



Sunday  
2 Aug 2020  
**LISTEN | CAN JESUS TAKE  
AWAY MY FEAR?**

**MATTHEW  
13:53-14:36**

### **Faith in the face of fear**

A beautiful testimony about faith in face of fear.

*I was asked by a patient if I feared going to work, and I could genuinely say that I didn't due to the faith and hope I have in Christ.*

Frontline health professionals ARE courageous everyday... especially in global pandemic.

Her courage is more than a medical qualification, part of her training and workplace management. Our sister is steadied in the face of fear... by Jesus.

Fear spirals us into unhappy places. Fear steers us into unhealthy habits. Fear suppresses warm relationships. Fear stunts our spiritual growth.

Knowing the REAL Jesus... steadies faith when rocked by fear. Knowing who Jesus really is... will give us a secure perspective... to live courageously in the world.

*Following Jesus has helped me to understand the fears and frustrations of my patients in these trying times and to empathise with them. My hope is to be able to seize the opportunity to share this hope I have with them.*

I want to have a Jesus-grounded courage that enables me to be like her.

Matthew's Gospel will build up our confidence in Jesus. Matthew is sensitive to our fears. Matthew knows fear is real... and shows us who Jesus REALLY is to steady us.

Do you want this courageous confidence and steady security?

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**New Life**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## Flimsiness in the face of fear

Matthew shows us a negative example of it... a flimsy character manipulated by fear is Herod.

Herod...

Herod doesn't do his job with courage and confidence.

He's given mis-information about Jesus (v2).

He's caught up in a marriage he should not be in (v4).

When challenged by John Baptist... wants to kill him... BUT

**[v5]**... fear!

In his fear he's manipulated by an inappropriate party dance...

and tricked into beheading John and while 'distressed' (v9)...

parades head to step-daughter on a platter at a banquet.

That's every bit of horrible.

Herod's supposed to be a leader of God's nation... but callous scaredy cat.

He's such a contrast to Jesus... a compassionate servant.

**[v13-14]**

Matthew tells us 4 particular times, Jesus has compassion on people.

In Ch9 because: **they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.**

Jesus come into world to be a courageous and compassionate shepherd. He has come to steer us away from all that is broken. To rescue us from sin and death. Lead us to place of eternal goodness, providence and rest.

This courageous compassion takes Jesus willingly to his crucifixion. Not a tragic death, strategic miscalculation or historical fantasy. But climax of God's plan to shepherd his people into eternal life.

Is that where your life is headed?

Is your life steadily and confidently secured into eternity with Jesus?

## **Invitation to faith in the face of fear**

Let me show you Matthew's testimony about faith in the face of fear.

**[v22-30]**

This is quite an experience for Jesus' disciples!

Just like Jesus did back in Ch8 when he calmed the storm...

in the face of fear he shepherds his disciples into faith...

and shows he's powerfully, wonderfully, faithfully safe & secure.

**[v31-33]**

If Jesus is NOT the compassionate, powerful, wonderful, faithful, safe and secure Son of God... I have NOTHING to offer you in your fear. At best I can cheer you on and say I'm thinking of you.

BUT because Jesus IS who he is... BEST thing I can do is point you to Jesus. And WE can point one another to Jesus. We can walk alongside one another in discipleship. We can pray for one another. We can share with one another our testimony of faith in face of fear.

If you're feeling rocked by fear... spiralling into dark and unsteady places... can I encourage you to lift your eyes back to Jesus?

I can leave with TWO things that might help you in days ahead. First an ancient song that we can pray together. Second a new song that we can sing along to.

### **Praying Psalm 23**

Lord, I thank you that you are my shepherd;  
And that with you I lack nothing.

Please lay me down in green pastures,  
Lead me beside quiet waters,  
And refresh my soul.

Guide me along the right paths,  
For your name's sake.

Jesus, I am walking through the darkest valley,  
Steady my faith and take away my fear.  
Be with me and comfort me.

According to your Word,  
Prepare a table before me,  
Anoint my head with oil.  
Overflow my cup with your goodness.

May your goodness and love chase after me,  
All the way into eternity with you.  
Amen.



### **Discussion and reflection questions**

Read Matthew 13:53-14:2

1. What are the opinions these people have about Jesus? What is the basis of their opinion?
  - hometown
  - Herod's attendants
2. How are people's opinions about Jesus shaped today? How is your opinion about Jesus formed and shaped?

Read Matthew 14:13-36

3. Make a list of everything Matthew wants us to know about who Jesus is in these verses.
4. The disciples say, "Truly you are the Son of God" (v33). Is this your opinion of Jesus?
5. What is one situation in your life you are afraid of (or worried about)? What will it look like for you to be steadied by your faith in Jesus?
6. Pray Psalm 23 (above) when these situations arise