

Daily View

"But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today'" Hebrews 3:13

June 12, 2020

The Virus of Fear

[For the record, I have a healthy fear of Covid-19. I'm not a young man so I can't afford to be cavalier about it for my sake or the sake of others. This article is not suggesting that we should not be very careful. And I have no desire to make any kind of "political" statement. Yikes!]

Living one's life in fear of anything is debilitating. It's worse than any virus, isn't it? That's sort of a rhetorical question.

I was five years old when my parents moved us to Modesto in the middle of my kindergarten school year at Harbor Elementary in Costa Mesa. Back then, kindergarten was not mandatory so my parents didn't enroll me in school when we arrived in Modesto.

Somehow, though, I knew the word "truant" and I knew there were "truant officers" who were responsible for making sure children were showing up for school every day. If a child did not attend for a couple of days, the truant officer would pay a visit to the home of the child. My view of a truant officer was something akin to a velociraptor. "It" scared me.

One day, a man in a uniform knocked on the door at our house in Modesto. I just knew it was a truant officer who had tracked me down all the way from Orange County, 350 miles away, and I was terrified. I ran to mom and breathlessly told her a truant officer was at the door. She was not convinced. In fact, it was a policeman and it was my *mom* who was afraid, thinking maybe that my dad had been in an accident or something. So there was a lot of fear in the house that day, at least for a few minutes. Turns out it was nothing. But it makes me think, just now, of James 5:9, "*The judge is standing at the door.*"

Reminiscing about the fears I faced as a kid has made me more sympathetic to kids and *their* fears, many we know nothing about. I still feel guilty about a time when I was driving on an overpass that was uphill and curved around to the left. You couldn't see the rest of the road; it looked like you were going to fly off the end of it. Dave was about 8 or 9, sitting in the backseat, and I joked, "look Davey, where's the road?" That terrified him and I felt really badly that I did that.

Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death is the man who deceives his neighbor
and says, "I am only joking!" *Proverbs 26:18-19*

Adults suffer from many fears, too. We carry around fears in our hearts that, out of pride, we would never dare share with anyone. Unfortunately, fear actually defines the life of some people, even Christians. But fear sucks the life out of you.

I've had my moments but I have refused to live in fear of the coronavirus. Yes, it's terrifying to think of being on ventilator. It's horrifying to imagine being in a hospital where everyone is wearing garb that is designed to keep them safe. It's sad to think about the people who have died with no family at their side. I can't even imagine and I want to do all I can to keep that from happening to anyone.

But are we going to allow that to control our lives? What kind of life is that? Isn't that a kind of virus? On a lighter note, it reminds me of the man who was always looking at the ground hoping to find money. He never saw a sunrise or a sunset, but he did find a dollar and a half.

I take reasonable precautions and do what the CDC tells me to do. I'm not careless, for my own health's sake and others. I have no desire to put myself or anyone else in the horrible position of those who are hospitalized with Covid-19.

But I also know I don't have control over everything, so I've decided I'm not going to fret about it. Solomon said it well:

What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity. There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God. — *Ecclesiastes 2:22-24*



I was amused/bewildered by this bronze statue that sits on the steps on the north side of the Cathedral, in the Domplatz at Wurzburg, Germany. His back is arched, head lifted, looking up at the towers of the Cathedral towering above. It was created by by Maria Lehnen. It does represent how some people feel when they are controlled by fear.