

# How To Handle Fear-Pt 1

HOW TO HANDLE FEAR-Pt 4

HOW TO HANDLE FEAR-Pt 2

## HOW TO HANDLE FEAR PART 1

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Fear is to Satan

what

Faith is to God

Faith does God's work

Fear does Satan's work

See [Faith vs. fear - what does the Bible say?](#)

God operates on the basis of **faith**, which enables believers to resist one of the devil's chief operative tactics --**fear**. God has not given believers

a **spirit of fear**, but of power and love and discipline (sound mind or literally "a saved mind"). (2Ti 1:7-note)

Peter exhorts believers to **resist** our adversary, the devil, remaining firm (stable, immovable) in our **faith** (1Pe 5:9-note).

In this present evil age believers are to

walk by **faith**, not by sight (2Cor 5:7)

Paul instructs believers to take up

the shield of **faith** with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one (including those intended to make us fearful) (Ep 6:16-notes, see also sermon by Wayne Barber)

**John** adds that whoever

is born of God overcomes (keeps on continuously conquering) the world (including its fears) and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our **faith**. And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1Jn 5:4, 5)

The **writer of Hebrews** explains that...

Without **faith** it is impossible to please (God), for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." (He 11:6-note)

And finally **Paul** explains how our faith can be fertilized and watered writing that...

**faith** comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Ro 10:17-note) (Click devotional)

**Fear knocked at the door.**

**Faith answered.**

**No one was there.**

- Fear is generated by unbelief, and unbelief strengthened by fear. Nothing can cure us of fear till God cures us of unbelief. - Francis Burkitt
- Let none but the servants of sin be the slaves of fear. -John Flavel
- Fear is the tax that conscience pays to guilt. - George Sewell
- Those who would be fearless must keep themselves guiltless. -Matthew Henry

**Spurgeon** writes that

IT SEEMS AS if **doubt** were doomed to be the perpetual companion of **faith**. As dust attends the chariot wheels so do doubts naturally becloud faith. Some men of little faith are perpetually enshrouded with fears; their faith seems only strong enough to enable them to doubt. If they had no faith at all, then they would not doubt, but having that little, and but so little, they are perpetually involved in distressing surmises, suspicions,

and fears. Others, who have attained to great strength and stability of faith, are nevertheless, at times, subjects of doubt. He who has a colossal faith will sometimes find that the clouds of fear float over the brow of his confidence. It is not possible, I suppose, so long as man is in this world, that he should be perfect in anything; and surely it seems to be quite impossible that he should be perfect in faith. Sometimes, indeed, the Lord purposely leaves His children, withdraws the divine inflowings of His grace, and permits them to begin to sink, in order that they may understand that faith is not their own work, but is at first the gift of God, and must always be maintained and kept alive in the heart by the fresh influence of the Holy Spirit.

I take it that Peter was a man of great faith. When others doubted, Peter believed. He boldly avowed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, for which faith he received the Master's commendation, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." He was of faith so strong, that at Christ's command he could tread the billow and find it like glass beneath his feet, yet even he was permitted in this thing to fall. Faith forsook him, he looked at the winds and the waves, and began to sink, and the Lord said to him, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" As much as to say, "O Peter, thy great faith is my gift, and the greatness of it is my work. Think not that thou art the author of thine own faith; I will leave thee, and this great faith of thine shall speedily disappear, and like another who hath no faith, thou shalt believe the winds, and regard the waves, but shalt distrust thy Master's power, and therefore shalt thou sink." (Read full message [Mr. Fearing Comforted](#))

**Spurgeon** in another sermon entitled [Needless Fears](#) (or [Pdf](#)) writes that...

Things often influence us out of proportion to their value because of their closeness. For instance, the moon is a very small insignificant body compared with the sun, yet it has far more influence over the tides and many other matters in the world than the sun has, simply because it is so much closer to the earth than the sun is. The life that is to come is infinitely more important than the life that now is, and I hope that, in our innermost hearts, we consider that the things that are seen and temporal are mere trifles compared with the things which are not seen and eternal; yet it often happens that the less important matters have a greater influence over us than those which are far more important, simply because the things of earth are so much closer to us.

