

Redeeming Leadership Today

Week 4: Fear

Raymond Chiu • NYCBC Sunday School • July 2, 2023

For class materials go to bit.ly/nycbc-redeeming



Agenda

- Introduction: Recap and moral diversity
- Youth: When fear is an inheritance
- Biblical: The Word over fear
- Global: Forms of threat sensitivity
- Personal: What am I afraid of today?
- Church: Fearmongering and politics
- Applied: Redeeming our fears



Introduction



What we've covered so far

- “In a world where fallen image-bearers of God fight for safety and dominance, our anxieties about life in the world induce within us traditional views about purifying and protecting our own people, and these priorities appear to be addressed by leaders who fit the strong-man image. As demonstrated by biblical history, these innate fears, moral intuitions, and impressions—which are based on imperfect information—pose a serious challenge to our humanity and faith, leading us to idolize tyranny in our societies and churches. Yet we are blessed with a hopeful portrait of leadership through Jesus Christ that transforms our understanding of both leadership and followership and redeems our moral character, interpersonal relationships, and church governance.”

red – preference for tyranny purple – traditional morality green – fear of external threats



Recap of Weeks 1 to 3



US elections 2024
Pro-Trump pastors rebuked for 'overt embrace of white Christian nationalism'

Mainstream Christian leaders criticize Pastors for Trump for distorting religious teachings and endangering democracy

Peter Stone in Washington

Mon 1 May 2023 09.00 BST

- Week 1
 - the challenge of authoritarianism
 - how leaders emerge to meet our needs
- Week 2
 - role of processing limited information
 - leader prototypes including tyranny
- Week 3
 - individualizing and binding moral foundations
 - binding traditional foundations focus on the group

<https://amp.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/may/01/far-right-pastors-embracing-trump-white-christian-nationalism>

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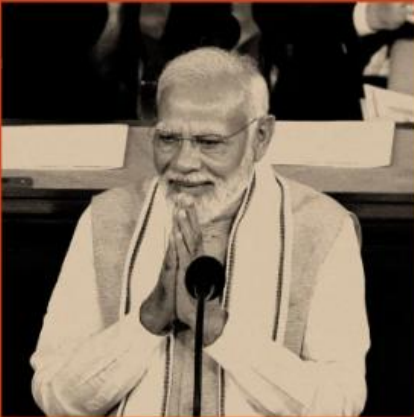
Recap of the path so far

NEWS WATCH NOW

ASIAN AMERICA

What's fueling the rise in Hindu nationalism in the U.S.

To some, Modi represents the face of a new, better India. To others, his human rights violations are ushering in an era of Hindu nationalism – and it's rapidly spreading in the U.S.



NBC News; Sipa USA via AP

June 27, 2023, 9:01 AM EDT

By Sakshi Venkatraman

- One step does not necessitate the next
 1. Leaders are a product of our needs and wants, including our moral intuitions
 2. Some people prioritize the protection of social order, hierarchy, and purity
 3. We judge leaders imperfectly due to limited information and distance
 4. We draw from traits that appear to signal effective leadership: for tyranny, domineering, pushy, manipulative, loud, conceited, selfish
 5. Acceptance of tyrannical traits perpetuate support for authoritarian rule
- The solution is a redemptive lens on creation

