[1 : 21] So, I don't want to freak people out or weird people out, but I'm going to ask for your special prayers for me this week.

Bishop Charlie, who's with us, he can clearly bear testimony or witness to this, is that often when a person's going to preach on a particular Bible text, it's not unusual for aspects connected to that text to sort of affect you during the week.

Probably in heaven, one of the things that God will do, and we'll all have a great laugh over it, is he'll point out all those different things that he put on in your week that you just missed. You know, it was an opportunity to reflect upon the word in a deeper and better way.

But sometimes it's very obvious. So, I'm asking you all of this because next week I'm going to speak about demons. I'm going to speak about the very famous text of Jesus casting out a legion of demons from the Gadarene demoniac.

And in times before when I've spoken on demonic things, I've had a bit of extra trouble throughout the week because demons don't like to be unveiled. They don't like to be outed.

[2 : 27] So, if you could just pray for me a little bit this coming week as I'm preparing, that would be very good. I'm not afraid of them or anything, but I just know that they're going to probably mess with me more than usual. And so, I'd appreciate your prayer.

And it also fits into what we're going to look at today. And I'm not the sharpest tack in the... I'm not the sharpest pin in the pin cushion. And I'm not the sharpest tack on the bulletin board.

And probably there were a lot of various things that happened. But I... This week I had a... I had a... I had a phone call that I had to do. And I started... I was anxious about it.

I was a bit afraid about the phone call that I had to do. And it... I'm so clueless. Here I am looking at a text about fear. And it sort of... It took me a while before I...

And all of a sudden it was as if the Holy Spirit said, George, you're talking about fear. And you have fear about this phone call. Like maybe there's supposed to be something going along connected to these two things.

[3 : 26] And then I realized just how profoundly helpful the text of Scripture was. And so we're going to look at fear today. Being afraid. And...

You know, we're human beings. All human beings have fears. But we live in an age of fear right now. The newspapers and the media are stoking fears. Fear sells.

They don't want to have a thing. By the way, this is all going to be normal in about a month. No. They want to make it look like there's going to be 23 more viruses and 56 more interventions. Or who knows. Maybe there will be.

I don't know. But we live in an era that stokes fear. We live in an era that stokes political fear. That if you vote for this other party, basically the entire world will come to an end almost.

And that's just on one level. This overarching fear which is part of our world and that many people have. And many of us have been in context where you can cut the anxiety or the fear with a knife.

[4 : 22] But that's separate from just the other fears that we all have. We get worried about having to have that conversation with our boss. Or the conversation with our spouse. Or the conversation with our neighbor.

We're worried about looking at our bank statement when it comes in. Because we're very concerned and fearful about our finances. We're concerned about going to see the doctor. Or waiting to hear what the doctor is going to say about the medical prognosis.

Where we're living in fear because we heard the prognosis. And it struck us in a very, very powerful way. And we are filled with fear. And so given that fear is such a common part of the human experience.

The Bible here today, the text that we have is a very profound and deep reflection upon fear. And for Christians it's a profound reminder. And for those outside the faith.

It will give you a bit of a window into why it is that the gospel is so emotionally satisfying and important. So if you would turn with me in your Bibles. It's Mark chapter 4 verses 35 to 41.

[5 : 24] And we're preaching through the book of Mark. And this is the story that we come to today. And so it's just whatever that is. Seven verses. But it's a very compact story.

With lots of details that are very important. And here's how it goes. On that day when evening had come. He said to them. Let us go across to the other side.

Now just pause there for a second. This is going to become more important as the story progresses. But what you want to notice here is that Jesus is driving the action. We don't know whether or not he knew that there was going to be a big storm.

We don't know some of those details. But he's driving the action. It wasn't as if the apostles all said let's go out for a boat trip and catch a few fish. And then a storm happens.

Jesus drives the action. They probably would have just stayed on the shore. And we'll find out a little. I mentioned a little bit in the sermon partly why he wants to go across. But he's driving the action. And then in verse 36 it says this.

[6 : 22] And leaving the crowd they took him with them in the boat. Sorry I moved my hand and I lost my place. And leaving the crowd they took him with them in the boat just as he was.

And the other boats were with him. And I want to pause on this as well. This is actually another very important little detail in the story. What's happening here is that Jesus is...

