

THREE WAYS THE FEAR OF THE LORD BRINGS PEACE

ORIGINS SERIES PART 2 - GOING VIRAL

Ben Rudolph

Good morning Life Fellowship. It is good to see you here this morning. Please turn in your Bibles to Acts Chapter 9. I can't believe it, but this is the final sermon in our series called, 'Going Viral.' This is kind of sad for me because I have really enjoyed this series as we have been going through the book of Acts this year. And for me this is a constant reminder of the way the church should look and the way God likes to move in His world.

And I think as we have been looking at the book of Acts this year, it should be a mirror to us. This should be something as we look at it and say, '*This is what we want to see today.*' We have been talking about going viral, and today we are going to see another verse that talks about how the early church was going viral. As a result of that, it should make us ask questions as to why we aren't seeing this happen today.

I think a lot of it has to do with the foundational issues we think of and what we believe about church. A number of years ago I took my family to a retreat center called St. Christopher's Retreat Center which was on Seabrook Island. It is an Anglican camp and conference center, and they have a little clergy cottage that you can rent if you are a pastor. So I rented it for a few days and while we were there we took a little tour of the facilities one day. And on this tour they showed us this building which was like a chapel that had been built maybe 60 or 70 years ago when they were first developing this conference center.

Now the building wasn't being touched but there was massive construction going on underneath the building. It was being dug out and there was this giant pit surrounding this building. Everything was being held up by cinder blocks and they were digging this giant pit around the building in order to fix the foundation. I found out that when that building was built 60 or 70 years ago it only cost about nine thousand dollars. But what had happened was the foundation was built on sand, so it needed to be repaired. And what they were doing now was spending two hundred and fifty thousand dollars to fix the foundation so that the building would not crumble.

I think a lot of times when it comes to the church today we see some things around us culturally that seem to be crumbling and falling apart. And we need to ask ourselves if the problem is with the siding or the floor or if it is a foundational issue that we have to get to. And in this passage today I believe we are going to be talking about one of those foundational issues. I believe if we get underneath what drives us as believers, what should drive us as a local church, is something so important, yet is so absent from most of our lives, and that is the fear of the Lord.

Pastor Dan did an amazing job last week sharing about Saul's conversion and we know that Saul became Paul and Paul ended up writing most of the New Testament. He

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was just an amazing missionary church planter, but his early story was of a guy who hated Christians and who was arresting, imprisoning and killing them. Then after a transformation he became one of the biggest proponents of Christ, and his story is one of the most amazing stories we see in Scripture.

So what we have now is the two episodes that we are going to read today following Saul's conversion. Let's pick up Acts Chapter 9 beginning in verse 19. ***“For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues saying, ‘He is the Son of God.’ And all who heard him were amazed and said, ‘Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?’ But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.”***

“When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night in order to kill him, but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.”

So Saul immediately goes and starts preaching Jesus is Lord. And they were like, ‘What is going on here? This is the guy who came here to arrest people, and now he is trying to make people believe in Jesus.’ They are perplexed, they are amazed, and there is this confusion about Saul. But after many days when the Jewish leaders realized that he was for real, they only had one option and that was to kill him.

So Saul escapes at night by being lowered in a basket. Now let's look at the next episode here beginning in verse 26. ***“And when he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples.”*** Since Saul was now a Christian and his home base was Jerusalem before that is where he returns to meet up with the apostles. ***“And when he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples. And they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple.”***

“But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists. But they were seeking to kill him. And when the brothers learned this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.”

Now we have these two episodes, Saul at Damascus and Saul at Jerusalem. I want us to take a look at this passage because here is one of the things I want to try and

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teach you as we have been reading this narrative. When we read narratives a lot of times what we watch for is the moral of the story, the purpose of the story to be right there smack dab in our faces. But the way that a Middle Easterner's mind worked, and the way that the Jewish mind worked is when they describe a story, or unveil a story, that is just as important as what they are saying.

So when you are reading the Bible always look for patterns, when you are reading a narrative, look for patterns. We did this about a month ago when I was preaching on Acts Chapter 6, and I talked about how we need to look at some passages like a sandwich. A sandwich has bread and toppings but the meat is in the middle. Well, this is a little like that, so what you are going to see here in these two little episodes of Saul are the same things happening. Step one, step two, step three, step four and then it leads to the main point of what the author is trying to say.