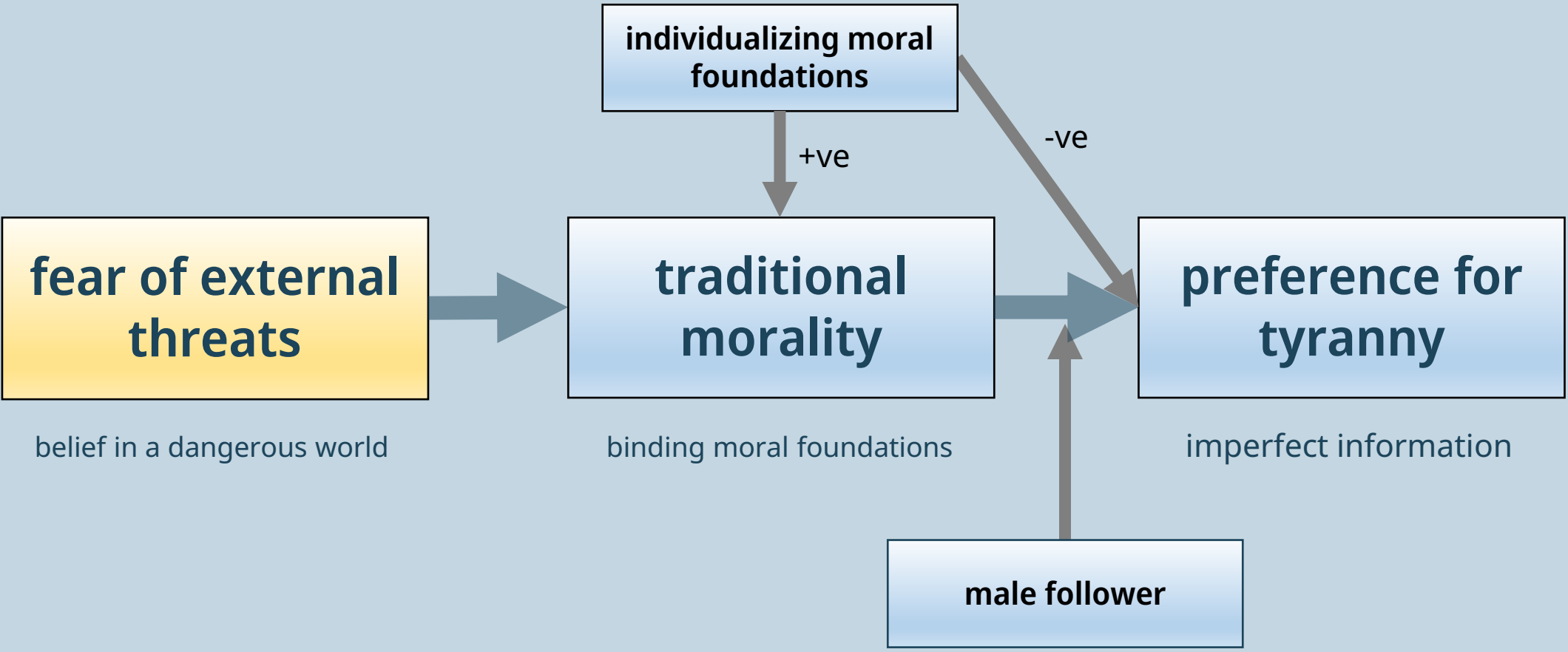
<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/modis-popularity-grows-india-hindu-nationalism-rising-us-rcna90680>

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Stepping through the model



Mirowska, Agata, Raymond B. Chiu, and Rick D. Hackett. "The Allure of Tyrannical Leaders: Moral Foundations, Belief in a Dangerous World, and Follower Gender." *Journal of Business Ethics* 181, no. 2 (2022): 355-374.



Redemptively navigating moral diversity



The screenshot shows the top portion of a web article. At the top left is a magnifying glass icon. Next to it is the 'TGC' logo, followed by 'U.S. EDITION' with a dropdown arrow. To the right is a hamburger menu icon. Below this is a green bar with the text 'FAITH & WORK'. The main title of the article is '‘An Unlikely Ally’: What a Secular Atheist Is Teaching Christian Leaders'. Below the title, it says 'FEBRUARY 28, 2018 — SARAH EEKHOFF ZYLSTRA'. At the bottom of this section are three social media icons: Facebook, Twitter, and Email.

- Are moral foundations compatible with the Gospel?
- Some conservative Christians find them useful
 - *The Righteous Mind* was “the most important book in years.” (Russell Moore from the Southern Baptist Convention)
 - “[Speaking about mending divisions in the church] In the Reformed tradition, we have an appreciation for all truth as God’s truth, and a belief that common grace can help even people who are not regenerate to be able to help advance some truth. And I think that’s the case with Haidt.” (John Hanson, editorial director of The Gospel Coalition)
 - “It’s important for both secular and religious people to read what he has to say” (Tim Keller)

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/what-a-secular-atheist-is-teaching-christian-leaders/>;
<https://dbts.edu/2020/11/04/theological-diversity/>



Redemptively navigating moral diversity



The screenshot shows the top portion of a web article. At the top left is a green search icon. Next to it is the 'TGC' logo in bold black letters, followed by 'U.S. EDITION' in smaller green text with a dropdown arrow. To the right is a green hamburger menu icon. Below this is a green banner with the text 'FAITH & WORK' in white. The main title of the article is in large, bold, black font: 'An Unlikely Ally': What a Secular Atheist Is Teaching Christian Leaders. Below the title, the date 'FEBRUARY 28, 2018' and the author 'SARAH EEKHOFF ZYLSTRA' are listed. At the bottom of the header are three social media icons: Facebook, Twitter, and Email.

