

Introduction:

1. When have you said "I would never . . ." and had to eat your words?
2. When have you absolutely dreaded meeting someone, with no idea of what you'd say or how to handle the situation, and then the meeting went well and you KNEW it was the Lord?

Understanding:

3. Read what Jesus said about oaths in Matt 5:33-37. Compare that to what Peter did in Matthew 26:72-74. How do you account for the difference? Is there any connection to how we are tempted to act when we are fearful?
4. Proverbs 29:25 is Hebrew wisdom literature about fear of man. In what way have you been caught in the snare? What is the remedy?
5. Read John 19, verse 10-11a. What are the 2 kinds of power that are contrasted here? How does this help you overcome the fear of man?
6. A guy who follows Jesus was told "I can't believe that you have a master's degree and you believe that stuff about Jesus ". The guy thinks that's an honor! Do you agree with him? Why?
7. In the Luke account of Peter's denial Jesus turns and looks at Peter after the rooster crows (see Luke 22: 60-62). Do you think the look was a look of anger? Consider Matthew 26:31-32 as you answer. What does this say about Christ's attitude towards us when we sin by being fearful?
8. In the song "I Whistle A Happy Tune "it says
"Make believe you're brave
And the trick will take you far
You may be as brave
As you make believe you are"
How does what this song says about human willpower contrast with today's biblical teaching?
9. Read 2 Timothy 1:7. Describe the work of the Spirit here. How do the 3 qualities mentioned empower you when you are tempted to fear of man?

Application:

10. Ask yourself, "Where is fear stopping me from doing what I know is right?" Is it a spiritual area, like Peter? Where you have opportunities to identify yourself with Jesus, but stay silent?

Is it a moral area where you have opportunities to challenge something that's just not right but you keep your mouth shut?

Is it a personal area? Afraid that if you stand up and do what's right, instead of going along with the other person's strong personality, it'll be dangerous?

Pray that the Lord, by the power of the Spirit, would change your heart.
11. Pray that the Lord would work in our congregation to give courage in place of the fearful things that people let go as they wrote on their rocks.
12. This application is copied from the Chapel's "LENTEN GUIDE":

READ: John 13:31-38; 18:15-18, 25-29

REFLECT: Have you ever been embarrassed to admit you're a Christian? Why?

FAST: Let go of your fear this week! Strike up a spiritual conversation or invite someone to church.