So here is what we know from these two episodes of Saul's life. In the first episode in Damascus here are the four things that we see - Saul joins the disciples in Damascus, there is uncertainty over who Saul really is, the Jews were confounded by Saul's argument so they wanted to kill him, and then the disciples let him down in a basket to escape. So that is what we see in the narrative of Damascus.

Now let's look at what happened to Saul in Jerusalem which is the second episode we read - Saul attempts to join the disciples in Jerusalem, there is uncertainty over who Saul really is, he disputes with the Hellenists this time and they want to kill him, and then it says the disciples take him down to Caesarea.

Now here is what is so interesting about this. We know there is a pattern here when we realize Caesarea is north of Jerusalem. There may be a song where geographically Jerusalem sat on a hill, but the author here, which is Luke, is trying to show us there is a pattern in Saul's life that he is trying to point to. There is something that Saul is doing with his life now that is making us ask, *'How is he living his life? He just became a believer. He didn't have time for us to mess it up. He didn't sit with a bunch of believers and ask, how do I do this?'* But he received from the Holy Spirit what he was supposed to do and immediately he went out and started doing it.

And that is good discipleship. He didn't wait around and think he had to read the scrolls again, and make sure he knew enough; he just went there and immediately started proclaiming Jesus is Lord. So what made him do that? What made him immediately move into the act of sharing Jesus with people?

I believe the answer is found in the next verse. We have seen these little steps that Saul was taking in both these episodes, and now look in verse 31, because here is

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what Luke is trying to say. “*So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.*” See, that is it. The main point of what Luke is trying to point out here with what is going on with Saul and the disciples was the reason why the church is growing, why it is going viral, and it is right here in this verse.

It says, “*The church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace.*” Now we have been studying this every single week for the last eight weeks but has this church had peace? No, it has had opposition every single week. Every single week we read God’s word and we were seeing how people are trying to silence them, they are being attacked, they are being persecuted, they are being imprisoned, and they are being killed. There were all these things that were happening, and there doesn’t seem to be any peace there at all.

So what is the peace they are talking about? I believe this is the peace that comes from God, a peace that transcends circumstances. Let me ask you if you have peace today? Do you have the peace of God? Do you have the peace that is not tied to your circumstances but is the peace that transcends circumstances? For most of us that kind of peace is very foreign to our lives. We equate peace with when everything in our life goes well.

But this church was not having peace in a way that everything was going well. They were being attacked, they were being persecuted, yet they had peace. How were they able to have peace? Well, it says right there that they were “*Walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.*” And then it says the church was multiplying. There was another passage where it talks about the church being multiplied in Acts Chapter 6. There it talks about how the church prayed first to make sure they were going to do what they should.

And when we talk about these foundational issues for the church, we can talk all day long about strategy, how we are going to do this or that, how we want to plant a church, and so forth. But here is the thing, we can talk strategy all day long, but if we don’t get the foundation right at the church, we will never see it happen. We will never see what God wants to do.

And just as much as prayer has to be the foundation of this church, we see here another foundational issue that makes this church go viral, and that is the fear of the Lord. We don’t like talking about the fear of the Lord today. I think most of us don’t really know what it is, but the fear of the Lord is so important to our lives. I believe that most of us live under the bondage of the fear of man as opposed to walking in the freedom of the fear of the Lord.

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What we see in this passage is that the fear of the Lord brings peace, and that the fear of man brings bondage. For those of us who haven't seen God do something, we haven't seen God work and move the way that we want to, we need to ask ourselves what is keeping us back. What is keeping us back from seeing God do some amazing things, some extraordinary things?

I know for me the biggest issue that I always face, the two ditches I think are on the side of the road every morning for me are the ditch of fear and the ditch of pride. And fear and pride are after us every single day, and we can either fall into one ditch or the other. And fear is the big one, it can paralyze us, it can put us into a prison of our own making, and it keeps us from moving and doing what God wants us to do.

Does the fear of the Lord mean that we are shaking in trepidation? Most of the time when we hear the word 'fear,' we think of it as a negative word. And yet the fear of the Lord is mentioned over three hundred times in Scripture, and it is always used in a positive way. It is not terror that we should feel, the fear of the Lord is this idea that God should matter most, that it is His authority, that it is His control and His desire that should matter most. That is what the fear of the Lord is.

