

Acts: The Spirit, the Church and the Spread of God's Word

Unashamed and Unafraid, Part 1

Acts 20:17-38

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brian Fannin / March 15, 2020

What kind of people are we to be?

There are some specific things Paul shows us that we must be actively killing if we are going to be the people that transform the world in which we live for the glory of God!

I. Be killing the promotion of you, so that humility becomes you.

Pride is the inaccurate assessment of our wisdom, our value, and our very essence in light of others and especially in light of God. It thrives on what you think, what others think of you, and downplays what God says about you. Humility on the other hand is seeing yourself accurately in light of God.

Proverbs 16:5 “Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; assuredly, he will not go unpunished.”

You won't start living for what matters most, becoming all that God designed you to be, until you stop living for the little kingdom of “self.”

Acts 20:19 “Serving the Lord with all humility...”

Isaiah 66:2 “...This is the one to whom I will look; he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at My Word.”

For Jesus to be seen appropriately, for Him to be exalted, you have to lay low and stay low.

1 Corinthians 4:1 (NIV) “So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ...”

The Greek word for “serve” in v. 19 is the word “*dulos*” that simply means slave. That word for servant in 1 Corinthians 4:1 is not “*dulos*” but “*huperetes*” – a word that refers to a slave on a ship who is down below deck rowing! He can't even see what's going on above, but he's just doing his job. Someone else is in charge, on deck, and center stage. Who is that? It's Jesus!

II. Be killing the part of you that remains shallow and isolated, so that deep meaningful friendships are cultivated.

Acts 20:36-38 “And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷ And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, ³⁸ being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again...”

Romans 12:15 “Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.”

You can't have genuine friendship or community without truth. Relationships need to hinge on something bigger than the relationship itself. Meaningful friendship requires shared

convictions but also vulnerability—a willingness to open up and really share your heart.

The best friendships are forged in the midst of doing and pursuing something else, of sharing truth and pursuing more!

“...pathetic people who simply ‘want friends’ can never make any. The very condition of having friends is that we should want something else besides friends. Where the truthful answer to the question, ‘Do you see the same truth?’ would be, ‘I see nothing and I don’t care about the truth; I just want a friend,’ no friendship can arise. There would be nothing for the friendship to be about...Those who have nothing can share nothing; those who are going nowhere can have no fellow-travelers.”

~ C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*

III. Be killing your fear of the unknown.

Genesis 3:10 “...I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid...”

You need to face life with an open Bible, not a worried mind. The things that you perceive to threaten you, do not threaten God nor His faithfulness to His glory and your good. So, you still see the reality of possible threat but you don’t perceive it the same way.

Acts 20:22-24 “And now, behold, **I am going** to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, **not knowing what will happen to me there,** ²³ except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. ²⁴ **But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself,** if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.”

If you are dominated by sinful fear, worry, and anxiety, your problem is not fear of possible things; it is fear of the wrong thing. God is the only one to fear. We should be struck dumb with awe of Him, and appropriately careful before the Lord. But, the fear and worry about what might happen to you is a problem of self-centeredness.

1 John 4:18 “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear...”

“The enemy of fear is love. The way to put off fear is to put on love...love is self-giving, fear is self-protecting. Love moves toward others; fear shrinks away from them. But...we must remember that love is the stronger since it is able to ‘cast out’ fear. In dealing with fear nothing else possesses the same expulsive power.”

~ Dr. Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor’s Manual*

Paul was not afraid even though he knew trials and pain were in front of him. Why? Because there was no place he would go without God who would be limiting ordering and controlling what happened.

Mark 4:39-41 “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. ⁴⁰ He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” ⁴¹ 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?”