

Facing A New Year Without Fear

S#1.

Text : **Matthew 6: 24-34 ; 14: 22-33**

A. 2020 has been an eventful year.

S#2.

1. 2020 started off with best economy in world history, but ended with one of the worst in American history.
 - a. By July the America's G.D.P. had dropped by 31.7% and was still falling.
 - b. From full employment some states reported as much as 8% unemployment.
 - c. During the week of Dec. 13 there were 780,000 new claims for unemployment.
2. This was all the result of a worldwide pandemic / a plague unleashed by China.
 - a. The virus was released in a way which is extremely suspicious. *Was it intentional?*
 - b. In excess of 300,000 deaths of people are blamed on the pandemic.
 - c. In response the government has shut down businesses, churches and even sports.
3. The quarantines are continuing to make life difficult for us all.
 - a. In excess of 100,000 small businesses are closed forever ... bankrupted by China.
 - b. Air travel is near non-existent and reportedly dangerous.
 - c. Most restaurants are closed except for takeout orders.
 - d. 110,000+ restaurants have permanently closed, 26,160 just in the past 3 months.

B. There are some obvious challenges before us in the months to come.

S#3.

1. The covid-19 challenge should improve, **but** it is still a political football.
 - a. First the first time in history we have created a vaccine in less than a year.
 - b. However, the vaccine is being held up for political reasons.
 - c. It will not be widely distributed until after the inauguration.
2. Some of the mistakes of the past are promised to be repeated.
 - a. The new administration is promising business closures and school shutdowns.
 - b. They have indicated that they will restrict the movement of people.
 - c. There may be another attempt to prevent people from gathering for worship.
3. Thousands of nursing home patients died because of foolish political decisions.
 - a. Some covid positive people were put into nursing homes when other places available.
 - b. People are forced to face the last days of their life alone without loved ones allowed in.
 - c. Hospital staffs have been cut back to the point services are limited.

C. We also face political challenges as never before in this country.

S#4.

1. It would appear that our President won re-election, but lost the count. (*like 3rd world*)
2. Those who believe he was cheated will resist the new administration. (*political division*)
3. Our country has taken the hardest left turn every in our history. (*apprehensive re future*)

I. By nature people are afraid of the unknown.

S#5.

A. Ancient mapmakers (cartographers) used to print their fears on their maps.

S#6.

1. They made maps based upon their travels.
2. When the map reached the limit the cartographer had traveled, he put
"beyond this there be dragons."

B. Christopher Columbus faced this kind of fear on his journey.

1. The sailors on Columbus' ships were about to mutiny when land was found.
2. They were afraid they would sail off the edge of the earth.

C. Satan uses fear as an antidote to faith.

1. When we are enveloped by fear we know it is **NOT** from God.

II Tim. 1: 7 – For God gave us a spirit not of fear
but of power and love and self-control. (ESV)

S#7.

2. When Jesus ascended back to Heaven, He left us with the power & command not to fear.

John 14:27 – Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world
gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

3. Thus, when you or I are overcome by fear or anxiety we know Satan is tempting us.

D. There are things that are real reasons to be afraid.

1. When the persecution first arose, Christians were wise to flee Jerusalem.

a. **Acts 8: 3** – But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after
house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.

S#8.

4 Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word.

b. These brethren were wise to flee for their lives, but they took Christ with them.

2. When the prophet Elijah fled from Jezebel, it was a wise and prudent thing to do.

a. **I Kings 19: 14** – Then he said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God
of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant,
torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword.
And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

S#9.

b. Elijah fled only after defeating and killing all the prophets of Baal.

3. Later God reassured Elijah that he was not alone.

S#10.

I Kings 19: 18 – Yet I will leave 7,000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him."

- * 4. Among the masses, God knows the names of those who remain faithful.

II. Most fear is caused by a lack of faith.

S#11.

A. Why do you think “fear” is the first sin listed in **Rev. 21: 8?**

1. **Rev. 21: 8** – But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

S#12.

2. This was the sin of the ten spies.

- a. **Num. 13: 30** – Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome it." **31** But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us." **32** So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great size.