Heaven is infinitely more to be desired than any joy on earth, yet it seems so far off, and therefore these fleeting joys here may give us greater present comfort. The wrath of God is far more to be dreaded than the anger of man, yet sometimes a frown or a rebuke from a fellow creature will have more effect upon our minds than the thought of the anger of God. This is because the one appears to be remote, while, being in this body of flesh, we are so near to the other. Now, beloved, it will sometimes happen that a matter, which is scarcely worthy of the thought of an immortal spirit, will trouble and worry us from day to day. There is some oppressor, as the text puts it, whom we dread and continually fear, yet we forget the almighty God, who is on our side, who is stronger than all the oppressors who have ever lived, and who has all people and all things under his control. The reason why we act this way is because we think of God as if he were far off, while we can see the oppressor with our eyes, and we can hear with our ears his threatening words. (Read the full message [Needless Fears](#))

**Dr. E. Stanley Jones** describes the relationship between **faith** and **fear** this way:

I am inwardly fashioned for faith, not for fear. Fear is not my native land; faith is. I am so made that worry and anxiety are sand in the machinery of life; faith is the oil. I live better by faith and confidence than by fear, doubt and anxiety. In anxiety and worry, my being is gasping for breath—these are not my native air. But in faith and confidence, I breathe freely—these are my native air. A John Hopkins University doctor says, "We do not know why it is that worriers die sooner than the non-worriers, but that is a fact." But I, who am simple of mind, think I know; We are inwardly constructed in nerve and tissue, brain cell and soul, for faith and not for fear. God made us that way. To live by worry is to live against reality." The only thing that conquers fear is **faith** in the Lord.

**Spurgeon** commenting on "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee" (Psalm 56:3) writes...

IT must be a very difficult thing to be the first traveler through an unknown country, but it is a much more simple matter to travel where others have preceded us; however difficult may be the road, we discover our path by certain marks which they have left for us, and as we turn to the record of their journey, we say, "Yes, they said that here they came to a forest, and here is the forest; here they spoke of a broad river as here they forded it; here is so exactly the spot which is marked, we are in the right road, for we are following in the track: of those who have gone before." Now God in his providence has placed us in "the ends of the world" as to time; a long caravan of pilgrims he preceded us, and they have left us marks on the way, and records of their

joy.

A notable one among the pilgrims to the skies was David, for his pilgrimage was so singularly varied. Some travel to heaven amid sunshine almost all the way there; and some, on the other hand, seem to have story from beginning to end. But David's case differed from these, for he had both the storms and the sunshine. No man had fairer weather than the King of Jerusalem yet no man ever ploughed his way through soil that was more deep with mire, nor through an atmosphere more loaded with tempest than did this man of many tribulations. He has been a kind of pioneer for us. I remember seeing, some years ago, the French army going through Paris, and noticing some of the big, tall fellows, old men that had been in the wars of the first Napoleon. These went in front, and they seemed to be worth all the rest that were behind; they were the pioneers that cleared the way for the others. Now David, and such as he, of whom we read in the Scriptures, are the grand old soldiers that bear the standard and lead the way, and we are the raw recruits that follow on behind them. Let us be thankful that we have some veterans to lead the van. Our text is rather an extraordinary one, yet it represents the experience of many of us, and we are comforted by the thought that our feelings and David's have very much agreed: "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee." (Read the full sermon on [Psalm 56:3 Faith Hand in Hand with Fear - Sermon by C H Spurgeon](#))

(**Related sermon** - on Isa 12:2, Ps 56:8, 41:14 - [Ps 56:8; 41:14 - Fearing and Trusting - Trusting and Not Fearing - Sermon by C H Spurgeon](#))

**Dr John MacArthur** when asked how a believer should handle fear remarked that

there are two causes of fear basically. One is a **guilty conscience**. The other is a **lack of trust**. Two things cause fear: **sin in your life that you haven't dealt with** (then you feel you have a right to being punished and so you're afraid it's going to come) (click OT illustration) or secondly, **you're afraid because you don't think God can handle your situation**. You're afraid you're going to die, you're afraid you're going to get sick, you're afraid your kids are going to get hurt, you're afraid the roof's going to fall in, you're afraid the demons are going to get you... Whatever it is, it comes from two things. Number one, you have a guilty conscience. Number two, a lack of faith. Now, you can deal with both of those. A guilty conscience: confess your sin and get it all cleaned out. A lack of faith: get your Bible open and read what God says about Himself and learn to trust Him... And pray.

Faith obeys God in spite of circumstances or consequences, and it is not afraid of what others may say or do. An "Elijah complex" in ([see below](#)) can rob you of power and joy, so beware! Elijah went from victory to defeat because he started walking by sight and not by faith. He believed the wicked queen Jezebel's words but not God's word, and he forgot how God had cared for him for three and a half years. **Fear** replaced **faith**, and he ran for his life. We need to obey the words

Do not be **afraid**; only **believe** (Mark 5:36).

