

A Pandemic Survival Kit Sermon Series

by Rev. John C. Tittle

SCRIPTURE: Lamentations 3:52-58 NRSV

Those who were my enemies without cause have hunted me like a bird; they flung me alive into a pit and hurled stones on me; water closed over my head; I said, "I am lost." I called on your name, O Lord, from the depths of the pit; you heard my plea, "Do not close your ear to my cry for help, but give me relief!" You came near when I called on you; you said, "Do not fear!" You have taken up my cause, O Lord, you have redeemed my life.

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS – How To Not Be Afraid

1. What jumps out at you about this passage?
2. What was a time you were really afraid in your life?
3. What fears have you been experiencing these days? What fears have you observed going on around you?
4. Why do you think "be not afraid" is the most oft repeated command in Scripture?
5. It was mentioned in the sermon that during WW1 the press and government communication sought to shield the truth of the Spanish influenza pandemic from the public in order to keep morale up during the war, yet instead of boosting morale, it boosted fear. *How might speaking truth about reality allay our fears rather than heightening them? What do you think of Mr. Roger's mantra: if it's mentionable, it's manageable?*
6. When is fear a good thing? How can it be good?
7. When does fear become a bad thing? How can it be bad?
8. In faith, the man makes this prayer in Lamentations 3: 34-36, "When all prisoners in the land are crushed underfoot, when human rights are overridden in defiance of the Most High, when someone is cheated of justice, does not the Lord see it?" How might this passage speak to what we are watching in the news today regarding George Floyd? Does God see injustice that goes on? Do we see it? Does seeing need to lead to acting?
9. What are ways for us to non-violently stand up for justice and stand against injustice? What are bad ways that should be avoided?
10. What do you think of large gatherings while our world is still in the throes of a pandemic?
11. The positive way of expressing "be not afraid" is to trust in God and to be courageous in the face of fear. Why is trust and courage so important for godly living?
12. Do you think unhealthy fear is one of the major reasons we have so much polarization in America today? How does it contribute? And if not, what is the root cause?