Mark is saying that there's witnesses to the miracle. Now just back up a little bit about something else as well. When I was in the Anglican Church of Canada, very, very many people and many clergy loved this story.

I would often hear clergy talk about it. And they loved it because of this very, very basic image of how you can be afraid and Jesus is with you. You just got to wake him up.

That would often be a little bit of a joke. Jesus is already with you. You just got to wake him up. But the interesting thing is that most of the clergy probably didn't believe it actually happened. They saw it just as a very, very powerful story.

[7 : 30] Very powerful image. And it is a powerful story. And it is a powerful image. However, if it didn't happen... Well, then it sort of doesn't make any sense actually.

They treat it like a parable. But the thing is that what Mark is trying to communicate to you is that this really happened. Mark understands the difference between a parable and telling you about something that really happened.

In fact, if you go back later on and look, you'll see that just before this, Mark is told a variety of parables. But now he switches and he uses a different type of language.

He's using the language of reporting something that actually took place in time. And even though the other boats won't necessarily have heard Jesus say his words, peace be still, they all are going to be out in the water when they see something which just gobsmacks them.

Something that is completely and utterly impossible. They're all going to experience very directly going, what on earth happened? Like that's completely impossible. And so what Mark is signaling here when he tells us is that when he writes his gospel, this biography of Jesus, he's writing at a time when there's still many, many eyewitnesses and earwitnesses to Jesus.

[8 : 41] And he's actually in a sense providing you, for those who are inquirers, those who are skeptics, those who have questions, he's saying to you, travel back to this region of Galilee, go to this region.

There were lots of other people out in boats on this particular night and they all experienced it. Check it out. It really happened. He's trying to communicate that this happened. Let's continue on in the story.

Verse 37. Now just a couple of things about this.

Back in my previous church, I had a fellow in the congregation. I'll call him Bob because I call all the men Bob and all the women Sue.

We'll call him Bob, but he'd been in the Navy for 30 years. And after he'd been in the Navy, he'd just been retired for a few years, but he'd been in the Navy for 30 years. And he was an adult convert to the Christian faith.

[9 : 48] I think he was in his early 50s when he became a Christian. He ends up coming into our church and I'm doing a Bible study with him. And this was one of the texts that we looked at. And I'll never forget what he said.

He said, George, when I first heard this story as a Christian, it was a bit of a crisis of faith for me because I didn't believe that it was true. That sort of took me a bit back. He said, nobody could be in a big storm and stay asleep like that.

Anybody who thinks you could have never been in a big storm. Like, George, have you ever been in a big storm? Well, no, I hadn't. He said, I've been in big storms. Nobody could stay asleep.

And he said it really troubled him for a while. And then he was reflecting upon it and praying about it. And he realized, this is, I'm just telling you what he said because I've never been in a big storm.

He said, George, there's a miracle within the miracle.

And the miracle is that he was asleep. And he was not saying that to dismiss it. But he said, I just, that's what I started to come to after having been in many storms. And looking at this text, I realized God gave him the gift of sleep to help set up this greater miracle that's about to happen.

[10 : 57] Now, I'll just give you that for what you can just think about it. Some of you have maybe been in big storms. Others, I'm not going to swear to it. But it's always struck me ever since I heard him say that. And so here, if you go back in the text, look at verse, so the storm's coming, verse 36, 38.

But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him up and said to him, teacher, do you not care that we are perishing? And in the original language, they're rebuking him. It's a bit of a rebuke. They're telling him off.

In fact, actually, if you're curious about this afterwards, go back. And there's lots of elements in this story that are very similar to Jonah 1. But the big difference is, in Jonah chapter 1, Jonah is running away from God.

And he goes out in the ocean to try to get away from God and away from God's will. And the storm comes. And if you go back and you look at the story later and you look at Jonah 1 and you compare them, and it's more obvious in the original language, but it's almost word for word.

What the disciples say to rebuke Jesus is the words that the captain says to rebuke Jonah in Jonah 1. Because Jonah's asleep. And the guy says to Jonah, what are you doing?

[12 : 03] Don't you care that we're going to perish? Get up. And then, of course, he goes on and says, get up and pray to your gods because we're all about to die. But it's sort of a connection to that story in Jonah. And the apostles are rebuking Jesus.