Only he who can say, "The Lord is the strength of my life," can say, "Of whom shall I be afraid?" -Alexander Maclaren

God incarnate is the end of fear; and the heart that realizes that he is in the midst... will be quiet in the midst of alarm. - F. B. Meyer

This is a wise, sane Christian faith: that a man commit himself, his life, and his hopes to God; that God undertakes the special protection of that man; that therefore that man ought not to be afraid of anything. - George Macdonald

**C H Spurgeon** advises believers to

Fear to fear. Be afraid to be afraid. Your worst enemy is within your own bosom. Get to your knees and cry for help; and then rise up, saying, "I will trust, and not be afraid." He goes on to add that we need to "Get away from the world and nestle under God's wing. Exchange doubt for certainty and **fear** for confidence. **Faith** laughs at what **fear** weeps over. **Faith** leaps over mountains at whose feet mere mortal strength lies down to die."

**A W Pink** ([An Exposition of Hebrews](#)) writes that

**Faith** not only elevates the heart above the delights of sense, but it also delivers it from the **fear** of man. **Faith** and **fear** are opposites, and yet, strange to say, they are often found dwelling within the same breast; but where one is dominant the other is dormant. The constant attitude of the Christian should be,

"Behold, God is my salvation, I will **trust** and not be **afraid**;  
For the LORD GOD is my strength and song,  
And He has become my salvation (my Yeshua = my Jesus)." (Isa 12:2)

But alas, what ought to be, and what is, are two vastly different things. Nevertheless, when the grace **offaith** is in exercise, its language is,

“When I am **afraid**, I will put my **trust** in Thee” (Ps 56:3)

RECALL THIS DIVINE RESOURCE WHEN YOU ARE TEMPTED TO FEAR:

AMAZING GRACE

([Play hymn](#))

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound?  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind but now I see.

Tw'as grace that taught my heart to fear,  
**And grace my fears relieved;**  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed.

## SOME OF THE "FLAMING ARROWS" (FEARS) WHICH SATAN'S DEMONS FIRE AT OUR MIND

**THE KEY TO OUR SPIRITUAL DEFENSE** - Ephesians 6:16+ "In addition to all ("All" the "armor" - Eph 6:12-15, 17, 18+), taking up (Active voice = calls for a decision of our will to take it up - .How? e.g. practice Phil 4:8-9+ replacing thoughts of fear with thoughts of God, memorize 2 Cor 10:3-5+, etc) the **shield of faith** with which you will be able to extinguish **all** (HOW MANY?) the flaming arrows of the **evil** ([poneros](#) = active evil that continually seeks to harm us! cf 1 Pe 5:7-9+ - note role of faith in resisting!) *one*.

And how do we "nourish" our faith? Romans 10:17+ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. (Are you in the Word daily? Better yet, is the Word in you, your heart daily? cf Ps 119:9, 11+, Job 23:12+).

### 1). FEAR OF DEATH:

1 Cor 15:55-58 "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; 57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, **be** steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord. (commentary on v58)

On September 7, 1851, the unbeliever Henry David Thoreau wrote in his journal, "Nothing is so much to be feared as fear." The irony is as an unbeliever at his death, he came to realize see what he should have feared in life - eternal punishment!

Fear of death enslaves individuals, keeping them in bondage. Hebrews records that Jesus' death rendered powerless the devil "who had the power of death" and that Christ's death on the Cross was able to "deliver (release, completely set free from bondage) those who through **fear of death** were subject to **slavery** all their lives." (He 2:14, 15+).

The Greek for "**subject to**" (enechos) pictures one who is ensnared, entangled or held in the grip of the fear of death. **'Slavery'** (douleia) describes servitude, dependence or the state in which an individual is prevented from freely possessing and enjoying their life. Outside of Christ all of mankind is pictured as a bondsman continually subject to a cruel master named "**fear!**" Satan uses the fear of death as a terrible weapon to gain control over the lives of people. His kingdom is one of darkness and death. The gospel is used by God to

open (unsaved, enslaved mankind's) eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified (set apart from the world and unto God) by **faith** in (Jesus). (Acts 26:18+)

Believers are now free of the fear that permeates Satan's kingdom of darkness, for God has "delivered (ONCE AND FOR ALL

TIME!!!) us from the domain (AUTHORITY - THE RIGHT AND THE MIGHT - SATAN NO LONGER HAS NO AUTHORITY OVER BELIEVERS) of darkness and transferred (ONCE AND FOR ALL TIME AND ETERNITY!) us to the kingdom of His beloved Son" (see **note** Colossians 1:13)

We who trust in Jesus Christ have once and for all been delivered from Satan's authority and from the terrible enslavement to fear of death. All those who do not know Jesus as Lord and Savior face eternal death and thus are eternally held in slavery. Only Jesus sets man free from this slavery. (Click devotional; or here)

God has not given us a spirit of fear  
(of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear)  
(2 Ti 1:7+)

**Read the brief testimonies** of how two men were enabled to face the very real and imminent **fear of death** at the hands of the Nazis in World War II - Martin Neimoller and Dietrich Bonhoeffer

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**Pastor John Piper** has the following thoughts on why believers do not need to be afraid...

