

Sunday, April 26, 2026

God & Governance Session 8: Rejecting Fear and Embracing Truth: Standing Firm Against Satan's Tactics in God and Governance

Class Summary

This teaching session addresses the spiritual battle Christians face in navigating political and social issues in contemporary America. The pastor examines Satan's primary tactics—mixing truth with lies, manipulating through fear, anger, and hate, and promoting lukewarm Christianity. The message emphasizes that while Christians have civic responsibilities to pray, vote, and speak against immorality, they must not succumb to fear-based messaging from either political side. Instead, believers are called to saturate themselves in Scripture, recognize that God has not given them a spirit of fear but of power, love, and self-control, and combat fear through prayer and faith. The sermon challenges the binary political thinking that labels those who disagree as evil, calling instead for unity in the church and love for fellow Christians regardless of political differences. The antidote to fear, anger, and hatred is perfect love in Christ, which drives out fear and enables believers to walk in peace and truth.

Key Points

- Satan's tactics include mixing truth with lies, manipulating through fear, anger, and hate, and promoting lukewarm Christianity
- Christians must evaluate world events through three lenses: what the Bible directly says, what we learn from Scripture, and areas where Scripture is silent requiring wisdom
- The media consumption pyramid should have Bible reading as the foundation, followed by printed materials, then news sources, with social media used sparingly
- Fear is a primary weapon Satan uses to divide the church and manipulate believers away from God

- God did not give believers a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control (2 Timothy 1:7)
- Binary political thinking that labels opponents as evil cannot exist in the church
- The proper response to anxiety is prayer and petition with thanksgiving, which brings God's peace that surpasses understanding
- Christian civic responsibilities include praying, voting, speaking against immorality, seeking biblical justice, and influencing others positively
- The evangelical church in America has become fractured due to fear-based political messaging
- Perfect love drives out fear, and believers must love fellow Christians even when they disagree politically

Scripture References

- Genesis 3:10 (Adam hiding from God in fear after sin)
- Hebrews 2:14-15 (Jesus destroying the devil's power over death)
- Revelation 12:10 (Satan as the accuser of believers)
- 2 Timothy 1:7 (God has not given us a spirit of fear)
- Philippians 4:6-7 (Do not be anxious; pray instead and receive God's peace)
- 1 John 4:18-21 (Perfect love drives out fear; loving God means loving fellow Christians)

Discussion Questions

- How can we distinguish between healthy fear that leads to repentance and unhealthy fear that Satan uses to manipulate us and push us away from God?
- In what ways have you seen Satan mix truth with lies in contemporary culture, and how can we develop discernment to recognize this tactic?

- What does it mean practically to leave your anxieties with God as described in Philippians 4:6-7, and why do we so often pick them back up again?
- How has the church in America become fractured along political lines, and what is our individual responsibility in fighting for unity despite disagreements?
- When evaluating news and information sources, how can Christians balance staying informed with avoiding the consumption of fear-based messaging?
- What is the danger of lukewarm Christianity in our current cultural moment, and how might Satan be using political affiliation to promote it?
- How does 1 John 4:18 challenge the idea that Christians need a mean, tough leader to protect them rather than trusting in God's sovereignty?
- In what ways do we allow binary thinking to categorize people as either good or evil based on their political views, and how does this contradict the gospel?
- How can we practice loving our fellow Christians who hold different political perspectives while still standing firm on biblical truth?
- What are practical ways we can influence our culture positively for the kingdom without being driven by fear, anger, or hatred?

God & Governance – Session 8 Homework

Fear, Anger, Lies & the Call to Love

Purpose:

To help you (1) recognize fear/anger messages in our culture, (2) compare them with Scripture, and (3) practice responding in faith and love instead of fear and hate.

Part 1 – Compare & Contrast: Fear's Message vs. God's Message

This week, notice what you're hearing and reading.

1. **Choose two current messages** (from news, podcasts, social media, conversations, etc.). For each, write:
 - What is this message telling me to **fear**?
 - Who or what am I being told to be **angry at** or to **hate**?

- What “solution” is being offered? (More outrage? More control? A political victory? Something else?)
2. For each message, write a short paragraph:
 This message is saying _____.
 In light of Scripture, I believe the **truth** is _____.
 Therefore, my response as a Christian should be _____, not _____.

Bring these notes next week if possible.

