

PANIC vs PEACE

Fear, Anxiety and Panic vs The Peace of God

which will you choose?

Psalm 23

INTRO:

Thank you for that scripture reading (Phil). Psalm 23 is probably one of the most popular Psalm in the bible, if you type into Google and search for the most popular Psalm, or most comforting psalm, or even psalms to memorized Psalm 23 is very often number one on the list or at least near the top. And rightly so, it is a Psalm of acknowledgement of the Lord being our shepherd it is a psalm of peace and of restoration, a psalm of correction and comfort in difficult times, and it is a psalm of promise, verse 4 says

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You *are* with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. Our world has fallen onto a valley, a shadow; into a dark time. Our world has become a world engulfed with fear and as one person said' has lost much of its critical thinking'.

Two weeks ago on March 17th Liesa and I along with Hannah were sitting in our living room after supper, were reading some of the news updates of the day, that day the BC school system shut down due to the Covid 19

virus, along with the schools were pubs and bars, restaurants and coffee shops and all other areas and events of social gathering and interaction. This signaled the first steps of the social distancing policies we see being implemented today. Earlier that day I received a phone call from what sounded like a very nervous individual in regards to the events that were happening around us, the individual asked what was my take on the whole situation, and sensing the fear in their voice I calmly responded and still believe “it is a media exploitation of an unreasonable fear creating unreasonable pani” I told the individual that “we need to be cautious of course, but we also need to be reasonable with the situation”.

Well as we were sitting in our living room discussing all of the events of the day I thought this would be, a good teaching opportunity for Hannah to see if she knew the difference between a pandemic and an epidemic, so I asked her ‘what is a pandemic’? She quickly responded ‘a pandemic is an epidemic of panic’ well we laughed at that one and there is some truth to what she said.

But an epidemic is an outbreak of a disease that spreads more quickly and more extensively among a group of people than would normally be expected.

A pandemic is the wide spread of a disease or a condition that is found in a large part of a population. the corona virus or Covid 19 is a pandemic.

the Merriam-Webster dictionary say this of the two;

An *epidemic* is defined as “an outbreak of disease that spreads quickly and affects many individuals at the same time.” A *pandemic* is a type of *epidemic* (one with greater range and coverage), an outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area and affects an exceptionally high proportion of the population. While a *pandemic* may be characterized as a type of *epidemic*, you would not say that an *epidemic* is a type of *pandemic*.

EOQ

well as I just said Covid 19 is a pandemic, at the time of checking this out it has spread to over 150 of 195 countries in the world, and I am sure by now that number is probably much higher today than what it was two weeks ago.

But there is a pandemic that is spreading faster than Covid 19 and affecting more people than the corona virus,

it is fear, and it is one that is just as real. Once you are affected with fear and you do not contain or control it there is a good chance your fear will grow into anxiety and anxiety if left to its own ways will grow into panic. And if it is not properly contained in society or the nation or the world, it becomes as Hannah said about her definition of a pandemic, you end up with an epidemic of panic’

Fear can be spread more quickly than any disease or illness known to man, it can travel thousands of miles in a single text, it can cross countries in moments in a single post or blog. It can circle the globe in a matter of days

with the modern media ability we have developed today, and if you have a cell phone, or internet access, or a television or even a radio you can be affected. The infection can come from news papers, from magazines, from posters and billboards, and the most dangerous part is you don't even need to come into contact with anyone one person to get it.

as I said if left untreated fear will take the person to the next stage which is anxiety, in anxiety, the most common symptoms are a lack of reasoning, irrational thoughts, the obsessive mulling of thoughts and scenarios no matter how improbable or impractical they may be. It becomes a feeding frenzy for the mind on thoughts and possible actions and outcomes no matter how irrational.

While anxiety is mostly inward and contained in the thoughts of a person with only some external symptoms, if left unchecked it can quickly develop into panic. Panic is then the final stage of fear, panic is the body or person taking physical action on the irrational thoughts and fears that have infected them and push them to whatever action they deem necessary to suppress the fear and anxiety that is driving the person mentally no matter how irrational it may be.