- Moral foundations is a psychological framework
 - Imperfect like others (e.g., personality, team life cycle)
 - They provide a space for engaging the world
- Most important for understanding how ideology, not faith, drive politics, churches, and leaders
 - ¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence,^[d] and the violent take it by force. (Matthew 11:12)

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/what-a-secular-atheist-is-teaching-christian-leaders/>

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When fear is an inheritance

Youth perspective





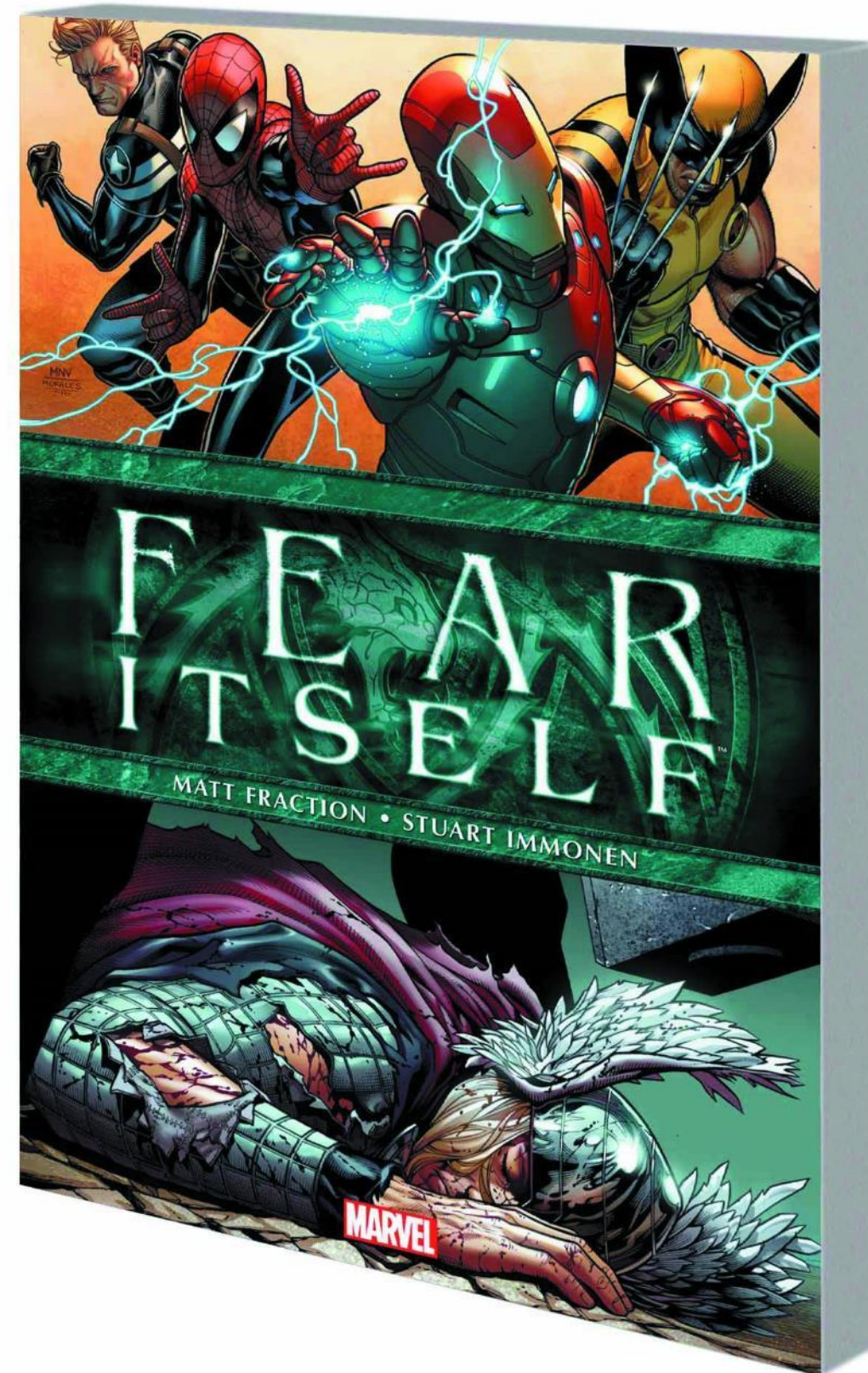
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When fear is an inheritance