Part 2 – Bible Exploration: Fear, Anger, Love & Unity

Set aside **three 20-minute times** this week. Use a notebook.

Day 1 – Fear

Read:

- Genesis 3:8–10
- Hebrews 2:14–15
- 2 Timothy 1:7
- Philippians 4:6–7
- 1 John 4:18–21

For each passage, answer briefly:

- What kind of **fear** is this (fear of God, fear of death, fear of punishment, etc.)?
- Does this fear move people **toward God** or **away from God**?
- What is God’s **answer** or provision here?

Then summarize in 2–3 sentences:

When is fear appropriate, and when is it a tool of the enemy?

Day 2 – Anger and Hate

Read:

- Ephesians 4:26–27
- James 1:19–20
- Matthew 5:21–24, 43–48

Answer:

- What’s the difference between **righteous anger** and **sinful anger** in these verses?
- How do these verses challenge the idea that we need a “mean, tough” leader motivated by anger?
- What does Jesus call us to do with our **enemies** and those we strongly disagree with?

Then write 3–4 sentences:

Here is what I believe **Christian anger** should look like, and here is what it must never become.

Day 3 – Love, Unity, and Discernment

Read:

- John 13:34–35
- John 17:20–23
- 1 John 3:10–18; 4:7–12
- Romans 12:9–21

Answer:

- What marks **true Christian love** in these passages?
- How high a priority does Jesus place on **unity among believers**?
- Which specific commands in Romans 12 push back against the “destroy/own the other side” culture?

Then answer in one sentence:

Why is loving fellow Christians who disagree with me politically a **non-optional** command?

Part 3 – Practical Application: Practice Rejecting Fear & Choosing Love

A. Media & Fear Audit (Two Days)

Pick **two different days** this week. On each day:

1. Keep track of your **media intake** (news, podcasts, YouTube, social media, etc.).
2. For each significant item, jot down:
 - Source: _____
 - Main emotion it stirred: **Fear / Anger / Hate / Hope / Peace / Compassion / Other**
 - Did this push me to **trust God more**, or to **fear people more**?

At the end of each of those days, read Philippians 4:6–7 and pray:

Lord, here are the fears and worries that were stirred up today:

_____.

I give these to you. Please give me your peace that surpasses understanding and guard my heart and mind in Christ Jesus.

Picture taking “rocks” out of your backpack and leaving them with God.

B. One Concrete Act of Cross-Political Love

Before next session:

1. Choose **one Christian** you know who loves Jesus but does not share your political views.
2. Do **one practical act of love** for them:
 - Invite them for coffee and listen without debating.
 - Send a kind text or note of encouragement.
 - Do a small act of service for them.

Guidelines:

- No political arguments.
- No trying to “fix” their views.
- Focus on loving them as a brother/sister in Christ.

Afterward, write a few sentences:

- How did this challenge your **binary thinking** (“my side good, their side evil”)?
- Did this interaction **increase or decrease** your fear, anger, or suspicion?

C. Personal Prayer Commitment

At least **three times** this week, pray something like:

“Lord, you have not given me a spirit of fear,
but of power, love, and a sound mind.

Show me where I’m being shaped by fear-mongering instead of your Word.

Guard my heart from anger that turns into hate.

Teach me to love my brothers and sisters—even when we disagree—so that the world can see Jesus in us.”

Write down one specific area where you sense the Lord inviting you to:

- **Consume less fear,** and
- **Trust Him more.**

Bring any reflections or questions from this homework to our next session.

Extra Credit

Have one difficult conversation this week.

Use the following guide on how to talk about cultural pain points in a distinctly Christian way, without turning the conversation into “my party vs. your party.”

General Tips for Non-Politicized Conversations

Across all these topics, you can keep the conversation Christ-centered and non-partisan by:

1. Start with the heart, not the policy.
 - “What are you feeling about this?”
 - “What fears does this stir up for you?”
2. Name fear, anger, and hatred as spiritual issues, not just emotional ones.
 - “I’ve noticed this makes me angry in a way that doesn’t feel holy. I’ve been praying about that.”
3. Bring Scripture in as a mirror, not a hammer.
 - Share how a passage convicted or comforted you, instead of weaponizing it against them.
4. Refuse binary labels.
 - Avoid: “You people,” “the left,” “the right,” “those idiots.”
 - Use: “our neighbors,” “people who disagree with us,” “others made in God’s image.”
5. Keep Jesus as the hero, not any leader or party.
 - “My hope isn’t ultimately in who wins the next election; it’s in Christ and His kingdom.”
6. End with prayer, not a “win.”
 - Offer: “Can I just pray with you real quick about this fear/concern?”
 - That re-centers the conversation on God rather than on political victory.