For real, from Wikipedia:

Fear is an [emotion](#) induced by perceived danger or [threat](#), which causes physiological changes and ultimately [behavioral](#) changes, such as fleeing, hiding, or freezing from perceived traumatic events. Fear in human beings may occur in response to a

certain [stimulus](#) occurring in the present, or in anticipation or expectation of a future threat perceived as a [risk](#) to oneself

Anxiety is an emotion characterized by an unpleasant state of inner turmoil, (*and*) is a feeling of uneasiness and worry, usually generalized and unfocused as an overreaction to a situation that is only subjectively seen as menacing.

here is the Wikipedia definition of panic it is;

Panic is a sudden sensation of fear, which is so strong as to dominate or prevent reason and logical thinking, replacing it with overwhelming feelings of anxiety and frantic agitation consistent with an animalistic fight-or-flight reaction.

EOQ

Fear, anxiety and panic is no joke, fear is powerful, it can cripple us. If we let fear loose in our minds it will produce anxiety, and anxiety if it is left alone to control our thoughts it will consume us and will turn into panic, and panic, well there is not end to what man can and will do when panic sets in.

All in all it becomes a very sad state for the person; it will rob the person of all peace and can do lifelong damage to the person's physical and mental state and stability and will leave the person in a perpetual cycle that has no end.

Along with the spread of the Covid 19 virus we have now seen fear encompass the entire world but not only fear, but the growth of anxiety and panic as well. In the early stages I heard of people resorting to violence and throwing punches over toilet paper and no matter how much the government and health organizations tell us to remain calm panic is still rampant.

In a BBC article posted on March 24 titled “Corona virus death rate: What are the chances of dying?” states

‘The UK government’s scientific advisers believe that the chance of dying from a coronaviurs infection are between 0.5% and 1%.

EOQ

from the ‘Insider’ news feed

Special Pathogens Expert Dr. Syra Madad the senior director of the New York City health and hospitals system-wide special pathogens program says;

... there’s a lot we still don’t know about the corona virus dieses but based on the data that is coming out it seems to be a mild type of viral infection... there a 2% fatality rate

she goes on later to say:

let’s just take seasonal flu for example, seasonal flu this year started in October and the center for dieses control prevention are already reporting over 10,000 deaths related

to seasonal flu and over again we know 20 million Americans being infected so let's just put things into context.

EOQ

Context, yah, lets talk about context, yesterday in talking and texting with Wayne we talked about the amount of people who have now died in Spain, I think it was over 5000, and now 27,000 have now died worldwide, it not that serious, and someone may say 'Pastor you are being a bit too callous about the whole thing, these are real people,' yup, these are real people but so are the 10 million unborn children who have been aborted in the world so far this year alone, and what does the media say about those (zip the lip)(hush) we hear nothing, what must God think of a world which is panicking over a virus which may take 2% of its victims and we don't even blink over the 50 million unborn we throw into the garbage this year alone.

In the cases of the corona virus this mortality percentage of 2% only increases if you have underlying or previous conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, respiratory disease or high blood pressure, or are over the age of 70. in the case of abortion it is 100% mortality if you are unwanted,

And yet fear of the corona virus is still rampant, the span of fear is more wide spread than the virus instilling it. As of yet there is no cure for Covid 19 except prevention, but there is a cure for this pandemic of fear, if you are

listing to this today and you find yourself held in the grips of fear and anxiety there is a remedy, and the best part of it all it is free.

There is freedom from fear, there is freedom from anxiety, and there is prevention for panic.

As we watch our world getting wrapped up in the fear that is covering the globe with regards to the Corona virus there is a way of escape, not from the virus, for that can only be done by taking hygienic and preventative measures and following some basic precautions. But there is a way of escape and cure for the fear that is infecting so many around us.

the only sad part is that many don't want this cure and if they do it is often only for a short temporal time until the disease or whatever pandemic is present is past and life returns to normal.