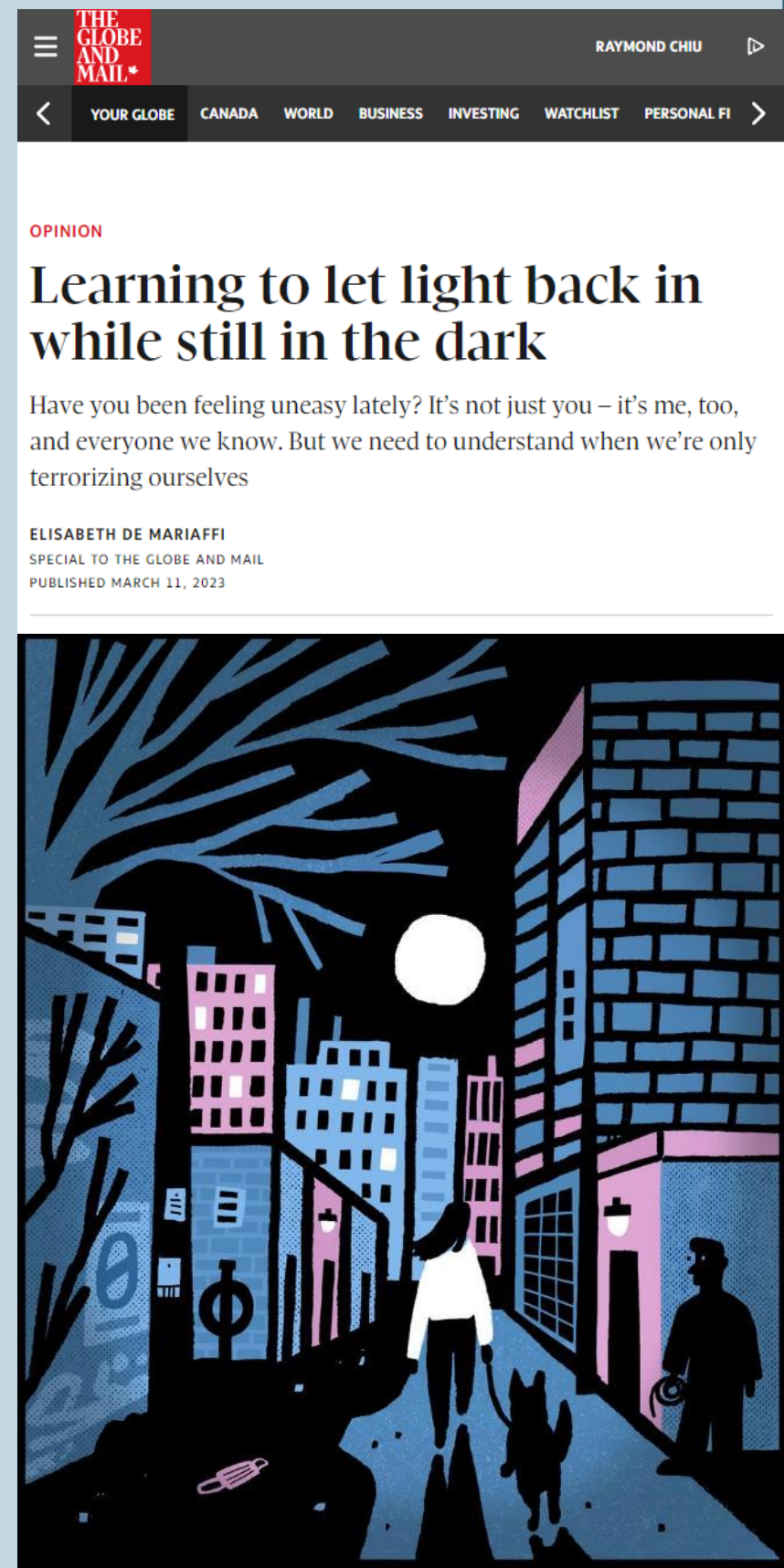
- In groups, share a way that fear has affected you intergenerationally. Or talk about someone else's fear that has affected you over time.
- When time is up, type a few words in the poll to describe the fear and its effect.