**We will not die apart from God's gracious decree for his children.**

James 4:14-15, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that."

Matthew 10:29-30, "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows."

Deuteronomy 32:39, "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand." (See Job 1:21; 1Sa 2:6; 2Ki 5:7)

**Curses and divination do not hold sway against God's people.**

Numbers 23:23, "There is no enchantment against Jacob, no divination against Israel."

**The plans of terrorists and hostile nations do not succeed apart from our gracious God.**

Psalms 33:10, "The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples." ([Spurgeon's comment](#))

Isaiah 8:9, 10, "Take counsel together [you peoples], but it will come to nothing; speak a word, but it will not stand, for God is with us." (See 2Sa 7:14; Neh 4:15)

**Man cannot harm us beyond God's gracious will for us.**

Psalms 118:6, "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" ([Spurgeon's comment](#))

Psalms 56:11, "In God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?" ([Spurgeon's comment](#))

**God promises to protect his own from all that is not finally good for them.**

Psalms 91:14, "Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name." ([Spurgeon's comment](#))

God promises to give us all we need to obey, enjoy, and honor him forever.

Matthew 6:31 (note) "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ... Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

Philippians 4:19 (note) "And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

**God is never taken off guard.**

Psalms 121:4 Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. (see commentary notes)

**God will be with us, help us, and uphold us in trouble.**

Isaiah 41:10, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Isaiah 41:13, "For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, 'Fear not, I am the one who helps you.'"

**Terrors will come, some of us will die, but not a hair of our heads will perish.**

Luke 21:10, 11, 18+, "Then [Jesus] said to them, '... there will be terrors (!) and great signs from heaven... and some of you they will put to death... But not a hair of your head will perish.'"

Nothing befalls God's own but in its appointed hour.

John 7:30, "So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come." (Cp John 8:20; 10:18)

**When God Almighty is your helper, none can harm you beyond what he decrees.**

Hebrews 13:6 (note), "So we can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?'"

Romans 8:31 (note), "If God is for us, who can be against us?"

**God's faithfulness is based on the firm value of his name, not the fickle measure of our obedience.**

1Sa 12:20-22, "And Samuel said to the people, 'Do not be afraid; you have done all this evil... For the Lord will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake.'"

**The Lord, our protector, is great and awesome.**

Neh 4:14, Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome.

Trusting firm promises with you in fragile times, Pastor John ([Ref](#))

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For the believer, "death is swallowed up in victory" (1Co 15:54), because for a believer death simply releases us into the presence of our Lord.

**Spurgeon** in fact once said that

Your dying hour will be the best hour you have ever known. Your last moment will be your richest. Better than the day of your birth will be the day of your death. It will be the beginning of heaven, the rising of a sun that will never go down forever. Let the **fear** of death be banished by **faith** in a living Savior.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death  
I **fear** no evil For Thou art with me.  
Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me Psalm 23:4

**Spurgeon** has these comments on Psalm 23:4 ([ref](#))...

**Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.** This unspeakably delightful verse has been sung on many a dying bed, and has helped to make the dark valley bright times out of mind. Every word in it has a wealth of meaning.

**Yea, though I walk**, as if the believer did not quicken his pace when he came to die, but still calmly walked with God. To walk indicates the steady advance of a soul which knows its road, knows its end, resolves to follow the path, feels quite safe, and is therefore perfectly calm and composed. The dying saint is not in a flurry, he does not run as though he were alarmed, nor stand still as though he would go no further, he is not confounded nor ashamed, and therefore keeps to his old pace. Observe that it is not walking in the valley, but through the valley. We go through the dark tunnel of death and emerge into the light of immortality. We do not die, we do but sleep to wake in glory.

**Death is not the house but the porch,  
not the goal but the passage to it.**

The dying article is called a valley. The storm breaks on the mountain, but the valley is the place of quietude, and thus full often the last days of the Christian are the most peaceful of his whole career; the mountain is bleak and bare, but the valley is rich with golden sheaves, and many a saint has reaped more joy and knowledge when he came to die than he ever knew while he lived. And, then, it is not "the valley of death," but the valley of the shadow of death, for death in its substance has been removed, and only the shadow of it remains. Some one has said that when there is a shadow there must be light somewhere, and so there is. Death stands by the side of the highway in which we have to travel, and the light of heaven shining upon him throws a shadow

across our path; let us then rejoice that there is a light beyond. Nobody is afraid of a shadow, for a shadow cannot stop a man's pathway even for a moment. The shadow of a dog cannot bite; the shadow of a sword cannot kill; the shadow of death cannot destroy us. Let us not, therefore, be afraid.