Conversation Topic Examples

1. War, Global Conflict, and “End of the World” Fears

Examples:

- Ongoing wars (Middle East, Ukraine/Russia, threats involving Iran, etc.)
- Talk of World War III, nuclear possibilities, asteroids/comets, “we’re doomed” headlines

Why this connects to the sermon:

- Your teaching emphasized: “God did not give us a spirit of fear,” and critiqued fear-mongering.
- You mentioned the war in Iran, fear of global collapse, and exaggerated claims like “all Iranians want to kill all Jews.”

How to talk about it without politicizing: Instead of “What should our government do?” start with:

- “How are you processing all this emotionally and spiritually?”
- “What fears is this stirring up in you or the people you love?”

Move from politics/strategy to:

- Human suffering (image-bearers on every side)
- Fear vs. faith
- Prayer and Christian hope

Helpful biblical frames:

- Philippians 4:6–7 – Bringing anxiety to God in prayer rather than living in panic.
- Hebrews 2:14–15 – Christ breaking the slavery of the fear of death.
- 2 Timothy 1:7 – Not a spirit of fear, but power, love, and a sound mind.

Sample conversation starter:

- “There’s so much in the news about war lately. How are you doing with that? Is it making you anxious?”
- “I’m trying to practice Philippians 4—bringing my fears to God instead of just sitting in the headlines. What helps you keep perspective right now?”

2. Elections, Campaign Rhetoric, and “The Other Side Is Evil”

Examples:

- Presidential election cycle
- Campaign ads designed to maximize fear (“If X wins, democracy is over”; “If Y wins, America is finished”)
- Friends/family saying “We need a mean, tough SOB to save us” or “The other side is evil”

Why this connects to the sermon:

- You critiqued binary thinking (“my side good, your side evil”) and the rhetoric of anger and annihilation.
- You shared that evangelical quote wanting the “meanest, toughest SOB” and labeled it fear/anger speech.

How to talk about it without politicizing: Focus not on which candidate is best, but on:

- How fear and anger are being used to manipulate people.
- How Christians are tempted to place messianic hope in human leaders.
- The spiritual danger of hating or dehumanizing people on the “other side.”

Helpful biblical frames:

- 1 John 4:18–21 – Perfect love drives out fear; hatred of a fellow believer exposes a lie.
- John 13:34–35 – Love for one another as Christ’s mark of discipleship.
- Romans 12:9–21 – Overcoming evil with good; blessing persecutors; not repaying evil for evil.

Sample conversation starter:

- “Have you noticed how much of the election messaging is built on fear—‘If we lose, everything is over’? How do you think that affects us spiritually?”
- “I’m trying to figure out how to care about issues and still obey Jesus’ command to love my enemies and even believers who vote differently. How do you wrestle with that?”

You can also gently reframe statements like:

- “We definitely need strong leadership, but I’m nervous when Christians talk as if we mainly need a mean or cruel person. That feels really out of step with Jesus’ call to us, even if we disagree on policies.”

3. LGBTQ+ Debates, School Policies, and Fear for Children

Examples:

- Curriculum debates, gender identity policies in schools
- Laws about bathroom use, sports, or parental rights
- Christian rhetoric like “They’re going to turn all our kids trans”

Why this connects to the sermon:

- You named the fear narrative: “All the children will become trans if we let them.”
- You showed how fear of “the radical agenda” can morph into anger and hatred.

How to talk about it without politicizing: Instead of jumping to:

- “My side’s policy is right; your side is wrong,” begin with:
- “What are you afraid might happen?”
- “How can we respond as Christians in truth and love—without panic and hatred?”

Emphasize:

- The call to value truth about God’s design
- The call to see every person as an image-bearer, not an enemy caricature
- The need to protect children wisely, without demonizing whole groups

Helpful biblical frames:

- Genesis 1:26–27 – Every human made in God’s image.
- Ephesians 4:15 – Speaking the truth in love.
- 1 Corinthians 13 – Love’s character (patient, kind; not rude or easily angered).