This often happens with people who are only searching for a temporal relief from the fear they are experiencing or they search for a quick fix of comfort from truth only to appease the moment, but isn't long lasting, no life changing habits but only a temporal and quick fix for those people looking for a crutch.

There is however an escape and peace that we can hold onto for the rest of our lives and 'it', or rather I should say 'He' is found in this book, the bible. It is like the quote from Charles Spurgeon which says;

A bible that's falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn't.

And if you want it to be more personal to you just listen to an anonymous quote I found which says;

'if your bible is falling apart, chances are you life is staying together'

This book holds the key, this book has the answers, this book has the truth, and from this book you will find the cure to all of your fears. That I can guarantee because it did for me. There is nothing in your life that is too hard for this book to answer. It is God's word speaking to you.

It is as Paul says to the Philippians in chapter 4 verses 6,7 it says;

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

This is the promise of the peace that we can have, this is the promise we can hold onto. It is a peace that covers us, it is a peace that fills us, and gives us the knowledge that nothing in this world can take away that peace, not the corona virus, not illness, not even death can remove or destroy that peace that we can have. The question is do you want it.

We have seen in the past few weeks fear griping the world and the anxiety it brings, we have seen the panic that has consumed many people, as I said the first time I heard that tissue paper was being hoarded and was being bought up by the cases and truck loads, that people were punching

other people for toilet paper, I thought that it was a hoax, a joke, but I soon found out it was real.

People were really hoarding tissue paper and stockpiling this product, all because of fear. I thought it was nuts, but this is what fear will do when let loose. I told people that if this was truly to be a pandemic of epic proportions and extended isolation, toilet paper would be one of the last concerns on my list, but this is panic, panic buying, this is anxiety taking over reasonable thinking. My guess is that most people who have 6 months to a year of tissue hoarded in their home probably don't have food in their homes to last 4 weeks if isolation came down to such extreme measures. It is absolutely crazy, this world has gone crazy.

But as I said there is freedom from this fear, from this anxiety and panic, and it is simple and free.

Because I think that the fear that is driving this world today is not the fear that they may run out of toilet paper, no that's just that is unreasonable anxiety and panic, the fear of the virus is not even reasonable because 85% of people who get it may not even know they have it or have only mild symptoms, this is not the fear. It is not the fear of being one of the 10% who get really sick that scares people, I think that what really scares people is death it the fear that this is the end and they are not ready, this is what they fear. That 2% mortality rate if you actually get the virus and die, this is what

they fear. And when fear turns into anxiety it results into the lack of reasoning and irrational thinking. And when you run with anxiety panic will take over. and it can all be prevented and it all starts with this book, the freedom from fear.

If you are a believer I hope that the words from the scriptures have increase your faith during the times as we are in now, if you are a nonbeliever I hope you will find faith in these words, the true faith, the only faith that saves and can free you from fear and from something far worse than any corona virus. And it all starts with looking your own heart.

A.W. Tozer once said

'An honest man with an open Bible and a pad and pencil is sure to find out what is wrong with him very quickly'

That is so true, when we come to see ourselves through the words of the bible, we find out very quickly what is wrong with us And it doesn't come from the corona virus.

To look at our problem there is a step 1 is to acknowledge that there is a God; that there is an all knowing, all seeing, all powerful God who created everything. Deny this, well you might as well turn me off right now, because

if you do not believe that there is a God, a real personal God who knows you and created you, well, then you are just a germ on this planet riding the evolution ball of existence and covid 19 is just another evolutionary development to decide the survival of the fittest.

But if you acknowledge that there is a God then Romans chapter 3 tells us very well what we have become, turn Romans chapter 3, in Romans chapter 3 in verses 10 - 20 we read just what the initial problem is when it comes to man Paul says:

10 As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one;
11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.
12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable;
There is none who does good, no, not one."
13 "Their throat *is* an open tomb; With their tongues they have
practiced deceit"; "The poison of asps *is* under their lips";
14 "Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness."
15 "Their feet *are* swift to shed blood;
16 Destruction and misery *are* in their ways;
17 And the way of peace they have not known."
18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."
19 ¶ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are
under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world
may become guilty before God.