**I will fear no evil.** He does not say there shall not be any evil; he had got beyond even that high assurance, and knew that Jesus had put all evil away; but "I will fear no evil;" as if even his fears, those shadows of evil, were gone for ever. The worst evils of life are those which do not exist except in our imagination. If we had no troubles but real troubles, we should not have a tenth part of our present sorrows. We feel a thousand deaths in fearing one, but the psalmist was cured of the disease of fearing. "I will fear no evil", not even the Evil One himself; I will not dread the last enemy, I will look upon him as a conquered foe, an enemy to be destroyed,

**For thou art with me.** This is the joy of the Christian! "Thou art with me." The little child out at sea in the storm is not frightened like all the other passengers on board the vessel, it sleeps in its mother's bosom; it is enough for it that its mother is with it; and it should be enough for the believer to know that Christ is with him. "Thou art with me; I have, in having thee, all that I can crave: I have perfect comfort and absolute security, for thou art with me."

**Thy rod and thy staff,** by which you govern and rule your flock, the ensigns of your sovereignty and of your gracious care -- they comfort me. I will believe that thou reignest still. The rod of Jesse shall still be over me as the sovereign succour of my soul.

Many persons profess to receive much comfort from the hope that they shall not die. Certainly there will be some who will be "alive and remain" at the coming of the Lord, but is there so very much of advantage in such an escape from death as to make it the object of Christian desire? A wise man might prefer of the two to die, for those who shall not die, but who "shall be caught up together with the Lord in the air," will be losers rather than gainers. They will lose that actual fellowship with Christ in the tomb which dying saints will have, and we are expressly told that they shall have no preference beyond those who are asleep. Let us be of Paul's mind when he said that "To die is gain", and think of "departing to be with Christ, which is far better." This twenty-third psalm is not worn out, and it is as sweet in a believer's ear now as it was in David's time, let novelty hunters say what they will.

## 2). FEAR OF FAILURE:

And so you reason that it is safer not to do anything, concluding "If I do it I will fail" and you become effectively immobilized. [Click illustration of paralyzing effect of fear on the great saint C H Spurgeon](#)).

**A W Pink** adds that "**Fear** is the result of distrust, of taking the eye off God, of being unduly occupied with difficulties and troubles." (from [An Exposition of Hebrews](#)) (See devotional below - "A Good Miss")

**ELIJAH** - When the servant of God obeys and trusts the Word of God, he or she need not fear failure. 1 Kings 19:1-21 records the story of Elijah who had just defeated Jezebel's false prophets, thus incurring the queen's scorn and wrath. (1Ki 19:2). What was Elijah's reaction? Scripture records that "he was **afraid** and arose and ran for his life." (1Ki 19:3)

Why did Elijah fear he would fail now after only hours earlier he had exterminated several hundred of Jezebel's false prophets? James 5:17 reminds us that Elijah had "*a nature like ours*," and thus was a man of clay subject to the same trials and failures as any believer. Yet still it seems strange that Elijah should be able to face several hundred angry prophets and not be afraid, and then run away from the threats of one woman!

Certainly there may have been a physical cause to his failure as the Mt. Carmel confrontation (read 1 Kings 18:1-46) must have wearied him. But the main cause for Elijah's failure was spiritual, for Elijah focused on the death threats of Jezebel, rather than the definitive promises of Jehovah. In every step prior to this time, Elijah had waited for God's command (1Ki 17:2, 8; 18:1, 36), but now his fear led to disobedience. He was no longer risking his life for God's glory, but instead was trying to save his life for his own sake. In a moment of testing the man of faith was transformed into a man of fear. Don't we all tend to react at times like Elijah did?

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### A Good Miss

READ: Romans 8:26-34

We know that all things work together for good to those who love God. --Romans 8:28

I was watching with interest a game in which my grandson Peter was playing. It was his second year of playing T-ball, which introduces 6-year-olds to baseball. In this game the ball is placed on a rubber post that sits on homeplate. A baseball rests on top of

the batting tee just waiting to be slugged. The youngsters swing with all their might, hoping to hit a home run, but often they miss the ball completely.

This had just happened to my grandson, and he appeared to be very upset with himself. The coach wanted to encourage him, so he shouted, "That was a good miss, Peter!" My grandson had missed, and yet the coach called it "good."