Sample conversation starter:

- “I know a lot of parents are really scared about what’s happening in schools around gender and sexuality. What are you hearing? What are you most concerned about?”
- “I want to hold to what Scripture teaches about our bodies and identity, but I also don’t want fear to turn into hatred. How do you think we can keep loving people, even when we profoundly disagree?”

4. Media, Misinformation, and AI

Examples:

- AI-generated fake news, deepfakes, fabricated crises (like the comet story you mentioned)
- Social media algorithms amplifying outrage and fear
- Confusion over what sources can be trusted

Why this connects to the sermon:

- You warned about social media, AI, and “fake news,” and emphasized saturating ourselves in Scripture.
- You used the “media food pyramid” idea: Bible at the bottom, then print/edited sources, then more volatile media on top.

How to talk about it without politicizing: Shift from:

- “That outlet is evil, mine is holy”
to:
- “All outlets can be biased; how do we guard our hearts and minds?”

Emphasize:

- Discernment rather than cynicism.
- The spiritual impact of constant outrage/doom consumption.
- Building habits of Scripture-first intake.

Helpful biblical frames:

- Romans 12:2 – Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.
- Philippians 4:8 – Whatever is true, honorable, just, pure... think on these things.
- Ephesians 5:15–16 – Be careful how you walk, making the best use of the time.

Sample conversation starter:

- “Have you noticed how many stories now turn out to be half-true or totally fake? How do you try to discern what’s real without just giving up?”

- “I realized that when I start my day with headlines, I’m way more anxious than when I start with Scripture. Have you noticed anything like that in your own habits?”

5. Fracturing of the Church and “Evangelical Identity” Wars

Examples:

- Christians unfriending, leaving churches, or splitting over politics
- Public statements like “evangelicalism is destroyed” or “there’s no putting this back together”
- Suspicion between believers: “If you voted ___ you can’t really love Jesus”

Why this connects to the sermon:

- You shared your fear/sadness about the fracture of the evangelical church.
- You stressed: unity doesn’t happen accidentally; we have to fight for it.
- You highlighted lukewarm Christianity and “Christian in name only” as serious issues.

How to talk about it without politicizing: Focus not on:

- “Which camp is right?”
but on:
- “How did we get to the point where we devour each other?”
- “What is Jesus actually calling His church to be?”

Emphasize:

- Repentance where we’ve idolized politics or tolerated sinful anger.
- Forgiveness and patient listening.
- The priority of kingdom identity over party identity.

Helpful biblical frames:

- John 17:20–23 – Jesus praying for our unity as His witness to the world.
- 1 Corinthians 1:10–13 – “I follow Paul / I follow Apollos” rebuked as divisive.
- 1 John 4:20–21 – Loving God and hating a brother is a lie.

Sample conversation starter:

- “It grieves me how divided Christians have become over politics. How have you experienced that?”
- “What would it look like for us to obey Jesus’ prayer in John 17 with people in our own church who vote differently?”

You might also say:

- “I’m not saying issues don’t matter. But if I can’t share communion with a brother or sister who votes differently, something is very wrong in my priorities.”

6. Economic Anxiety: Inflation, Collapse Talk, and Global Shocks

Examples:

- Headlines about inflation, national debt, potential global recession or collapse
- Commodity disruptions (oil, fertilizer, food chains)
- People saying, “The global economy is about to collapse”

Why this connects to the sermon:

- You mentioned fear-messages about the global economy and oil/fertilizer shortages.
- You called out exaggerated, apocalyptic language detached from trust in God.

How to talk about it without politicizing: Instead of arguing:

- “This is X party’s fault” vs. “No, Y party’s fault,” begin with:
- “What financial worries are weighing on you right now?”

Emphasize:

- God’s care for daily needs, even in hard times.
- The difference between prudence and panic.
- Our call to generosity and mutual care, especially for the poor.

Helpful biblical frames:

- Matthew 6:25–34 – Do not worry about tomorrow; seek first His kingdom.

- Philippians 4:19 – God will supply all your needs according to His riches.
- Acts 2:44–45 – Believers sharing with any who had need.

Sample conversation starter:

- “A lot of people are talking like the entire system is about to collapse. How is that affecting you personally?”
- “I’m trying to walk that line between wise planning and not living in fear. What helps you trust God with your finances?”