S#13.

- b. All of these men saw the same land; why the difference in reports ? **Eyes of faith !**

- * 3. When we look at the world without the “eyes of faith” .. **THERE BE DRAGONS !**

B. Christians have been given promises that should eliminate fear.

S#14.

1. Jesus promised His followers salvation.

- a. **Mark 16: 16** – He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

- b. Do we believe Jesus has the power to save believers ?

2. Jesus promised to come for His disciples to take us to Heaven.

- a. **John 14: 2b** – ...for I go to prepare a place for you. **3** If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

S#15.

- b. Do you believe Jesus will return to take you to Heaven?

3. Jesus promised to take care of our basic needs.

- a. **Matt. 6: 33** – But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

S#16.

- b. Do you believe that Jesus will take care of your needs?

C. As are those above, these promises are also fundamental to Christianity.

1. Jesus promised that He would always be with us.
 - a. **Matt. 28: 19** – Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. S#17.
 - b. Do you believe that Jesus will be with us until the end?
2. God promise that He would never forsake us or stop helping us.
 - a. **Heb. 13: 5** – Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you." **6** so that we confidently say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?" S#18.
 - b. Do you believe that God is constantly with you and helping you?
- * c. *If you believe these promises, there is never any reason for you to fear or be anxious.*

III. Every promise made to man is dependent upon his obedience in some way. S#19.

A. In Num. 13 ... The Israelites were promised a land, but they had to conquer it

B. In Mark 16: 16 and many other places we are promised salvation. S#20.

1. **Mark 16: 16** – He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.
2. However the promise depends upon faith in Jesus and surrendering in obedience.

C. John 14 ... Jesus has prepared a place in Heaven for His faithful followers S#21.

1. **John 14: 2b** – ...for I go to prepare a place for you. **3** If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.
2. However, the precondition for this promise is given in **verse 1**.
 - a. **John 14: 1** – Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.
 - b. Trust ... Don't be troubled.
 - c. Faith ... Believe in God and His Son

D. Jesus promised to take care of our basic needs. S#22.

1. **Matt. 6: 33** – But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
2. This promise is in response to a commitment to serve God with all your strength.
3. It involves a level of trust; one must commit himself before receiving.

E. Jesus promises to be with us all of our lives.

1. **Matt. 28: 19** – Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. S#23.
2. The prerequisite for this promise is service in the objective of Jesus. (*go teach*)
3. “I am with you ..” implies more than physical presence; it infers assistance.

F. God promises never to forsake His people.

1. **Heb. 13: 5** – Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,” **6** so that we confidently say, “The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?” S#24.
2. This promise has multiple preconditions.
 - a. One must free himself from the love of money . (cf. **Eccl. 5: 10**)
 - 1) **Col. 3: 5** – Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. S#25.
 - 2) God wants for men to love Him exclusively.

I John 2: 15 – Do not love the world nor the things in the world.
If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
 - 3) This was the message of Jesus in **Matt. 6: 24** :

Matt. 6: 24 – No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. S#26.
 - b. One must free himself from all vestiges of covetousness and be content.
 - 1) **Heb. 13: 5** – Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; S#27.
 - 2) **I Tim. 6: 6** – But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. **7** For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.
8 If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

CONCLUSION :**A. We face an uncertain future. We are going to where “*there be dragons.*”****S#28.**

1. Some of us will face imposingly negative events while others are blessed.
2. **Psa. #23** – Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; (*promised w/ us*) S#29.

B. Like Peter we can face our dragons as long as we keep our eyes on Jesus.

S#30.

Lesson Text :

Matthew 6: 25-34

25 For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? 27 "And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? 28 "And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, 29 yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. 30 "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! 31 "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' 32 "For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

34 So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 14: 22-33

22 Immediately He made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away. 23 After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone. 24 But the boat was already a long distance from the land, battered by the waves; for the wind was contrary. 25 And in the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea. 26 When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid."

28 Peter said to Him, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." 29 And He said, "Come!" And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30 But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 When they got

into the boat, the wind stopped. 33 And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!"