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

and then down to verse 23

...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

We have all come short of the glory of God, we have all sinned and broken God's laws, we only need to look at the 10 commandments and we can see we are guilty of breaking Gods command. if we believe that there is a God and he created all things and gave us moral laws we should live by where do you find yourself in compression to them? Paul said that all the world may become guilty before God, and that includes you, me, all of mankind is guilty.

Exodus chapter 20 and we will read the verses that pertain to the law or the 10 commandments and see justs where we fall short in His law.

verse 3 "You shall have no other gods before Me.

verse 4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;

verse 7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

verse 8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

verse 12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

verse 13 "You shall not murder.

verse 14 "You shall not commit adultery.

verse 15 "You shall not steal.

verse 16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

and verse 17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

If you have broken just one of these then you are guilty of breaking the law in all of them. And what must a just God do to those who break His law? He must punish them, you see when we commit a crime in our society a judge must punish us for the crime we have committed. If we drove to fast we must pay the fine, if we stole a car or robbed a bank we may need to go to prison for some time, if we rape or murder someone we may go to prison for a very long time and in some places we pay with our own life. We pay the penalty that is due to us for what we did and God is not different, in fact, that is where our justice comes from, from the laws of God.

And what is God's punishment for someone who has broken His laws? Hell? Because there is nothing we can pay Him to atone for one sin, the sinner or lost man is condemned to hell for his sin and unbelief. God cannot

allow a liar, an adulterer, a thief, or a blasphemer into heaven, it would not be just, He would cease to be a just God if he did.

And just let me give you a bit of warning here, you will hear or maybe have heard possibly from other Christians that God loves you just as you are, let me tell you that is not true, that is an untruth in order to make sinners feel more comfortable in their sins. God did not love me as I was, I was a reached sinner filled with filth. Psalm 7:11 says;

God is a just judge, And God is angry ***with the wicked*** every day.

Wicked is what I was before I was saved. it is as Paul says to the Romans in Romans chapter 7:18

For I know that **in me** (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells;

When we come to see the wickedness that is in our own hearts and see our sins through the eyes of God it should make us weep, it should make us morn for the offence we have committed towards GOD and his law.

But there is hope, step 2, there is a way of redemption for our lost and condemned souls and the freedom from fear and that is found in two words what are they? repent and believe, to repent of our sins, of our sinful lifestyle, and the waywardness of our hearts, and believe on the one and only son of God Jesus Christ, who came to earth as sinless man and paid our price and took our sin on the cross in our place as an atonement for

GOD wrath that we may have life and be washed and freed from our sins.

1 Timothy 2:3-6

3 For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,
4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

5 For *there is* one God and one Mediator between God and men, *the* Man Christ Jesus,

6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

this is the free gift, this is the redemption we long for that we can be made right in the eyes of God in that Jesus has taken it upon Himself our sins and that we can be forgiven and washed clean of all of our unrighteousness and be made pure in the eyes of God. this is the freedom from the fear of death that we can have.

When we do this we know that we can have eternal fellowship with God in heaven forever and say as Peter says in 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 3

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

This is the freedom we can have, this is the redemption from hell fire that we can escape, it is not of our own works but through the trust and faith in

Jesus Christ that He has delivered us and made a way for us to escape God's wrath and punishment that is coming on all those who do not believe.

Menno Simons says it well he says;

This is the real intention and object of the law: To reveal unto us the will of God, to discover unto us (*our*) sin, to threaten us with the wrath and punishment of the Lord, to proclaim death and to point us to Christ, that we may, before the eyes of God, be humbled in heart, die unto sin, and seek and find the only and eternal medicine and remedy for our souls, Jesus Christ.

