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THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

John 18:36
Lesson #24
Fear - Test
01/17/2021

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MOB STORMS CAPITOL

Lawmakers reject voiding two states' votes after pro-Trump riot disrupts Congress

Woman Is Killed By Police; Members Evacuated

Political Violence Shakes Country

Biden Certification Delayed

'Protesters Are In the Building'

Democrats Win Control of Senate

January 6, 2021




This is more than a tragedy or a referendum on an election, or a culture war

It is an invitation to brand the message of 1 Peter into our lives.

1

The fear test

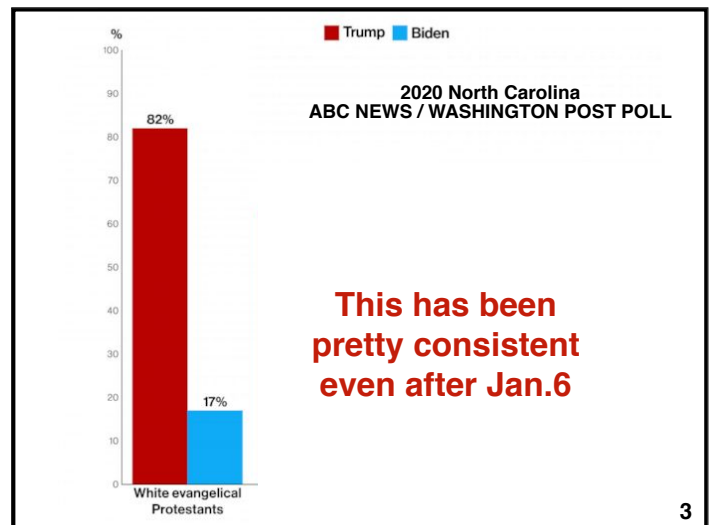
What have we learned in our study of 1 Peter?



A theme in 1 Peter

Where we find our home will determine how we respond to the **fear** of living as aliens in a fallen world.

2



Brene Brown

"We're tired of the national conversation centering on **"What should we fear?"** and **"Who should we blame?"**."

Dan Brown

"Men go to far greater lengths **to avoid what they fear** than to obtain what they desire."

4

The Political Right is AFRAID that the left will turn the country to socialism and socio-economic collapse.

So they want to

Have more government control of certain moral issues

Have less government control of environmental and economic issues

5

The Political Right is **AFRAID** that the **left will turn the country to socialism and socio-economic collapse.**

So they want to

Stop
abortion

Bless
Israel

Fight
socialism

Dignify
Christian
values

Grow the
economy

Preserve
a WASP
culture

They may not like Trump's "style" but they see him as a shield and sword respecting and sharing their **fears**.

6

The Political Left is **AFRAID** that the **the right will continue to deconstruct our institutions and the planet.**

So they want to

Have more
government control
of environmental
and economic
matters

Have less
government
control of personal
moral choices

7

The Political Left is **AFRAID** that the **the right will continue to deconstruct our institutions and the planet.**

So they want to

Save the
planet

Promote
education

Welcome
diversity

Dignify the
poor and
minorities

Join the
global
community

Stop
economic
greed

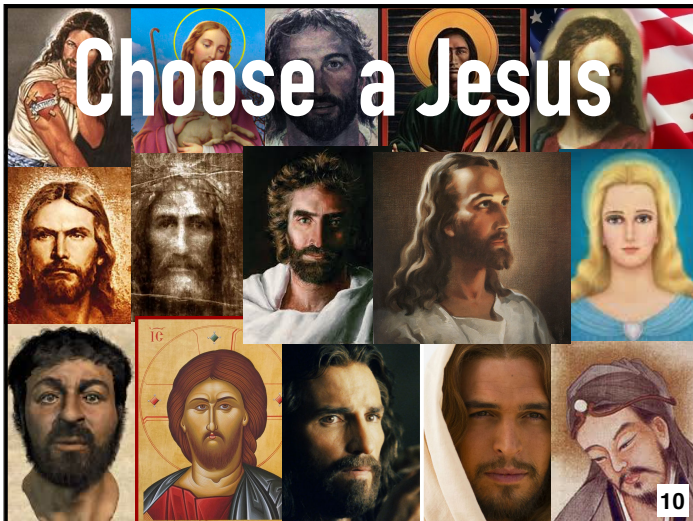
Donald J. Trump is **FEARED** as an incompetent president who is worse than the "swamp" he claims to drain.

8

As a Berean my concern is NOT with where the left and right disagree **but with the areas where they agree.**

1. They both are afraid of losing an IDEALISTIC kingdom.
2. They both see POLITICAL power as the way to alleviate their fears.
3. They both DEMONIZE and fear their opposition.
4. They both see a JESUS who looks like them and is the champion for their cause.

9



10

Fear is Satan's tool, expressed in shame, blame, anxiety, despair, & idolatry.

We need leaders who will shepherd us through our **fears** -
- and not use **fears** to manipulate us.

11



John 14:27

"Peace I leave with you;
My peace I give to you;
not as the world gives
do I give to you, Do not let
your heart be troubled,
nor let it be fearful."