You remember when you were a kid and you got to Junior High and all of a sudden you become aware of what people might think about you. I remember this because I went from a Christian school in fourth grade to a public school in fifth grade, and it was a big transition for me. I remember walking into this massive school with hundreds of kids, and all of a sudden it mattered what I wore to school every day. Kids would point out things like, *'I can't believe you are wearing that.'* There are certain times you look at your parents and say, *'Mom - why?'*

I look at school pictures and I remember one school picture where I had blue patches on my gray sweatpants. Does that make sense to you? So, *'Mom - why?'* And she was like, *'I didn't want to buy a new pair of sweatpants for you.'* So all of a sudden you become aware of what people are thinking about you, and that is the fear, the fear of what people think.

Hopefully when you get to be my age you stop caring about those things. You stop caring about what people think. In fact the only person I care about the way I look is my wife. Sunday morning I will ask her what she thinks about this outfit or that outfit before I put it on. And she always tells me *'Yes, that's good,'* or *'No, that's not good. I like this better.'* And my wife is the person I care most about how I look.

Now maybe you all think I dress weird, or you think I dress plain or boring, but I don't care. As long as Liz likes it, that's all I care about. And see that is the way the fear

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of the Lord works. The fear of the Lord works like this - I don't care what anyone else thinks, but there is one audience that matters most to me and that is the audience of the Lord. And that is the way the fear of the Lord should work in our lives.

We see Saul immediately start preaching and proclaiming and moving forward, so how was he able to do that? We just read this passage about Saul and how in about two months he has lived a more exciting Christian life than I have in twenty years. How did he do this? He did this because he was not allowing the fear of man to determine one step that he took in his life; instead he was walking in the fear of the Lord.

So how does the fear of the Lord work? How does the fear of the Lord confront and bring peace in the midst of what we face in life? I want us to look at three ways the fear of the Lord brings peace, because I believe that many of us today are struggling with fear in our lives. And until we face this fear of man, the fear of what people think, the fear that puts us in bondage to ourselves, we are never going to move forward. We are never going to be able to see and do the things that this church did to make it go viral.

The first thing I want to share is the fear of the Lord gives peace so that we can risk losing power and position. We have to understand what Saul was doing here. He had achieved a level of political power and position like no one else. We believe he was a young man at this point.

I am going to read a passage of Scripture in Philippians Chapter 3 where Paul, after Saul has become Paul, is probably twenty years older than what we read about here in Acts. How was Saul able to change from someone who had been a Pharisee, someone with great power, who could walk into a city and begin arresting people? This was a lot of power for a young man. Listen to what he says about himself in Philippians Chapter 3 beginning in verse 4.

“Though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more; circumcised on the eighty day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee.” Now here is what you have to understand. To be a Pharisee you had to be able to memorize almost the entire Old Testament which is insane. That was the level of achievement he had.

“A Pharisee, as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.”

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Listen, Saul had achieved a lot in his young life. He was on a path and position to power. He had a powerful voice in the Sanhedrin that would have been unmatched in his day. And he gave it all up to follow Jesus. He immediately went out and started proclaiming Jesus. And that took guts. That took a new fear, a new opinion, and a new audience. It didn't matter what people thought; he was willing to give up position and power that his culture had told him was important, so he could follow Christ. He had a new Lord. Saul had been a student of the great Rabbi Gamaliel, and he gave it up to take on a new rabbi whose name was Jesus.

Think about your own life. Think about what God is calling you to do. What is the position, what is the power that you have right now that you would say, '*God, I am not willing to give this up. I am not willing to step up. I am not willing to step out and do something you want me to do because I feel like I would lose this. And this position and this power that I have in my life is too great, too valuable to me.*' I think for many of us what keeps us back from following Christ is we are afraid of what we will lose. But here is what we really need to be afraid of, we need to fear what we will lose if we don't follow Christ, because there is something great to gain for those of us who do.

I did a wedding last night for a young couple in our church. And weddings are always wonderful because everyone is always happy and it is the greatest day ever. Everyone looks pretty, and it is just a wonderful experience, and I love doing it. But there is something that has to happen in order for a man and woman to get married. They both have to be convinced that the other person is better than anyone else. They have to believe that. They have to be willing to give up all the other options that they might have and to choose this one person.