This reminds me of our failures as believers in Christ. God never calls our sin good, yet He doesn't treat failure as final. By His grace, He can bring good out of our greatest defeat. In Romans 8:28 we read that God is working all things together for the good of those who love Him. What a hopeful mystery!

If you love God and want to please Him, don't give up or get down on yourself. Ask Him for forgiveness and for strength to overcome your weaknesses. Trust Him. Let Him bring "good" out of your miss. —Dennis J. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Failure is failing to trust and believe  
That God can accomplish His purpose through you;  
Failure is failing to keep on trying  
To do all the Savior has asked you to do.  
—Fasick

Failure is never final for those who begin again with God.

### 3). FEAR OF CRITICISM:

Someone has said that if your enemy cannot fool you, he will try to frighten you. One of the ways he does it is by the use of opposition which can paralyze us with fear. This fear can prevent us from living out the truth of Christ in us the hope of glory or of verbally proclaiming God's truth. Or it may lead to compromise, so that we "give in" in order to protect ourselves from criticism. Are you afraid of rejection ([click here](#))? Do you fear being left alone?

Because we know we have been accepted by God and are righteous in Jesus Christ, we need not fear or fret when Satan throws his accusations at us. Often Satan will use people—including Christians—to slander and accuse us; and we are tempted to fight back. But these "*fiery missiles*" must not be allowed to penetrate and hit the vital organs. Rest on the finished work of Christ; realize that you are "*accepted in the beloved*" (Ep 1:6-note) and know that God's righteousness, placed on your account will never be removed.

Know who you are in Christ and whose you are, Christ's!

If you fear God, you need fear nothing else for you are safe in the Father's hands. So live your life in such a way that God could publish a book about you and you would not be ashamed for the whole world to read it. Live with eternity in view, and people and circumstances are less likely to make you fearful.

The **writer of Hebrews** addresses fear of rejection and being left alone exhorting his readers to

Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU," so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT SHALL MAN DO TO ME? (see **note** Hebrews 13:5-6+) (See the notes on the encouraging name of God, Jehovah Ezer: The LORD our Helper)

**A W Pink** comments that

One of the Divine promises is quoted, which if it be duly appropriated by us, we shall be dissuaded from covetousness and persuaded to contentment. Resting on this Divine assurance will both moderate our desires and alleviate our fears. "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" is a guarantee of God's continual provision and protection, and this rebukes all inordinate desires and **condemns all anxious fears**... The comfort of our soul does not depend upon outward provisions, so much as on our appropriation and enjoyment of what is contained in the **Divine promises**. If we rested more on them, we would crave less of this world's goods. What possible cause or ground for **fear** remains when God has pledged us His continual presence and assistance? ... "I will never, no, never leave thee, nor ever forsake thee." **In view of such assurance we should fear no want, dread no distress, nor have any trepidation about the future.** At no time, under any circumstances conceivable or inconceivable, for any possible cause, will God utterly and finally forsake one of His own. Then how safe they are! how impossible for one of them to eternally perish! God has here graciously condescended to give the utmost security to the faith of believers in all their difficulties

and trials. The continued presence of God with us ensures the continued supply of every need." ([An Exposition of Hebrews](#))

Pink goes on to comment that

**So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me'** Once more the apostle confirms his argument by a Divine testimony, for he quotes from Ps 118:6. In this citing of David's language, Christians are again taught the suitability of O. T. language unto their own case, and the permissibility of appropriating the same unto themselves: "we may boldly say" just what the Psalmist did! It was in a time of sore distress that David expressed his confidence in the Lord, at a time when it appeared that his enemies were ready to swallow him up; but contrasting the omnipotence of Jehovah from the feebleness of the creature, his heart was emboldened. The believer is weak and unstable in himself, and constantly in need of assistance, but the Lord is ever ready to take his part and render all needed aid. "**The Lord is my Helper**" implies, as W. Gouge pointed out, "a willing readiness and a ready willingness to afford us all needed succor." Those whom He forsakes not, He helps—both inwardly and outwardly. Note carefully the change from "we may boldly say" to "the Lord is my Helper:" general privileges are to be appropriated by us in particular. "Man can do much: he can fine, imprison, banish, reduce to a morsel of bread, yea, torture and put to death; yet as long as God is with us and stands for us, we may boldly say, '**I will not fear what man can do.**' Why? God will not see thee utterly perish. He can give joy in sorrow, life in death" (Thomas Manton).