And then we come to verse 39. And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, peace, be still. And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

Now, I didn't know this until I was doing the research for the sermon in the academic commentaries. But the word rebuke, the language here is actually the language of an exorcism.

Now, it's not, what's going on is this. And those of you who are big fans of the Lord of the Rings and also maybe some more of the Lord of the Rings because of the different worldview than some other fantasy novels.

But if you've watched the movies or if you've read the book, even better if you've read the book, there's this time early on when they're all traveling and they have to sort of go around a mountain. And there's this big snowstorm and rocks and everything like that.

[13 : 15] And the characters say that it's almost as if the mountain itself is trying to stop their journey. And in fact, they actually do have to stop and they end up having to go through the mountain. And I won't tell you what happens by going through the mountain because it would be a big spoiler if you've never seen the movies or never read the book.

But there's a huge thing that happens in there. But they have this language. And it's a similar type of thing. What you're really seeing here is something a little bit similar to what you see in John when it tells you the story of Jesus raising Lazarus.

And there's a time in that story where Jesus just expresses his great sorrow, his great anguish at death in the fallen world. And there's something a little bit similar going on here.

What Jesus is doing is he's going across the Sea of Galilee to go to where the pagans are.

Because he wants to start to have this brief time where he proclaims the glory of God in the gospel to the pagans.

And he's going to be met by a legion of demons, so to speak, on the other side. And what we're in a sense seeing here is that it's as if neither demons nor nature or storms itself is going to stop me from coming to the pagans, to going to the nations, to reveal myself to them.

[14 : 27] And we all have a little bit of an experience of this, especially during times like COVID.

When we say to ourselves, oh, if I could only be with my family at this particular time. If I could only go and be with that person across the street or down the road and give them a hug at this time of their great distress.

But it's as if the virus and nature and all sorts of things are working against the good, compassionate, gracious desires of our bodies and frustrating it from happening. If I only didn't have this problem with my knees, I would so go over and help that person with their problem. And nature seems to foil our desires to do things which are compassionate and good and just and merciful. So we all on one level experience this.

And so here we have the storm apparently trying to frustrate it. So it's not just that Jesus stops it. It's almost in this original language, which the hearers would have understood, that it's almost the language of exorcism, that he is rebuking this.

It's all part of the great tragedy of the fall. Falling God's good designs and purposes. And you'll look at it again and see what it says.

[15 : 35] And it says, he says to the sea, peace, be still. And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. Now, I am not going to give you an argument for miracles in this particular sermon.

I've given lots before in the past. I'll give you lots before this series and mark is over and in the years to come. I just want to really draw this particular thing out to your attention. This is not a parable.

It's not an allegory. This is told as if you're reading a historical account of what actually happened. And what we've just seen here is a very profound miracle.

It's not completely surprising to us. Some of us have been in situations where it seems as if the wind just stops like that. Although usually it might take a couple of minutes or whatever for it to stop. But some of us have seen that that's not as big a thing. Although it is obviously a miracle. The profound miracle. The one that would have had all of the people in boats talking. In fact, it would be one of those things.

[16 : 39] What happened to the guys in the boats? People would be buying them beer for years to tell the story about what happened. That's what I'm talking about. Just to be crass.

Beer for years. They'd say the waves were higher than that. And all of a sudden, flat. Flat. All across the sea. Not waves that high. The wind stops. It's a centimeter smaller. And then a centimeter smaller ten minutes later.

And then a centimeter smaller ten minutes later. And then five or six hours later it's flat. Flat. What went on? So I mean by when he says that there's other boats.

He's saying, you're a skeptic. Go to the region. There's still lots of people alive who've heard about this. You can go ahead and ask them. Jesus did this very, very, very, very, very profound miracle.

[17 : 37] See, this is all at peace with a variety of other things that go on in the text. By the end of the gospel, you're going to see that it's going to give you an eyewitness account of Jesus dying on a

cross.

And it's going to tell you of the eyewitnesses that the tomb is empty. And it's all part of the other biographies and the other things and the preaching of the disciples and the apostles have been going on.

That the reason that the grave is empty is that Jesus had risen from the dead. And let me tell you this. If Jesus didn't rise from the dead and if this story didn't happen, if they're just stories, he's a loser.