Fear itself

- Franklin D. Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address (1933)
 - “So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is **fear itself**—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”
- Elisabeth De Mariaffi
 - “Have you been feeling uneasy lately? It’s not just you – it’s me, too, and everyone we know. But we need to understand when we’re only terrorizing ourselves.”

https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Franklin_Roosevelt%27s_First_Inaugural_Address;
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-fear-itself-learning-to-let-the-light-back-in-while-still-in-the-dark/>; illustrations by Sandi Falconer



THE GLOBE AND MAIL

RAYMOND CHIU


YOUR GLOBE CANADA WORLD BUSINESS INVESTING WATCHLIST PERSONAL FI

OPINION

Learning to let light back in while still in the dark

Have you been feeling uneasy lately? It's not just you – it's me, too, and everyone we know. But we need to understand when we're only terrorizing ourselves

ELISABETH DE MARIAFFI
SPECIAL TO THE GLOBE AND MAIL
PUBLISHED MARCH 11, 2023



The Word over fear

Biblical perspective



Fear monologue

- A monologue on fear will be read from a handout.
- It can be said that **the entire witness of the Word**, outside of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ, is to **combat the fear in human hearts** that drives us away from the Source of love and life.
- It is this fear that drives us to the **idolatry of substitutes** by way of other human beings, particularly **those showing themselves to be false leaders of power, might, and glory.**



<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-fear-itself-learning-to-let-the-light-back-in-while-still-in-the-dark/>; illustrations by Sandi Falconer



Forms of threat sensitivity

Global perspective





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Behavioural immune system

- If I agree instead of disagree with the first question, would my agreement with the second question tend to be lower or higher?
 - 1) “I never let any part of my body touch the toilet seat in public restrooms”
 - 2) “I tend to sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my group”

<https://pixabay.com/photos/toilet-bathroom-public-restroom-6343979/>



Behavioural immune system

- The **behavioural immune system (BIS)** is understood to have developed to avoid threat from disease, and since other humans are a source of pathogens, the BIS is likely to affect social attitudes.
- BIS reactivity is related to collective beliefs, avoidance of casual sex, preference for long-term mating, and conformity to other people's opinions.

Murray, Damian R, Daniel N Jones, and Mark Schaller. 'Perceived Threat of Infectious Disease and Its Implications for Sexual Attitudes'. *Personality and Individual Differences* 54, no. 1 (2013): 103-8; Terrizzi Jr, John A, Russ Clay, and Natalie J Shook. 'Does the Behavioral Immune System Prepare Females to Be Religiously Conservative and Collectivistic?' *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 40, no. 2 (2014): 189-202; Wu, Bao-Pei, and Lei Chang. 'The Social Impact of Pathogen Threat: How Disease Salience Influences Conformity'. *Personality and Individual Differences* 53, no. 1 (2012): 50-54.



Mortality salience



- How would writing about what happens when you die relate to how big a bail bond you would require for an illegal prostitute?

<https://www.cpr.org/2020/08/10/colorado-coronavirus-3-free-testing-sites/>



Mortality salience



- **Mortality salience and terror management theory** suggest that awareness of death activates the instinct for self-preservation. People cling to something meaningful that will live on, often something that validates their worldview standards or self-esteem.
- Awareness of one's mortality is associated with people who become more prejudiced, stereotype people negatively, punish social deviants, desire more children, and have reduced desire for an attractive woman (for men).

