



## LENTEN STUDY FOR 2011

*Facing our Fears:*

*Living as followers of Christ in a  
Fear-Driven Culture*

### *Week 2: Fear for Profit*

**Deuteronomy 31:8** *The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.*

**Experts in marketing know that our emotions motivate us to purchase goods that (if we were thinking rationally) we would realize that we don't really need. These experts have also learned that fear is an exceptionally powerful motivator. Remember how many people rushed out to buy batteries, canned food, and bottled water because they feared that civilization would crash and burn at the turn of the millennium?**

**How often do we upgrade our home security systems or purchase weapons because the media have convinced us that we are in immediate danger? How often have we rushed to the doctor because the advertisements for a new pill have listed symptoms that we just might be experiencing? How often do we purchase a different brand of toothpaste or deodorant or a new wardrobe because we fear the loss of status or popularity that might come if we don't buy these items?**

**Once again, the key is to discern whether or not the fear we are experiencing is caused by a real and immediate problem that will affect us and our loved ones.**

**Read Numbers 13:16-33. On the Israelites' journey toward the Promised Land, Moses sent spies ahead to investigate the territory. The report they brought back dissuaded the Israelites from following God's plan. Consider the following:**

- What emotionally charged words did the spies use to manipulate the Israelites through fear? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why do you think the Israelites listened to the fear-filled report, rather than the positive report brought by Caleb? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How does this story relate to your faith life? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Become aware of fear as a manipulative tool.** As you watch TV in the evening, notice what emotions you experience watching commercials and the news. Are you being manipulated to fear something that has little bearing on your life? What product are you being encouraged to buy – and do you really need it?

### **Prayer:**

*God of wisdom, help us to be aware of the part our emotions, and especially our fears, play in influencing how we use our time and money. Please give us the wisdom to discern between any real dangers and ways we may be manipulated for profit. Protect us from influences that frighten us needlessly, and increase our faith in your blessed assurance that you are with us in times of trouble and times of peace.*

*In Jesus' name – Amen.*

*Next week: Fear in Politics*