I would be really nervous if I got up there and starting reading the vows and their response was, '*Well, I guess so.*' If that was the response I would know this was going to be bad. I talk to young people a lot and I notice that young people are getting married later in life now. And I think the reason is because young people are afraid of making a mistake, or they don't want to get tied down to the wrong person. So in order to decide to get married they must believe that this person is better than anyone else.

And that is what we have to do to follow Christ. We have to believe that what Christ has to offer us is the very best. It is not about position or power; it is about fellowship and love. And what Christ has to offer me in following Him is far greater than what I have right now or what the world has to offer. We have to believe that. It is one of the most basic beliefs that we have to have in order to follow Christ, because everything we lose in order to follow Him is temporary. While everything that we lose in order to follow man is eternal. And we have to start asking ourselves if we care more

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about the temporal or the eternal. What is it that you are afraid to lose if you stepped out to follow Jesus? If God is calling you to follow Him in a deeper way, what is the fear that is keeping you back?

So the first way that the fear of the Lord gave peace to Saul was he was willing to have it all taken away. He gave up his position in the Sanhedrin, he gave up his political power, he gave up his authority to arrest people; he was willing to give it all up to follow Jesus. What are we willing to give up so that we can see the message of God go viral?

The second thing I want to share is the fear of the Lord gives peace to move forward even when you are threatened. I have to chuckle a little bit when we read about Saul's life here because here is the reality. It is not like he was in this nice little, peaceful shallow end of the water following Jesus. God just took him and threw him into the deep end. And within the first few weeks of Saul being a follower of Jesus there were people wanting to kill him. And this became a constant theme in Paul's life. You will see this throughout his ministry in the book of Acts, and as he writes about it in his epistles.

But here is what we know. Paul spent his entire Christian life, probably thirty plus years, being threatened, being imprisoned and finally being martyred for the cause of Christ. He was threatened all the time with death. And here is what happened with Paul. He got used to it. It became normal for him to be threatened. I think for us since we have grown up to freedom in America, when there is even a thought or an inkling of a threat that comes to us as Christians, we are afraid.

But it was normal for Paul to be threatened. And we read in both these episodes today that people wanted to kill him. Did that stop him? No. The threat of death and the threat of his loss of security did not stop Paul from obeying God. He just kept moving forward day after day and week after week. He kept proclaiming that Jesus was Lord.

I think about how important security is to us today. To some it is personal security while to others it is financial security. How much does the losing of security affect our following Christ? Listen, I understand it somewhat because I have discipled several men who work in the corporate world and they tell me how hard it is for them to follow Jesus, because the secular has these different agendas out there that they want to be promoted. And they understand if they don't promote them they will lose their job. And that is hard. I may not understand it fully, but it is a reality that is becoming more common and more normal for us.

And we have to ask ourselves if we are still willing to lose security in order to follow Jesus? That is the reality we are about to face. We have to look inward and ask ourselves if we are afraid and staying silent, or are we willing to speak out for the cause

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of Christ? I think so many Christians today have been silenced. All of our talk is put in categories - politically correct, hate speech, or offensive. Here is what I know, the Bible gives us just two categories for words - truth and lies. And that is what we need to hold on to. When we speak we should speak the truth in love, and we should not speak lies. But so many times the potential threats to our own security keep us silent. So we have to ask ourselves if we are being silenced because of the threats of what might come our way.

If you want to read a great book, it is one I have used for family devotions, and it is called 'The Insanity of God.' I am not sure if I have mentioned that book to you all before, but it is one of my favorite books of all time. 'The Insanity of God' by Nik Ripken. This man was a missionary in the country of Somalia, and the first half of the book tells his story about that. And it is not what you would expect, it is actually the story of tragedy because he went to the mission field with all these expectations and he walks away defeated. But then he goes around the world and he meets people from the former Soviet Bloc, China, the Middle East and the Far East, Muslim controlled countries and he just talks to these people about what it is like to follow God in the midst of a hostile world. What is it like to walk with Jesus when there is no security or safety.