Burke, Brian L., Andy Martens, and Erik H. Faucher. 'Two Decades of Terror Management Theory: A Meta-Analysis of Mortality Salience Research'. *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 14, no. 2 (2010): 155-95; Jonas, Eva, Andy Martens, Daniela Niesta Kayser, Immo Fritsche, Daniel Sullivan, and Jeff Greenberg. 'Focus Theory of Normative Conduct and Terror-Management Theory: The Interactive Impact of Mortality Salience and Norm Salience on Social Judgment.' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 95, no. 6 (2008): 1239-1251.



Historical disease prevalence



- How would a higher prevalence of eight diseases in the history of a region—leishmania, schistosoma, trypanosoma, malaria, filaria, leprosy, dengue, typhus, and tuberculosis—be related to how introverted or extroverted the people are today?

<https://www.wypr.org/show/midday-with-dan-rodricks/2021-03-12/doctors-without-borders-a-profile>



Historical disease prevalence

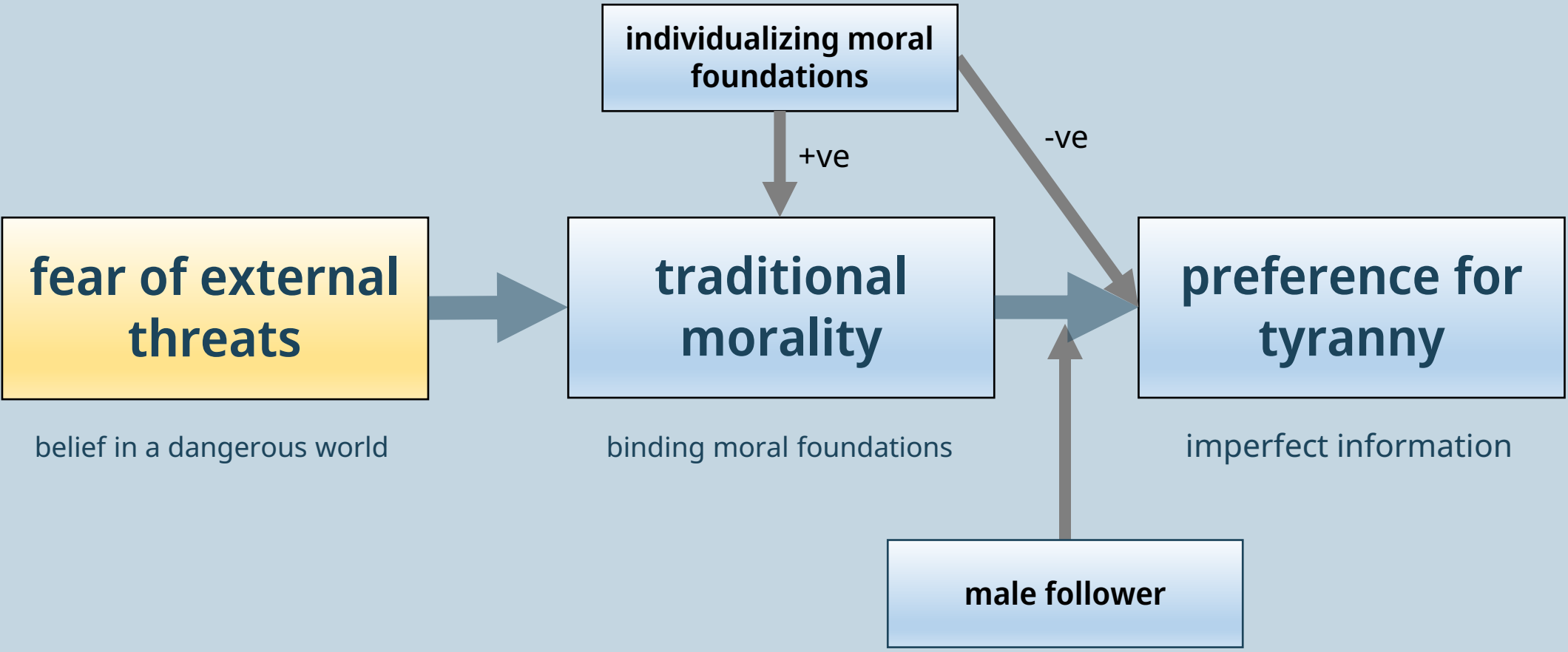


- Historical disease prevalence (HDP) is the past incidence of disease shown by epidemiological maps. Supposedly people respond psychologically to the risk of infection by changing their social behaviours.
- Higher HDP is related to populations that are: less extroverted, less open to experience, and less liberal in their sexuality; more xenophobic, more ethnocentric, and more politically oppressive.
- Higher HDP is also associated with lower individualism, higher collectivism, and higher traditional or binding moral foundations.