And we should all leave the room right now. We should all leave the room right now. To think that this is a comforting parable and he ended up still, he's just, he wrought in a grave somewhere else, is to not understand anything at all about the Christian faith.

And I don't really care if I've just offended a lot of people in a lot of churches. That's just the case. A lot better things to do with your time. And there's a lot more inspiring stories to read.

[18 : 41] If at the end of this, this was just invented and made up and Jesus died after his crucifixion. Because if that's what happened, he's just a loser. And we are losers to believe him and trust in him.

But the message of the gospel is this actually happened. This happened. It's a profound miracle. And then notice what happens right next in verse 41. And they were filled with fear.

Filled with great fear and said to one another, Who then is this that even the wind and the sea obey him? In the original language, what's going on is that they're very afraid because of the storm.

They're so afraid of the storm that they tell Jesus off. But after Jesus, by a word of command, has stopped the wind and stopped the waves and calmed the sea, before they were very afraid, now they're very, very, very, very afraid.

They stand there shaking and trembling at the majesty and the power of God. And whether it's just for a moment or whether it was something that lasts for several moments, but maybe for the first time in their life and something that has never really happened to any of us, they knew they were dust.

[19 : 53] They knew they were dust in the presence of the true and living God. The way we're preaching through the book of Mark is that on the Sunday before Easter Sunday, known as Palm Sunday, we're going to read the story of Jesus predicting for the first time that he's going to die on the cross, and when he's dying on the cross, and he's going to die on the cross.

He's going to rise from the dead, but he's going to die on the cross. And in that story, when Jesus says this, Peter tells him off and says, there's no way this is going to happen. If you could put up the first point, that would be very helpful.

How could a man who can stop the wind and the waves with a mere command be captured and die upon the cross? You see, Peter's response is completely and utterly, it's completely brilliant.

It's completely natural. I mean, you just think about it for a second. He can just say a word in all the wind. With just one word, he can make waves that high go down to as flat as this floor.

Charlie, he can do that, and he can raise the dead, and he can heal men born blind, and he can heal the sick and cast out a whole legion of demons, and he can do all of this stuff.

[21 : 24] You're not going to die on a cross. Because you think about it, if Bishop Charlie told us, by the way, that he knows he's going to die in a year and a half in a car accident, well, I don't know.

I mean, I think it would be a bit weird if he told me that, just between the two of us and all of us, actually. But, I mean, he could die. I'd probably tell him, well, if you think that, then don't drive your car.

Just stay in your house in the basement for four months and avoid it, or something like that. But I don't know, things like that happen. But he's just a mere mortal, just like me. But Jesus has just done this. So how on earth can he possibly die upon the cross?

And this gives you a profound window, if you think about it for a second, it gives you a very great window into the heart of the Christian faith and how the Christian faith is very, very different than the religions and spiritualities of the world.

You see, if the Christian faith, if the story of Jesus was just, he did this exorcism, he did a miracle, he did an exorcism, he did a miracle, he gives some good teaching, some other teaching, another miracle, another miracle, another miracle, and the end of the story, he just ascends into heaven, you would have a very, very different religion than the Christian faith.

[22 : 33] A very, very different religion than the Christian faith. In fact, actually what you'd have is what most people expect of religion and spirituality. That religion and spirituality will give us some type of power.

It will give us some type of power. It will either put the gods in our dead, it will give us some power to master the situations around us, it will give us some wisdom to master the situations around us, but it will give us insight or it will give us power.

And the idea of the Christian faith would then be, well, if you hang out with this guy or you call on this guy, maybe some of that power will rub off on you and it's all about power and it's all about wisdom and insight. But the gospel doesn't end with miracle, miracle, miracle, miracle, exorcism, exorcism, miracle, teaching, and then he goes to heaven.

It ends with him dying upon the cross. Well, I mean, that's the almost end because, of course, it ends with his resurrection. And it's miracles like this that it really does, that old saying that nothing could hold Jesus to the cross but his love.

The more you meditate upon these miracles, you realize good grief. He wanted to die upon the cross. He was willing to die upon the cross.

[23 : 53] The omnipotent dies for the powerless. The eternal dies for the finite. The sinless dies for the sinful.

Light dies for ones who are filled with darkness. Glory dies for those who are bereft of glory.