5-Day Devotional: Overcoming Fear with Faith

Day 1: When Fear Meets Perfect Love

Reading: 1 John 4:18-21

Devotional: Fear is a natural human response, but God calls us beyond natural responses into supernatural peace. The apostle John reveals a profound truth: perfect love drives out fear. When we truly grasp how deeply God loves us, fear loses its grip on our hearts. This doesn't mean we'll never feel afraid, but that fear won't control us. Like Adam hiding in the garden, we often run from God when we're afraid. But God pursues us with love, not condemnation. Today, examine what fears you're carrying. Are you afraid of political outcomes, economic collapse, or relational conflict? Bring each fear to God in prayer, allowing His perfect love to replace anxiety with peace. Remember: if you can love God whom you haven't seen, you can love the people around you—even those who disagree with you politically or theologically.

Day 2: Leaving Your Burdens at His Feet

Reading: Philippians 4:6-7

Devotional: Imagine carrying a backpack filled with rocks—each one representing a worry, fear, or burden. How exhausting! Paul offers a better way: "Do not be anxious about anything." Notice he doesn't say "don't feel anxious"—he says don't remain in that state. Instead, turn anxiety into prayer. The beautiful promise follows: God's peace, which surpasses understanding, will guard your heart and mind. This peace doesn't make logical sense given your circumstances, but it's real and powerful. Today, practice the discipline of leaving your requests with God. Write down

specific fears—maybe about war, the economy, or division in the church. Pray over each one with thanksgiving, then symbolically leave them at Jesus' feet. When those fears try to return (and they will), remind yourself: "I've already given this to God. His peace is guarding my heart."

Day 3: The Fear That Leads to Wisdom

Reading: Proverbs 9:10-12; Hebrews 12:28-29

Devotional: Not all fear is wrong. Scripture speaks of a healthy "fear of the Lord" —the beginning of wisdom. This isn't terror that drives us away from God, but reverent awe that draws us near. It's the recognition that we stand before a holy God, that our sin matters, and that we desperately need His grace. This godly fear leads to repentance, humility, and transformation. Satan wants to twist fear into something that paralyzes and separates us from God. But the Holy Spirit uses appropriate fear to bring us closer to our Father. When you sin, do you run and hide like Adam, or do you run to God for forgiveness? Today, reflect on the difference between worldly fear (which leads to death) and godly fear (which leads to life). Confess any sin that's creating distance between you and God, trusting that His mercy is greater than your failure.

Day 4: Rejecting the Spirit of Fear

Reading: 2 Timothy 1:6-7; Romans 8:14-17

Devotional: Paul's words to Timothy ring powerfully today: "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of self-control." When fear grips you, ask yourself: is this from God? The answer is almost always no. God gives power to stand firm, love to overcome hatred, and self-control to respond wisely rather than react emotionally. Our culture thrives on fear-mongering—political fear, economic fear, social fear. Both sides of every issue use fear to manipulate and control. But as believers, we're called to a different standard. We don't need a "mean, tough SOB" to protect us; we need the God who is our refuge and strength. Today, identify one area where fear has been controlling your thoughts or actions. Replace that fearful thinking with truth from Scripture. Declare: "I have not received a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind."

Day 5: Love in a Divided World

Reading: John 13:34-35; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Devotional: Jesus gave His disciples a radical command: "Love one another as I have loved you." This wasn't a suggestion—it was the

identifying mark of authentic Christianity. Yet today, the evangelical church is fractured, divided by politics, fear, and anger. We've allowed binary thinking to poison our relationships: if you disagree with me, you're not just wrong—you're evil. This grieves the heart of God. Love is the antidote to fear, anger, and hatred. When we saturate ourselves in God's perfect love, we can extend that love to others—even those on "the other side." This doesn't mean abandoning truth or avoiding difficult conversations. It means refusing to demonize those who think differently. Today, pray for someone with whom you have significant disagreements. Ask God to help you see them as He sees them—beloved, created in His image, worthy of respect. Then reach out with genuine care, choosing unity over division.

Reflection Questions for the Week:

- What fears am I carrying that I need to leave at God's feet?
- How can I influence my world positively rather than react in fear or anger?
- Where have I allowed political or cultural divisions to damage relationships with other believers?
- Am I consuming more of God's Word than I am consuming fear-based media?
- How can I demonstrate Christ's love to someone who disagrees with me this week?