



# Unnecessary Fear

ISAIAH 41 & 43



Fear: the soul's response to a perceived threat to our personal well-being


- in response to an external threat that is real or a “cultural script” (culture of fear)
- In response to internal conflict – unknowns, uncertainty, anxiety over what we cannot control, loneliness

The term 'extreme' weather is a paradigmatic culture of fear expression. As an adjective, 'extreme' signifies a state that is far beyond normal. The conceptual linkage of weather with 'extreme' exemplifies the growing tendency to inflate the risks posed by natural phenomena, by highlighting the unexpected and unpredictable quality of this unnatural occurrence. It is not so much a scientific as a cultural metaphor that captures the anxieties of our time. In contemporary culture, extreme weather is often interpreted through a moralistic narrative that presents it as the inevitable outcome of irresponsible human behavior.

Frank Furedi, *"How Fear Works"*

Contemporary society struggles to give concepts of right and wrong a self-conscious moral content. As the subsequent chapters argue, both the rhetoric and the reality of the culture of fear give voice to the moral uncertainties and sense of powerlessness that prevail in contemporary society. *In today's fragile moral climate we lack a virtue that can serve as an antidote to fear.* Consequently we rely on non-moral resources – psychology, therapy, expertise – to guide our responses to the threat we face. Moral confusion both sustains and reproduces the culture of fear.

Furedi; *“How Fear Works”*



Moral confusion is extinguished by moral authority and absolutes. This authority must be universal and rooted in objective truth. The Christian worldview proposes that the Scriptures, as God's revelation, provide such an authority and moral clarity to a world of moral corruption and confusion. The biblical record provides the virtue(s) that are the antidote to fear.

# The Triad of Biblical Virtues that are the Antidote to Fear

- ▶ Faith: confidence and trust in the God who has revealed Himself
- ▶ Hope: the future is known and certain because of God's promise
- ▶ Love: the covenant of a relational God

# Faith

- ▶ Isaiah 41:4 “I, the LORD, the first, and with the last, I am He”
- ▶ Isaiah 41:10 “fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God”

Our faith is not abstract. Our faith resides in the unique and transcendent God who has revealed himself and is Immanuel, God with us



# Hope

- ▶ Our future is known and certain because of God's promised redemption
- ▶ Isaiah 41:14 "Fear not, . . . I am the one who helps you, declares the LORD; your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel"
- ▶ Isaiah 41:16 "And you shall rejoice in the LORD; in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory
- ▶ Isaiah 41:27 "the gospel of redemption has been decreed and declared"



# Love

- ▶ Isaiah 41:8,9 “But you, Israel, my servant Jacob, whom I have chosen, . . .I have chosen you and not cast you off”
- ▶ Isaiah 43:1 “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine”
- ▶ Deut. 7: I chose you because I love you