Truth dies for those who easily believe the lies. And he only does it because he loves you and wants to reconcile you to the triune God.

There's no other reason other than love. And for all of us, it's going to mean that whatever we come to appreciate about the power, the wisdom of God, we know that our walk with Christ after we are reconciled to God through him is going to be something far more different than mere exercises of power or eloquence or brilliance.

Because he died. He died as a sacrifice to make you and I right with God. And so on one hand, this text is a bit of a window into what the true God is like.

[25 : 18] But it's also a mirror. Here's where the text becomes very personal and profound. I said it was a profound meditation upon fear. Just look.

I don't know if it'll be up on the screen. But after Jesus has calmed the storm in verse 40, he says two questions to them. And in a sense, these two are two questions for each one of us for the rest of our lives.

The first question is this. Why are you so afraid? Why are you so afraid? I mean, this is the thing that gobsmeaked me.

Here I am, sort of afraid of this phone call that I have to have. And of course, I'm not going to tell you all of the different sinful things that I do in my mind when I'm trying to deal with fear.

I mean, we all know we do distractions. We worry. We use our imagination in bad ways. We feel grumpy. We feel hard put. You know, all those things. And you have your own.

[26 : 17] And I sort of knew I was afraid, but I didn't entirely know how much my fear was sort of bending my afternoon and my day out of shape.

And I'm reading this text and I realize this is Jesus speaking to me and to you. In fact, if you could put the second point up, that would be very good. The Lord Jesus Christ asks you a question. Why are you afraid? Why are you afraid?

And one of the things which is so powerful about this question is that the one who asks it of us is the one who died on the cross for you. We talked about this a couple of, maybe in fact it was even last week, that this doctrine that was just before this, that God, that Jesus is the light of the world, but Jesus sees everything.

He sees every single thing in your life. And so that when he dies for you on the cross, he dies for you, he knows everything in you that needed to be, that was shameful and every single thing in you that was sin, every sin of commission, every sin of omission with nothing left out, every single thing. That the sins of our past that we become aware of, maybe as we grow older and we start to think back to the way we did something to our child or to our spouse, that now we just, we're horrified.

[27 : 43] We might even want to vomit over when we think about it. It's hard for us to believe that Jesus could love us when we think back to what we did and we almost feel like retching over it. It was so terrible. And it's news to us to have the weight of our sin revealed, but for Jesus, he knew that when he died on the cross for you.

He knew that when he willingly died for you. And so it's that same one, the one who's just revealed that he knows everything and the one who they don't yet know is going to die on the cross for them, that it's not just power shows and wisdom and insight.

He's going to actually do something that affects the whole universe. It affects, it's this sacrifice that's in history that's eternal and works in the heavens and works for all human beings.

That this profound thing he's going to do. And it's that same one who looks you and I in the eye in the midst of our fear and says, why are you so afraid? Why are you afraid? And if you could put up the next point, because he doesn't just ask you why are you afraid?

He says, the Lord Jesus, and then the next thing is he says, have you still no faith? The Lord Jesus Christ asks you a question. How does your fear reveal to you how the gospel needs to become more real to you?

[29 : 03] I mean, the wonderful thing about this is, and this is part of the profound power of the gospel is that not only are you talking to the one who died for you, who loved you so much, who, it isn't as if at the end of, after you've lived your whole life, he sort of looks at you and says, well, I think you just got a basic passing grade.

No, no, he passes the test for you long before you've died. That's what he does for you on the cross. And we, and as, and so, he says to you, okay, George, why are you afraid?

And maybe I'll start to say to him, well, I don't know if you have the power to do this or that, and he might say, well, George, it's not really about power, is it, George, is it? Like, what's going on? And then, there's a safe place to come to him, a person, the one who died for me, to have this conversation with him, and it might come out, well, you know, my, it's really important for me that I'm always right.

Don't you believe, George, that the gospel's about me making you right? Or maybe it's about me saying, well, you know, I like to have control.

George, don't you know that in my arms you don't have any control and you don't have to worry about it because I'm in control? Or maybe it's something very obvious.

[30 : 37] Well, George, if you'd just gotten my cancer diagnosis, you would be afraid as well. Well, maybe the gospel becoming more real to our heart is that don't you believe that Jesus is your hope of glory?

