

Daily View

“But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today’” Hebrews 3:13

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Monument to Jan Hus (John Huss) who was burned at the stake in 1415 in Germany because he spoke out against abuses in the Roman Catholic Church 100 years before Martin Luther. His courage and lack of fear is inspiring. [Photo, October 2018, city square, Prague, Czech Republic].

“Fear is a Hungry Lion”

We were headed out of town on a long, boring, lonely stretch of road. My little brother and I were in the back seat, not in seat belts — they were not a thing back then. Dad pulled out the shoulder to look at a map. A minute or two later, I got up on my knees and looked out the back window just as an old, shabby car pulled up and parked about 3-4 car lengths behind us. My eyes met the wild, wide-open eyes of a strange, scary man sitting behind the wheel of that old car.

The man got out of the car but then paused and stared at me. I stared back only because I couldn't avert my eyes. Meanwhile, I was trying to tell my parents what I saw but though my mouth was open, the words would not come out. Finally, as I continued to stare, the man got back in his car and pulled out onto the highway. As he passed he gave me a look that chilled my bones.

I'm convinced that the man was up to no good. Lots of possible scenarios flooded my mind. Was he going to steal our new car and leave us out on that lonely road? Or something much more sinister? Who knows? Of course, he may just have wanted to ask directions or something innocent, but play along with me here; I was only 7 years old and he had “serial killer” written all over his face. Well, maybe not a *serial killer*, but he looked like a real meany. It might be that my fearful expression caused the man to back off thinking I would tell my dad and that might not go well for him. He probably wanted to sneak up on us.

Fear serves a purpose at times. But usually it just makes things worse.

This is at least the third time I've written about fear in the *Daily View*. Obviously, the virus has caused a lot of fear. I'm not writing about fear today because the virus is not a real threat to health and safety. It most definitely is. But we can't control what happens with the virus; all we can do is control our *response* to it, and try to learn the facts that will help us respond rationally (see the article on page 2 for an example of the affect of fear of the virus on young people who don't know the facts).

Fear is a hungry lion inside us that will eat us up from the inside out. Fear paralyzes. As Huck Finn said, “it takes up all the rest of your insides.” Fear is also a tool used by people in power to control others and it's one of Satan's favorite tools. It's not rational to completely ignore valid threats like Covid-19, so, we take reasonable precautions. But when fear becomes irrational and paralyzes us then maybe we need a prescription. How about this?

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. *Matthew 10:28-31*

Just substitute “*anything that* can kill the body...” for “those who...” to make it applicable to what's going on right now. God knows all about this health crisis and he'll take care of us. And if we die, well — “to die is gain.” Meanwhile, “to live is Christ...” (Philippians 1:21). Whatever you do, don't allow your fear to keep you from living for Christ.

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Americans “dramatically misunderstand” the risk of death...

Americans “dramatically misunderstand” the risk of death they face during the coronavirus pandemic, according to the findings of a joint Franklin Templeton-Gallup research project released last month.

Researchers found that Americans overestimate the mortality rate for people aged 55 or younger, according to data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through July 22. For example, respondents estimated that people aged 44 or younger accounted for 30 percent of U.S. COVID-19 deaths, when the actual figure for that age group was 2.7 percent.

Conversely, Americans estimated that people aged 55 or older accounted for roughly 57 percent of COVID-19 deaths, when the actual figure was 92 percent. Americans thought

While people aged 18 to 24 accounted for 0.1 percent of overall COVID-19 deaths, about 59 percent of respondents in that age bracket said they fear significant health consequences if they contract the virus.

people aged 65 or older accounted for roughly 40 percent of COVID-19 deaths, when the actual figure was 80 percent.

The misconception “translates directly into a degree of fear for one’s health that for most people vastly exceeds the actual risk,” according to Sonal Desai, chief investment officer at Franklin Templeton Fixed Income.

“The fact that a large share of the population overestimates the COVID-19 danger to the young will make a targeted public health response more difficult to agree on,” said Desai. “We think it is also likely to delay the recovery, causing a deeper and prolonged recession.”

While people aged 18 to 24 accounted for 0.1 percent of overall COVID-19 deaths, about 59 percent of respondents in that age bracket said they fear significant health consequences if they contract the virus. The CDC’s website notes “the risk for severe illness from COVID-19 increases with age, with older adults at highest risk.”

Researchers identified “partisanship and social media” as key factors in the discrepancies.

“Fear and anger are the most reliable drivers of engagement; scary tales of young victims of the pandemic, intimating that we are all at risk of dying, quickly go viral; so do stories that blame everything on your political adversaries,” Desai said. “Both social and traditional media have been churning out both types of narratives in order to generate more clicks and increase their audience.”

Franklin Templeton and Gallup found that people who relied on social media as their key source of information on the pandemic had the “most erroneous and distorted perception of risk.” Researchers drew results from online surveys conducted by 10,014 U.S. adults aged 18 or older from July 2 to July 14.

[Source: <https://www.franklintempleton.com/investor/article?contentPath=html/ftthinks/en-us-retail/cio-views/on-my-mind-they-blinded-us-from-science.html>]