Murray, Damian R, and Mark Schaller. 'Pathogen Prevalence and Geographical Variation in Traits and Behavior.' In *Geographical Psychology: Exploring the Interaction of Environment and Behavior*, edited by P.J. Rentfrow, 51–70. American Psychological Association, 2014; Leeuwen, Florian van, Justin H. Park, Bryan L. Koenig, and Jesse Graham. 'Regional Variation in Pathogen Prevalence Predicts Endorsement of Group-Focused Moral Concerns'. *Evolution and Human Behavior* 33, no. 5 (2012): 429–37.



Stepping through the model



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Belief in a dangerous world

1. It seems that every year there are fewer and fewer truly respectable people, and more and more persons with no morals at all who threaten everyone else
2. Although it may *appear* that things are constantly getting more dangerous and chaotic, it really is **not** so. Every era has its problems, and a person's chances of living a safe, untroubled life are better today than ever before
3. If society keeps degenerating the way it has been lately, it's liable to collapse like a rotten log and everything will be in chaos
4. Our society is **not** full of immoral and degenerate people who prey on decent people. News reports of such cases are grossly exaggerated and misleading
5. The "end" is **not** near. People who think that earthquakes, wars and famines mean God might be about to destroy the world are being foolish
6. There are many dangerous people in our society who will attack someone out of pure meanness, for no reason at all



Belief in a dangerous world

7. Despite what one hears about “crime in the street”, there probably is **not** any more now than there ever has been
8. Any day now, chaos and anarchy could erupt around us. All the signs are pointing to it.
9. If a person takes a few sensible precautions, nothing bad will happen to him. We do **not** live in a dangerous world
10. Every day, as our society becomes more lawless, a person's chances of being robbed, assaulted, and even murdered go up and up
11. Things are getting so bad, even a decent, law-abiding person who takes sensible precautions can still become a victim of violence and crime
12. Our country is **not** falling apart or rotting from within



What am I afraid of today?

Personal perspective





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What am I afraid of today?

- What am I afraid of today?
- Answer in the poll, and then discuss with your neighbour the thoughts and actions that help you cope with these fears. What morals, beliefs, groups, and leaders to you look to?

Photo by [Terren Hurst](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Fearmongering and politics

Church perspective



Fearmongering in politics



The Economist

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Leaders | Imaginary hobgoblins

Fearmongering works. Fans of the truth should fear it

In Hungary, Russia, Pakistan and France, leaders lie to scare people into supporting them



AP

Apr 9th 2022

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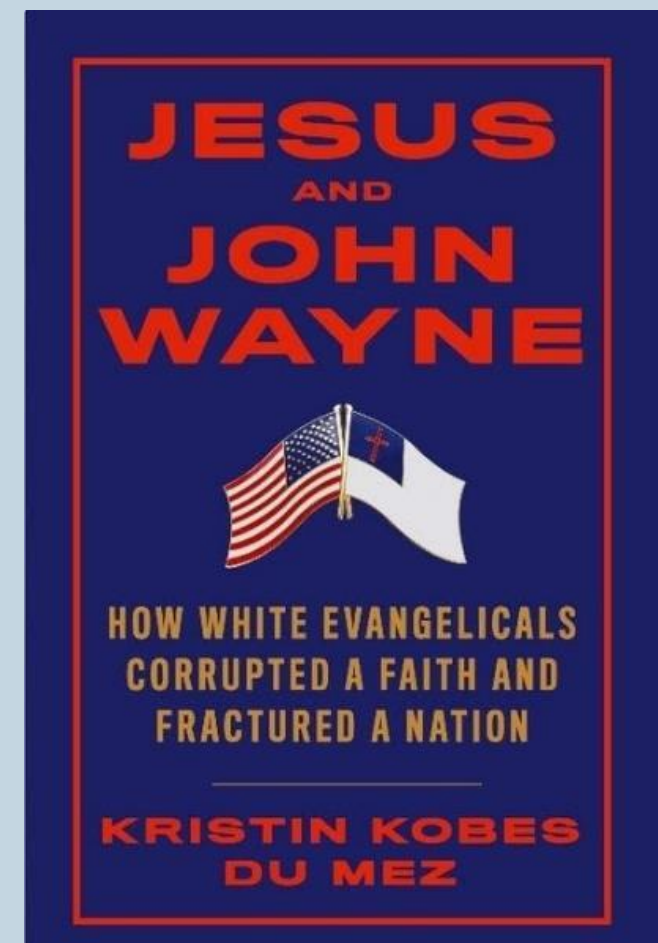
- “Hungary’s way of life is under attack, if you believe the ruling party. A Jewish billionaire plots to flood the country with a million Muslims. Perverts want to teach its children sexual deviance. The opposition are spoiling for war with Russia. The only way to stay safe is to back Viktor Orbán, the prime minister ... Mr Orbán called it a triumph for ‘our brand of Christian democratic, conservative, patriotic politics’. It was actually a victory for the paranoid style.”
- “The threats the regime describes are largely imaginary.”