Like, do you believe you're going to live forever? Well, I had so much I wanted to do, so much I had to do. Well, don't all things come of me? Aren't I going to give you my complete kingdom?

Don't you think that even in your sickness or diminishment that you can do something that will bring glory? I mean, I'm not going to go through it all, but you see, this story invites us into this conversation with our Savior and we can ask him and we can say, he can say to us, George, why are you so afraid?

And there's a safe place to begin to have a conversation with him and the heart of the conversation is always going to be that every single one of us, we do know the gospel, we believe the gospel, but the gospel needs to become more real to our heart, deeper to our heart.

Who Jesus is, what he accomplished for us on the cross, and his promises. And so our fears reveal those areas in our lives that either the person of Christ or the work of Christ or the promises of Christ have not yet really taken hold as they should.

[31 : 56] And then there's this other very profound thing at the end, just in closing. And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, who then is this that even the wind and the sea obey him? If you could put up the final point.

In a sense, what this is inviting us to say is a prayer. Lord, please grow in me a deeper trust in who you are, in what you have accomplished on the cross, in what you have promised to your children or to me, and grow in me a gospel-shaped fear of God.

If I don't get my blog written by 4.30 on Friday, it'll come out on Monday. And so the blog that'll come out on Monday are 12 Bible passages for you to contemplate and meditate upon upon the fear of God.

But that's what's going on here. You see, that as the gospel becomes more real to us, and as we have a deeper and greater sense that God is God and that we are not and that this is good.

Because that's part of what's going on in the fear of God. As that becomes more real to our heart, anxiety and fears decrease. Now just be honest, fears are like daisies in the summer.

[33 : 04] They're like weeds in your garden. They grow all the time. This isn't something to say when you master this you'll never have. No, no, no, no, no, no. Fears are like weeds and daisies.

Every day there will be fresh ones.

Every week, every month, every year. When you're 107, there'll be new fears. If you're 18, new fears.

But there's this profound invitation from Jesus to know who he is, to have faith in him, to go deeper and our fears can help us to understand afresh who he is, what he's accomplished for you on the cross.

his promises to you. All in the context of really understanding that there is a God. There is a God who's sovereign over all things.

And when I put my faith and trust in Jesus, there will be bad things that happen to me and unless Jesus comes first, there will come a time when I will die. But at no time am I ever not in the hollow of his hand.

[34 : 10] At no time am I ever not in the hollow of his hand and the object of his affection and great love at no time. At no time.

At no time. I invite you to stand. Let's bow our heads to prayer.

Father, I ask that if there are any here or any who are watching and entering into worship online, Father, if there are any here who think that this is too good to be true or could never be true for them because their life has been one of failure or abandonment or people not keeping their promises, Father, I ask that your Holy Spirit would just move in their lives and help them to lay down their excuses and help them, Father, and help us to get on our knees and say, Jesus, be my Savior and be my Lord and I thank you that you did it all for me in advance and that you will never leave me or abandon me or forsake me or mock me.

Father, if there are any here who think it's too good or too hard or too far that they'll fail, Father, even now, pour out the Holy Spirit upon them that they might call out to Jesus to be their Savior and their Lord.

And Father, for those of us who are here, Father, it is good to know that it's not a sign of lack of faith that anxieties and fears grow like daisies and weeds and they'll always be with us, but Father, thank you so much that your Son is so patient and kind with us that he looks at us with the eyes of love, the same eyes that he looked upon us, Father, as he died upon the cross thinking of each one of us who have put our faith and trust in him and that he can look at us in the midst of our fears and worries and anxieties and ask us, Father, with words of love, not words of threat, why are you afraid?

[36 : 09] And help us, Father, to cling to this story and cling to these words to hear his invitation to reflect and pray with him. And Father, we ask that in your mercy your Holy Spirit will reveal to us our fears and anxieties and bring the gospel home more deeply to our hearts in the presence of us, in your presence and in the real world and grow within us as the gospel shapes us, a true and proper fear of you.

And we thank you, Father, as that our faith deepens and our fear of you grows, that our anxieties will diminish and our fears will become smaller. So, Father, thank you for Jesus.

and we ask and thank all these things in the name of Jesus and all God's people said, Amen.