



# When Did We Become Afraid?

By J. Jeff Toler, Shenandoah Christian Alliance

- *“I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears”* (Psalm 34:4).

People seem to live in fear now more than ever. Too many of us are afraid to speak out, or disagree with consensus. We avoid speaking our hearts because we fear someone will take offense. So to avoid trouble, we avoid hot topics. We have become afraid to speak up, or speak out. Has it always been this way, or can we say living like this is a relatively new phenomenon? Perhaps this is the generational feature of the **children of**

**the sixties.** It was then that we dispensed rebellion over every form of ownership of our behavior. What did this do for their children we might wonder? Oddly, it seems to have made too many selfish, self-indulgent, and pampered.

We avoid fear of failure as much as we avoid failing. We are willing to believe almost anything because we don't have any real guiding beliefs. It seems we have taken the axiom, “Believe in yourself” as the best advice we can give or receive. So, when we encounter serious trouble in our life, predictably, the

thing we put our belief in fails us. We learn what real fear feels like.

### **That may explain why a virus is more fearful to us than the government lockdown it triggered.**

But, we are about to learn the response will have grave and terrible consequences—far worse than the Corona virus. Instead of questioning what we are told, and facing our personal responsibility to prepare and protect ourselves, we just accept it. This lack of personal responsibility explains the real problem of the age of entitlement: exchanging a healthy desire for probity with “personal peace and affluence.” Maybe that's why we are supposed to be afraid of climate change, which we are told will be the next great “pandemic.” Climate change? That's our worst fear?

### **What do the children of the children of the sixties have to say now?**

In a recent job board email posting, Amazon declared the most important thing is safety as an inducement to working there. Really? The most important thing? How about achievement? How about advancement? How about a decent paycheck for starters? Maybe those things are too frightening to talk about.

So it's official, We are afraid. So afraid that we have no problem accepting things like “sheltering in place,” or “social

distancing” as a way to cope with our fear of dying from a virus. Before this, were we not afraid of dying of cancer, suicide, drug overdose, or stepping in front of a bus? Or, for that matter, why was the last pandemic not this scary to us? Being afraid of death is certainly nothing new or extraordinary. People have been dying since the creation of man. So, is it fear that we are talking about here, or is it the avoidance of being afraid? As the saying goes, it's “better to be safe than sorry.” Sadly, at this pace, we are going to be very sorry, very soon.

**“Courage is *not* simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point.”** (C. S. Lewis)

For SCA, we are concerned about the ramifications this will have on our churches. We are concerned for our people. We are concerned for our pastors. We are concerned about the lack of enthusiasm, and the ultimate threat to the free elections of political candidates who desire to defend, or at least enable Christian orthodoxy, and openly condemn late-term abortion, homosexual agendas—like same-sex unions, gender reassignment for our children, rampant divorce, and the list goes on. All hot topics, yet seldom preached against in a definitive manner that leaves little doubt: God *hates* all of these things, and will visit His judgement on those who practice and promote them. But make no mistake,

we aren't looking for revival as much as we seek another awakening!

- *For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. (2 Timothy 1:7)*

**Philip Jenkins** writes candidly about the brutal effects the COVID-19 pandemic will have on [religion and faith](#). It is a sobering read, but well worth the experience. We link it here simply because we know things will no longer remain the same as they were. For our pastors, this can be troubling times, or a time of immense opportunity to preach the gospel, teach the law, and encourage everyone to be salt and light. Christians have so much to contribute to the culture, and to be vessels of grace and truth. Pastors, you can and should be leading the way!

- *“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” (1 Peter 5:6-7)*

We believe the Lord is moving in a mighty way! **Will we be afraid, or will we be on fire?**

Amen