<https://www.economist.com/leaders/2022/04/09/fearmongering-works-fans-of-the-truth-should-fear-it>



Fearmongering in churches

- “Driscoll thrived on manufacturing a sense of threat posed by outsiders ... A sense of physical threat dovetailed with **religious and cultural hazards**: unorthodox theology, Islam, “sexualized single women” and “effeminate men” all put the church and nation at risk. Driscoll incited fear in order to maintain control. Tolerating no passive consumption, **he demanded self-sacrificial service and absolute submission to (his) authority**. As in wartime, dissent was quickly snuffed out. By ratcheting up the sense of alarm, Driscoll justified his demands for discipline, control, and unquestioned power.”



bit.ly/n



Redeeming our fears

Applied perspective



Questions to ask

Regarding fear of worldly danger

1. How can I filter the fearmongering from politicians and its emotional effect on how I see the world?
2. How can my family and friends help me to **balance my fears with facts** about the decline of crime and violence?
3. How can I turn away from populism, protectionism, and nationalism, so I can **engage more freely with the world**?

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/alberta-election-ucp-ndp-attack-ads-1.6830991>

CBC | MENU

NEWS Sections

Calgary · Analysis

Why we fall for political ads – especially the nasty ones

f t e r in

UCP and NDP attack ads have been flying in Alberta, as a provincial election looms

Elise von Scheel · CBC News ·
Posted: May 05, 2023 7:00 AM EDT | Last Updated: May 5



Left, an image of NDP Leader Rachel Notley used in a UCP attack ad and right, how the NDP depicts Danielle Smith. We swear, they don't look this grainy or stark black-and-white in person.
(@unitedconservatives/YouTube; @cantafforducp/YouTube)



Questions to ask

Regarding fear of spiritual danger

4. How can I foster a more redemptive Christ-like posture and less reactive, fear-based response to every unfamiliar idea?
5. How do I reconcile the Great Commission to engage the lost with the simplistic narrative of a church under siege?
6. How can be wary of church control, legalism, and isolation, and instead build bridges so that we abound in love?

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-66070534>

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US Supreme Court rules website designer can refuse to serve same-sex couples

1 day ago

GETTY IMAGES

Graphic designer Lorie Smith argued she could not serve same-sex couples because of her Christian faith

By James Gregory
BBC News



Coming up

- Week 1: Leadership | Why Everything Old Is New Again
- Week 2: Information | When Leadership Is All in Our Heads
- Week 3: Morality | How Our Deepest Convictions Drive Us
- Week 4: Fear | Why a Terrible World Is Reshaping Us
- Week 5: Tyranny | When the Strongman Captures Your Heart
 - Given how leaders are idolized and vilified today, what does it say about our spiritual state? We explore how people created in the image of God are integrated, limited, and gendered individuals who seek fulfilment in larger-than-life figures.
- Week 6: Redemption | How Our View of Leadership Is Renewed



Q&A

Thank you for building each other up!





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