12

1 Peter 3:14

"But even if you should suffer
for the sake of righteousness,
you are blessed. **And do not**
fear their intimidation (fear),
and do not be troubled,"

Isaiah 8:12

"... And you are not to fear what
they fear or be in dread of it."

13

1 Peter 5:7

"⁶ **humble** yourselves under the mighty
hand of God, that He may exalt you at
the proper time. ⁷ having **cast all your**
anxiety on Him, because He cares
about you."

Psalms 55:22 (LXX)

"Cast upon the Lord your anxiety
and he will sustain you; he will never
allow the righteous to stumble."

14

Satan tempted Eve by first
instilling false expectations and
creating FEAR of missing out on life.

Genesis 3

"⁴ serpent said to the woman, "**You surely will not die!**" ⁵ **For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**" ⁶ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate."

15

Satan tried the same line on Jesus.

Matthew 4

"¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

³ And the tempter came and said to Him, "**If You are the Son of God**, command that these stones become bread." ⁴ But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

The FEAR of losing what we need.
Spiritual LIFE has no assurance
of temporal, tangible comfort.

16

Matthew 4

"⁵ Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to Him, "**If You are the Son of God**, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command His angels concerning You'; and 'On *their* hands they will bear You up, So that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.'" ⁷ Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

The FEAR of losing our security.

Social security is not a KINGDOM
promise or priority.

17

Matthew 4

“8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, **“All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.”** 10 Then Jesus said to him, “Go, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.’”

The FEAR of losing our birthright.

The Cross was not only Jesus’ destiny it was his PATH.

18

It was to be Paul’s path as well.

2 Corinthians 12

“7 And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there **was given me** a thorn in the flesh, **a messenger of Satan to buffet me** - to keep me from exalting myself! 8 Concerning this **I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me.** 9 And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in **weakness.**”

The FEAR of losing our impact.

Spiritual power comes in weakness.

19

Philippians 3

“3 for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and **put no confidence in the flesh,**

7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom **I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ,**

10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and **the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death;**”

20

Peter’s fearful denial.

John 13

“36 Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered, “Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you shall follow later.” 37 Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You right now? **I will lay down my life for You.**” 38 Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, a cock shall not crow, until you deny Me three times.”

John 18:26

“One of the slaves of the high priest, being a relative of the one whose ear Peter cut off, said, “Did I not see you in the garden with Him?” 27 Peter therefore **denied it again;** and immediately a cock crowed.”

21

Peter’s faith, hope, and love were attached to Christ but not to the way of the Cross.

The Point

A person can be passionately committed to Christ and yet misguided in their perception of God’ ways.

22

Peter’s false expectations

- Jesus would enter Jerusalem as a **reigning** king not a suffering sacrifice.
- Jesus’ disciples would be set **free** from all suffering to reign with Jesus.
- The Kingdom of God would be **material, temporal, and immediate.**

could also be ours.

23

How to recognize a toxic attachment to the false power of this world.

- An attachment to **political** power in this world was not Jesus or the Apostles model of the “Way of the Cross”.
- If it is **insecure** it is probably a false treasure.
- Monitor your **anger** and **anxiety** - What are the triggers that set them off? It might tell you where your real treasure is.

24

Our false expectations could be:

- centering God’s Kingdom on the **temporal and tangible** aspects of this world.
- to see our calling as to make America holy through **legislation**.
- to see our right as to **be served** rather than to serve
 - to get answers to my prayers as opposed to being the answer to someone else’s prayers.
 - to be justly treated as opposed to bearing a cross.
 - to receive grace as opposed to offering grace.
 - to reign with Christ as opposed to suffering for him.

25

*Identifying with Trump for **FEAR** of the alternatives **may bring with it some tragic consequences like:***

- ✓ A **disrespect** for 1) truth, 2) democracy (results of the election), 3) human dignity, and 4) key national institutions.
- ✓ A **distortion** of our message - the Gospel of the Cross - as we attach our faith, hope, & love to economic / political power in promotion of a superficial WASP culture.
- ✓ A **disturbance** of the peace, whereby the church loses an audience with those it needs to reach.

26

Consider these questions.

- ✓ Does God’s “New Covenant” kingdom demand a particular **political system**?
- ✓ Does **America** have a special contract with God?
- ✓ Doesn’t God’s Kingdom **power** mock the power of this world?
- ✓ Is God’s promised **peace** spiritual or physical?
- ✓ Does our ultimate **hope** rest in this world or the age to come?
- ✓ Is social **renewal** to be from the inside out or from political force?

27

How can we impact this world?

- ✓ Renew your **passport** as aliens in this world.
- ✓ Be an **example** through the faith community.
- ✓ Be **leaven** in the world, changing the whole loaf from the inside out.
- ✓ **Resist** the temptation to build a superficial kingdom through the world’s means.
- ✓ Respect the **dignity** of all who bear God’s image.
- ✓ Give **Caesar & God** what they are due.

28

John 18:36

“Jesus answered, “**My kingdom is not of this world**. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”

- ✓ If Christ’s kingdom is **not of this realm**, his people should not be fighting to protect him from abuse by this world.
- ✓ What does this suggest about the ethical agenda of the church in American politics?

29