Pink ends this section with a prayer it would good for all saints to pray at all times, but especially when experiencing fearfulness:

May the Lord graciously grant both writer and reader more faith in Himself, more reliance upon His promises, more consciousness of His presence, more assurance of His help, and then we shall enjoy more deliverance from covetousness, discontent, and the fear of man. ([An Exposition of Hebrews](#))

## 4). FEAR OF EXPOSURE OF ONE'S WEAKNESSES:

The enemy of our soul likes tongue-tied, ineffective Christians and plays on our secret fears and inferiorities to make us one of them. We reason to ourselves "If I do a work for God, and am out where people can see me, then my weaknesses will be exposed and that would bring criticism, etc." As a result we are neutralized by our perceived weaknesses or shortcomings. We focus on our areas of weakness rather than on the truth that we can

do all things through Him Who strengthens us (Php 4:13-note)

**Jay Adams** reminds us that

"God wants you to seek to please Him first, and think about the problem of **fear** secondly. That is why when speaking of worry (a lesser form of **fear**), in Mt 6:33 (Note) He commands "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." If you put anything else first—even the desire to rid yourself of a terrifying fear—you will discover that you will fail to achieve either goal. God will not take second place, even to a legitimate concern to be free of **fear**... " Adams goes on to advise that "Whenever you catch your mind wandering back into the forbidden territory (**Ed note**: those thoughts which incite fear and anxiety) (and you can be sure that it will—more frequently at first, until you retrain and discipline it... ) change the direction of your thought. Do not allow yourself one conscious moment of such thought. Instead, crisply ask God to help you to refocus upon those things that fit into Paul's list recorded in Php 4:8 (note), Php 4:9 (note). The attitude must grow within you that says: "So if I have a fear experience, so what? It's unpleasant, it's disturbing, but I'll live through it—at least I always have before." When you honestly can think this way without becoming (fearful or) anxious, you will know that the change has been made" (from his pamphlet "What Do You Do When Fear Overcomes You?", 1975).

As someone else has well said "When fear knocks at your door, let faith open it."

Anxiety disorders—from generalized anxiety to panic attacks and full-blown phobias—are the number one mental-health problem in the United States, affecting as many as 1 in 10 people and costing tens of billions of dollars in treatment and lost productivity. (see John Piper - [Anxieties: To Be Cast Not Carried](#)) **Fear** may on occasion be so profound that it produces a "panic attack" which is often related to an unfounded fear, albeit still overwhelming and overpowering such that it causes rapid heart rate (tachycardia), chills, flushing, or excessive perspiration. The person with such an attack feels completely unable to cope with the moment (Click here). In the succeeding section we will discuss Biblical ways of handling our fear.

BATTLING FEAR - Our Weapon: The Sword of the Spirit (Click for added note)

"Take the helmet of salvation  
and the Sword of the Spirit,

which is the Word of God."

(Ep 6:17-note)

In this verse, the Christian soldier is commanded to deliberately and readily take to themselves the helmet of salvation (not a call to be saved for he is speaking to believers), which pictures a saved mind controlled by God. Satan seeks to destroy the believer's assurance of salvation with the **fear** that he or she might not be saved. The believer's helmet serves to protect the mind from **fears** that one might lose his or her salvation. Paul writes elsewhere that the helmet symbolizes the "**hope of salvation**" explaining that this hope is not a "hope so" but is certain because of the fact that "God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Th 5:8, 9 - See 1Th 5:8; 5:9)

Second, our only offensive weapon in battle is the Word of God. When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, He used the "Sword of the Spirit" and defeated the enemy, three times declaring "It is written" (Mt 4:1-11+)

A single (relevant) passage of Scripture is more effective in our battle against **fear**, than all the wisdom the world might offer. The moment we cease relying on the Sword of the Word, relying instead on human reasoning to conquer our **fears**, that is the moment we have set ourselves up for defeat. We become like a soldier who even though involved in fierce, active combat, decides to throw away his sword and use only his hands to meet the advancing well armed adversary.

We must remember that

"though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." (2Cor 10:3, 4, 5 - see notes)

God gives us a powerful weapon against the spirit of **fear**, and that weapon is the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. (Click devotional)

## An Old Testament Illustration: Gideon's "Sword"

In the book of Judges when

"Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD... the LORD gave them into the hands of Midian seven years." (see note Judges 6:1)

**Fearing** the power of the Midianites,

"the sons of Israel made for themselves the dens which were in the mountains and the caves and the strongholds." (see note Judges 6:2)

God explained that their **fear** was the result of disobedience, declaring

"I am the LORD your God; **you shall not fear the gods of the Amorites** in whose land you live. But you have not obeyed Me." (see note Judges 6:10) In those dark, fearful days, God raised up a deliverer named Gideon.