And that is just foreign to us. As I read these stories in the book I notice this about every single person. In all these different countries, whenever the government authority threatened them with prison, with taking their children, or with death, the way they got through it and kept moving forward was they came to the conclusion that all the threats seemed very small to them. They decided that whatever they could do to them here in their temporary bodies would not change their eternity. When Jesus was talking about the fear of man He said not to fear the one who can destroy the body, but fear the one that can destroy the soul.

For most of us the fear of losing security in our lives, the threats against us keep us silent. But the passage we read earlier said, "***So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.***" And that was because the threats and the fear of man did not stop them. Will it stop us?

That was the second way they were able to have peace to move forward even when they were threatened. There is a third way in which the fear of the Lord brings peace and it is this. The fear of the Lord gives peace to rise above the opinions of others. There are two people that display this, and that is Saul and Barnabas. Can you imagine for a moment being Saul. Your reputation precedes you. Pastor Dan talked about that last week. When Ananias got the vision from God telling him to go to this man named

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Saul on Straight Street, Ananias knew that this guy was vicious. And he probably couldn't believe that God wanted him to really do that. But he goes there and Saul is healed, he is saved and he is baptized.

And in verse 20 it says this about Saul: “*And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues saying, ‘He is the Son of God.’*” You know I think there could have been a fear of man in Saul's heart thinking that no one was going to like him now. He knew his previous reputation and he may have felt that he should prove himself to them first. But no, he just moved forward and started proclaiming the Lord. He knew that most people were not going to like what he said and did. The Christians were not going to like him because of what he had done in the past and the Jews weren't going to like him because of his changed heart, but he had to be faithful to God's calling.

And when Saul goes to Jerusalem were the Jews like, ‘*Oh here is Saul. He accepted Jesus and he is wonderful.*’ No, that was not their response. They wanted to kill him. Let us put ourselves in their shoes. Imagine someone coming to Lake Norman to our culture and they start arresting Christians and putting people to death. Your family members and your friends are being persecuted because of this man. Then imagine him showing up at this church one Sunday and saying, ‘*Hey guys, God saved me.*’ How are we going to treat him? What are we going to think about this person? We are not going to be very confident in his change of heart, and we are not going to be very forgiving when we remember how much he has hurt us by destroying our family and friends.

And these Christians were not willing to trust Saul at first. They were not willing to move forward and embrace him. But one man, Barnabas, believed Saul. We saw before how Barnabas had brought a gift to the church and how he had encouraged the people. And one of the things I love about Barnabas is he believed in people. And he saw beyond what everyone else saw. If they had taken a public opinion poll at the church of what they should do with Saul ninety-nine percent of them probably would have said, ‘*He is not allowed in here.*’ But Barnabas rose above the public opinion, and he believed Saul. And it was through that relationship that he brought Saul into the church, and God was able to use him to increase and build the church in Jerusalem once again.

Listen, we can let the opinions of others put us in a prison that keeps us from doing from God wants us to do. It is so easy to do that. For some of us it is the prison of social media. It is the life that you see others having and all of a sudden you need to make sure that your life looks as good as their lives do. Their lives look wonderful and so we have to make sure the posts of our life look that good as well. We want to get as many ‘likes’ as we possibly can. But who cares anyway? We need to live our lives not for the likes of others but for the Lord Jesus Christ. That is what matters.

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Listen, you can allow the opinion of other people to put you in bondage and it is the worst form of prison. We need to just listen to Jesus and follow Him. I get that it is hard. Personally speaking growing up I went into a career where my dad was highly successful, and that is very difficult to follow. My dad is in the ministry and has served the Lord for over four decades being a faithful servant of God.

And I love my dad. He spoke here several months ago, and he is one of my heroes. But the reality is my dad has been a part of seeing thousands of young people coming to know Christ. He has spoken all over the world and hundreds of people are in the ministry today because of hearing my dad preach and giving their lives to God to serve in full time ministry.

And when I was 22 years old walking into churches getting my first opportunities to speak, here is what I would hear, *'Hey, are you as good as your dad?'* What am I thinking? *'Oh boy, here we go.'* And all of a sudden everywhere I have gone I hear something like that. This literally happened one time when I went to preach to a youth group, and the kids were all excited, and then they said, *'Ben Rudolph! I thought it was Ken Rudolph! We thought that was just a typo.'* And I am thinking, *'This is just great, they were expecting my dad.'*

And I remember early on in my pursuit of God I had to come to realize that He did not create me to be Ken Rudolph; He created me to be Ben Rudolph. And there are things that Ken Rudolph does that only he can do and there are things that Ben Rudolph does that only he can do. And I began to understand that God had called each of us to follow Him and to serve Him in a unique way.

