

January 22 | Sunday
UnAfraid: Fear of the Other

Read [Matthew 25:31-46](#)



23 | Mon – Should I Fear Anyone? | Read [Psalm 27:1-5](#)

The people who prayed and sang this psalm saw Jerusalem destroyed, saw Rome conquer their land, saw Jesus crucified, Paul and Peter martyred, were driven underground to worship - yet they still trusted. What difficulties make you afraid? How can you trust that, in the end, God will always keep His promises? What encourages you when you're afraid of bad news?

24 | Tue – Remember | Read [Leviticus 19:33-34](#), [Deuteronomy 10:14-19](#)

We often see Israel in the Old Testament as exclusive and narrow toward non-Israelites but here we read that immigrants were to be treated as belonging. God reminded his people that they were once poor immigrants without a home. What does this suggest about how God sees people of all nations and races? As Jesus' follower, how can you live out that same spirit in your attitudes and actions today?

25 | Wed – Enemies | Read [Matthew 5:43-48](#)

Jesus knew that one of the most common ways we deal with fear is to turn it into hatred toward those we fear. Anyone who is different or who we feel threatened by can become our "enemy" if we do not guard our hearts. Here Jesus gives us practical application in dealing with our enemies. Who is your "enemy" at the moment? What would happen if you turned away from hate or extreme dislike and began to pray for that person or persons?

26 | Thu – Jesus' example | Read [Luke 9:51-56](#)

Samaritans were a mixed race, born of Assyria's policy of wiping out the identity of conquered people, and they were hated by the Jews. Each side's fear of the other had hardened for 700 years which explains the Samaritan woman's astonishment that Jesus would speak to her. What do you think made Jesus willing to take the risk of being misunderstood in order to offer "living water" to a member of a despised race and a disgraced woman at that? How can we follow Jesus' example?

27 | Fri – Peter's struggle | Read [Acts 8:5, 25](#) and [10:9-28](#)

Peter had a hard time accepting that Jesus' gift of salvation was not just for the Jews, even after Pentecost. Like all devout Jews, Peter carefully followed the Law and he did not want to be made "unclean" by associating with non-Jewish people. It took a direct intervention in the form of a dream for God to change his heart. But what about us today? Are there people and places you avoid today because you fear they will make you "unclean"? Ask God to open your eyes to His intentions toward even your enemies.

28 | Sat – Antidote to fear | Read [Galatians 3:26-28](#) and [1 John 4:18-21](#)

The foundation of the Christian faith was the belief that God created human beings out of love and for love. (This is extraordinary; most other religions of that day did not believe that their gods loved them.) Christians believe that Jesus embodied God's love and it shapes how we relate to all people, those we like and those who are "other". Do you agree that hatred for other human beings means we do not have a genuine love for God, as [1 John 4:20](#) says? What practical steps can you take in learning to love the "others"?