

ONE FROM THE HEART

Overcoming Fear

Love and fear are two of the most basic drivers of human beings and we can live out of one or the other and both have the power to destroy the other. The way of Jesus is the way of love. John says that the person who fears has not been perfected in love. (1 John 4:18)

A life of fear is a life of torment. Fear is not God's will for us. The good news is that it is also possible to walk in love, without a trace of fear. That's where Jesus desires to take us, to become like Him.

Fear Paralyzes Purpose

When we fear what might happen or fear what people think - we paralyse our purpose

There is no greater paralysing of authentic, radical faith, hope and love than the fear of others. We worry so much about what will please other people that we forget what pleases God! (Proverbs 29:25)

Fear of others can cause us to compromise our integrity.

- + Fear of man led Saul to disobey God. Saul was afraid of failure and fearful that he would lose his position as King and this led Saul to make decisions out of fear of others. (1 Samuel 15:24)
- + It was fear that almost ruined the great prophet, Elijah. (1 Kings 19:3-4)

Fear makes us want to give up and get out of the race. Fear is torment. Fear is a trap. However, there is hope that we don't have to live with fear. There is a promise that fear can be overcome. From God's Word we can be encouraged by principles that teach us how we can overcome fear in our lives.

Focus on the Father's Perspective (1 Samuel 17; 2 Kings 6:15-17)

Our fears are based in the limited field of vision that we have. Fear is entrenched in what we feel right now and our expectation of the immediate

future. With this narrow view it is very easy to become overwhelmed by fear. But we need to discipline ourselves even in the midst of fear, to lift our eyes and consider God's perspective.

David the shepherd boy (who was to become King David) demonstrated how to focus on the Father's perspective. (1 Samuel 17:37)

The giant in front of you is never bigger than the God who lives in you!

We need to realise that God is with us to help us in our battles. Our own success in our life will be determined by our fear or faith perspective. (2 Kings 6:15-17)

Even when we are surrounded by circumstances that make us afraid, we need to remember that God is greater than the circumstances. God is for us, and He is with us. He is infinitely more powerful than anything that could cause us to fear. It's hard to be afraid when we look past what we can see and look at what God sees. What I see scares me – but what I know God sees assures me.

When we know that God is with us and that His power is for us, then we are ready to overcome our fears.

Expect to Overcome

Facing our fears is the only way we will overcome them. There is no point in facing our fears if we don't believe we have been given the power to overcome our circumstances.

We need to expect that God will help us and uphold us, just as He has promised. (Isaiah 41:10) God is Almighty and powerful, and He is for us. Whose power could compare to His? (Romans 8:31; 1 John 4:4)

We can't expect that no weapons will ever be raised against us, but we can expect that they will never defeat us.

The Opposite of Fear Is Love

Love conquers fear. The battle between fear and love is a big deal and worth fighting for. God is love. That means that God has no fear, no insecurity, no anxiety, no self-interest, or rejection issues and He isn't

ashamed. And we are made in His image. To become full of His love is to become who we were always meant to be – completely free. (1 John 4:18)

Love overcomes fear – even to the point of death. Jesus was motivated by love when He took our sins and gave Himself to be crucified on the cross. (John 15:13; Ephesians 5:2)

God has given us a spirit of love and of power, not a spirit of fear. (2 Timothy 1:7) Our new nature is motivated by love, not controlled by fear. God wants us to live free from fear. He has made it possible for us to live by faith in His Word and in His power.

True Fear

True fear of the Lord is for our good – the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10).

Fear of God does not drive us away from God but draws us closer to Him. The fear of the Lord is a holy reverence and respect because God is an Almighty and awesome God.

Declaration

Today I declare that I am no longer a slave to fear. I will not listen to the destructive voice of criticism or believe the fear it seeks to impart. Instead, I believe what God says about me, and I choose to confidently obey His call. Because of God's love in my heart, I have power, love and a sound mind to overcome all fear. From now on, I will not passively accept or allow fear a place in my life. Instead, I step into love because perfect love drives out fear. I am confident that whenever I encounter fear the Holy Spirit will give me the Father's perspective and strategies to overcome that fear, and I will have the courage needed to face every giant. Father, I put my trust in You.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are your greatest fears in life? Where do the fears come from?
2. Share about a time when fear paralysed you from achieving your purpose. If you were to face that fear again – how would gaining God's perspective change the outcome?
3. Share some practical measures of gaining God's perspective on things in life.
4. In what areas of life do you need to be more motivated by love for others? How would having God's love for others help you overcome your fears?
5. Pray for each other by laying on of hands, casting out fear and speaking God's reassuring word into each other's life.
6. Read the declaration out loud together.