Listen, if you try to live your life based on the opinions and perspectives of others, it is a deep prison to break out of. We need to listen to the Lord, follow Him, because He has something far greater for us than living our lives worrying about what everyone else thinks of us. I love that song we sang this morning called, *'O Lord Speak.'* I hope that one of the things that God is doing this morning is calling you to do something greater. I don't think Saul has to be the exception for us. I think every single one of us has an opportunity to follow God in the way that He calls us to. Are we listening? Or are we allowing the opinions of other people to shape the steps that we take?

The fear of the Lord is real. And the fear of the Lord needs to be greater than the fear of man. At the root of it all the fear of the Lord can help us to move through position, power and in the midst of threats we can rise above the opinions of others and move forward for the Lord. And no one did that more beautifully than Jesus. Jesus actually laid down His position and power to save us when He went to the cross. He

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actually walked into the threats of death and became obedient to the cross for us. Jesus actually did rise above the opinions of others and at the end of His life only a handful of people were still following Him. But He did that for us. If there is anyone who walked in the midst of the fear of man it was Jesus, and He did it for you and for me. And that should stir our love for Jesus where we will say, *'God, it is your opinion that matters most in my life.'*

Listen young people it doesn't matter if ninety-nine percent of everyone around you is telling you this is the way to go, you need to follow Jesus. If everyone else in your department is doing one thing, and you know that it not the way of righteousness we need to do what God is calling us to do.

When we walk in the fear of the Lord God is going to move. He is going to move us from our stagnant, silent, scared state and awaken us to see His church go viral. I want to leave you with two questions to meditate on. Number one - Jesus may be your Savior, but is He your Lord? Saul had to get to the point where his one audience was the Lord. And I think it is easy for us to want Jesus as our Savior and for Him to take away our sins, but in order for us to truly see God do something great in our community we have to make Him the Lord of our lives.

The second question is this - How does the fear of man enslave you? Whose opinion do you need to confront in your mind and heart? What burden do you carry that others have placed on you? We need to stand up and decide it doesn't matter what others think. Don't let the fear of man enslave what God wants to do in your life. This is the final sermon in the Going Viral series and we are taking a break before the Acts series comes up again in the fall. Let's get to the foundation, the foundation of this church and the foundation of our hearts. Let's make sure that we are walking in the fear of the Lord. Let's not worry about what people are thinking about us but making sure that we are following and obeying the Holy Spirit. Will you do that?

We are about to enter into a time of observing the Lord's Supper and I love this. To take communion is one of the great privileges we have as a corporate body of Christ and it is a way that we express something real about Jesus. When we partake of the Lord's Supper we are saying that Jesus is Lord, that He died on the cross, that He shed His blood for our sins, and that He rose again. And this is one of the most wonderful ways that we can end this service and that is by partaking in the Lord's Supper.

So what I want us to do is remember what He has done. We talked about how Jesus went right through the fear of man and the threats. He gave up His position and power and rose above the opinions of man. He was obedient to His Father by going to the cross for us.

THREE WAYS THE FEAR OF THE LORD BRINGS PEACE
ORIGINS SERIES PART 2 - GOING VIRAL
Ben Rudolph

Let's bow our heads and close our eyes to take a few moments before the Lord to examine our hearts, asking the Lord to make this a time of worship for us, and thanking Him for what He has done for us. Let's do that now.

Father, as we reflect and remember the sacrifice of Jesus we can't help but thank you. We can't help but be grateful for the life that we now have to live. God, I pray that you would set us free from the fear of man and to walk in the fear of the Lord. God, may we partake of these elements, the bread that represents your body, and the cup that represents your blood, as an act of worship. God, we come to the cross as sinners, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. God, may any other identity that we carry with us be put to death. We thank you for that. In Jesus name, Amen.

The preceding transcript was completed using raw audio recordings. As much as possible, it includes the actual words of the message with minor grammatical changes and editorial clarifications to provide context. Hebrew and Greek words are spelled using Google Translator and the actual spelling may be different in some cases.