In the same manner it is in regard to the gospel. Wherever it is preached in true zeal, according to the pleasure of God, and unblamably in the power of the Spirit, so that it penetrates the hearts of the hearers, there we find a converted, changed and new mind, which joyfully and gratefully gives praises to his God for his inexpressibly great love towards us, miserable sinners, in Christ Jesus, and thus enters into newness of life willingly and freely, by the power of a true faith and a new birth.

When you become a child of God and repent from your sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ you can have victory over fear and sin and death. The promises He gives us from His word are incomparable to the things in this world.

Peter says in 1 Peter chapter 1 and this time I want to read verses 3 - 5:

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

It is a place that is incorruptible, a place that is undefiled; it is a place that is free from sin, free from disease, free from pain, and suffering. It is a place that is free from fear. If you enter this hope, this living hope, we can have freedom from fear and the oppression it brings and nothing, nothing can take this love, this joy, this peace this promise away from you if you put your trust in Jesus.

For Paul says in his letter to the Romans, in chapter 8 verses 38 and 39

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,
39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Nothing can separate us from the love of God, if we live right and trust in His son Jesus Christ, no fear shall overtake us, no anxiety shall consume us, no panic shall get a hold of us and No virus shall scare us.

because what is behind all these fears we see? not really the virus, for no one says 'I am afraid of getting sick and recovering' no, people say I am afraid of getting sick and dying' it is death that is the underlying fear of this whole pandemic, it is the fear of the unknown, but Jesus has given us victory not only over death but fear itself. Paul says in 2 Timothy 1:7

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

The apostle Paul went so far to say to the Philippians

'for to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain'

He says that if I go on living it will be for Christ because nothing I can ever do could pay for the gift he has given to me which is eternal life, and if I should die, I would gain because I would be with my savior in glory. He goes on to say in Philippians 1:23 - 26

23 For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, *which is* far better.

24 Nevertheless to remain in the flesh *is* more needful for you.

25 And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith,

26 that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

He also says in Romans 15:13

Now may the God of hope fill you with all **joy** and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is the Peace you can have in knowing Jesus Christ; this is the comfort in knowing that this world, this broken and sick and diseased world is not my home, my home is waiting for me in heaven.

This is the freedom we can have from fear and from the mind paralyzing anxiety it can grow into. We as Christians do not need to be part of the pandemic of fear that has engulfed the world.

Paul also says in Hebrews 2 14 and 15

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,
15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

if we trust God and believe in His word, His promises, His truth then we as Christians should have nothing to fear, Our nation has gone a little bit crazy in these last few months and our whole world has gone upside down and fear, anxiety, and panic has gripped almost all people and it is not about to

let go anytime soon but, we do not need to be afraid because we know we have eternal life with God John says in chapter 8 verse 32

"And you shall know the truth, and **the truth shall** make you free."

Free from fear, free from death, free from that eternal judgment of hell, free from anything that is crushing your soul today. The truth shall make you free and you shall be free indeed, nothing can comfort you more in this pandemic our world is facing today, than the truth of these words that we find in these pages.

And I just want to close with a few encouraging verses from 1 John chapter 4 words that can give hope and calmness in the world we are living in today. 1 John 4:14-19

... we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *as* Savior of the world.

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

17 ¶ Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

19 We love Him because He first loved us.

and as A.W. Tozer said

'after the bible the next most valuable book for the Christian is a good hymnal...

and with that I want to read the word from the Hymn 567 'All Your Anxiety'

Is there a heart o'er-bound by sorrow? Is there a life weighted down by care? Come to the cross, each burden bearing, All you anxiety leave it there.

No other friend so keen to help you; No other friend so quick to hear; No other place to leave your burden; no other one to hear your prayer.

Come then, at once, delay no longer; heed His entreaty, kind and sweet; you need not fear a disappointment, you shall find peace at the mercy seat.

All your anxiety, all your care, bring to the mercy seat, leave it there; Never a burden He cannot bear, Never a friend like Jesus.

May God give you Peace during this troubling time in our world today, may He be your rock in this ever uncertain day for Jesus says

"**Peace** I leave with you, My **peace** I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

John 14:27