



## LENTEN STUDY FOR 2011

*Facing our Fears:*

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

### *Week 3: Fear in Politics*

**Matthew 10:28** [Jesus said] “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”

Smart politicians are aware that, especially in stressful times, we are more likely to vote with our emotions rather than with our intellect. These politicians and special interest groups use instantaneous media coverage of worldwide events to their advantage, spinning events into emotion-laden news-bites that seem to support their cause. Two regularly used interrelated emotions are fear and anger. If, for example, I am afraid of losing my job, I am inclined to become frustrated with the politicians or CEO’s who control the situation, and my frustration may, in turn, result in anger, leading to blame and political action.

fear ⇒ frustration ⇒ ANGER = blame: political action

We have experienced, in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, an emotionally-charged political atmosphere that has heavily influenced the outcome of our elections. Problems that are real enough, and which demand cooperation for deliberate, considered solutions, are used instead as tools for division and a

means to a particular end. Think about the emotional impact of the following phrases:

- Global warming
- Terrorism
- Weapons of mass destruction
- Illegal immigration
- Economic oppression

**How often do we allow the fear-laden rhetoric of politics to influence our votes and our actions?**

**Read Luke 21:5-36. Consider the following:**

- About what specific frightening events did Jesus warn his disciples? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What events occurring in our modern world are similar or parallel to Jesus’ warnings in the Luke passage? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How will Jesus’ admonition to “stand firm” affect your politics and your actions? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Look for the motive behind the message.** Be on guard against political movements that arise from lust for power. Any movement that would substitute reliance on a person or earthly institution for our faith in God, is unworthy of our support.

**Prayer:**

*God of eternity – God of history, thank you for your powerful hand that has sustained your people throughout the millennia. Help us to remember in these troubled times, that your perfect love will cast our fears aside. As we receive your love, help us to minister to our fearful neighbors in faith, love and hope.*

*In Jesus’ name – Amen.*

*Next week: Fear in Politics*