"The Angel of the LORD " (click study) appeared to him and said "The LORD is with you, O valiant warrior... Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?" (see note Judges 6:12, 14)

Judges 6:22-24 (note) : "When Gideon saw that He was the angel of the LORD, he said, "Alas, O Lord GOD! For now I have seen the Angel of the LORD face to face." And the LORD said to him, "Peace to you, **do not fear**; you shall not die." Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and named it the LORD is Peace (Jehovah Shalom- part 1 ; Part 2)"

As Israel faced the huge Midianite army ("as numerous as the sand on the seashore"!), the LORD told Gideon

The people who are with you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, lest Israel become boastful, saying 'My own power has delivered me' (see note Judges 7:2).

Only after Gideon had reduced his force to 300, was the Lord satisfied. Faced with overwhelming odds, would Gideon choose to **believe** God or **fear** the enemy?

The LORD recognized Gideon's **fear** and gave Gideon instructions to

"Arise, go down against the camp (of the enemy) for I have given it into your hands. But if **you are afraid** to go down, go with Purah your servant down to the camp and you will hear what they say; and afterward your hands will be strengthened that you may go down against the camp." So he went with Purah his servant down to the outposts of the army that was in the camp." (see note Judges 7:9-11).

What happened to Gideon's **fear**? Gideon received God's Word of instruction, responded in obedience and received reassurance which alleviated his **fear** (read (see Judges 7:13-25 for the rest of the story). **Faith** in God's Word which promised victory regardless of the "odds" strengthened Gideon and conquered the **fear** that had previously incapacitated him, even causing him to winnow wheat in a wine press out of fear that the enemy might spot him winnowing in the usually more elevated threshing floor (see note Judges 7:11).

There is a little of Gideon in all of God's saints isn't there? How often we too **fear** men rather than God and "hide" so others can't see who we really are! But like Gideon we can have victory over these seemingly unconquerable **fears** by choosing to place our **trust** in God's unchanging and trustworthy Word. Strengthened by His Word, we can experience victory over the **fears** that bombard our mind like flaming missiles. Faith can break the stranglehold of fear.

"Thou wilt keep in perfect peace,  
whose mind is stayed on Thee  
because he trusts in Thee  
Trust in the LORD forever,  
for in God the LORD,  
we have a Rock of Ages."  
Isaiah 26:3, 4

We are stayed upon Jehovah when we choose to set our minds on the truth about God and His Word, which is our *'sword of the Spirit.'* The result is that in place of **fear** and anxiety, we begin to experience perfect peace. Click [Like A River Glorious](#) and sing this wonderful hymn, as you ask God to help you deal with fear by setting your mind on the truth about Him in His Word.

"Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest,  
finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest."  
([Like A River Glorious](#))

## WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT FEAR?

### PERFECT LOVE CASTS OUT FEAR:

By this, love is perfected (brought to its intended goal) with us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world (The believer who has practiced love during his earthly life will be able to approach the judgment seat of Christ without any shame). There is no **fear** in love; but **perfect love casts out fear**, because **fear** involves punishment (or torment), and the one who **fears** is not perfected in love." (1Jn 4:17-18) ([O Love That Casts Out Fear](#))

Dearly beloved, as a believer in Christ Jesus, one of the first things you need to do is to accept and understand that God loves you with a perfect love. His love is not like most human love which has conditions attached, but is a perfect, unconditional love. Do you truly believe this? It is the truth about God and nothing you can do, good or bad, can alter His love for you because you are accepted in Christ Jesus, His Beloved (Ep 1:6-note).

**Wiersbe** adds that "Just as truth is victorious over lies (1Jn 4:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), **love** is victorious over fear (1Jn 4:17,18). As you mature in your love for God, you realize that you have nothing to fear, for your Father has everything under control. You trust those you love, and faith and love will give victory over fear." (With the Word Bible commentary: Thomas Nelson)

### AN OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE

Failure to trust God's love kept Israel from inheriting her possessions. To be sure Israel's tragic delay in arriving at the Promised Land was caused by conscious, willful disobedience of God's command. But where did that disobedience stem from? Moses identifies **fear** of the Canaanites as the immediate cause of the disobedience. Their **fear** in turn was rooted in a **failure to trust God's love**, Moses reminding them --

you grumbled in your tents and said, 'Because **the Lord hates us**, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us.' (Dt 1: 27) and added that even in face of God's divine protection, "you did not **trust** the Lord your God." (Dt 1: 32)

In the same way, failure to trust God's love can keep believers from inheriting their possessions which Paul describes as being "blessed... with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." (Ep 1:3-note).

**Being secure in God's love** lays the foundation for dealing with all other fears and enables us to encounter the world and the fears that bombard us. It is then that we understand that because He loves us with a perfect love, He will not let anything happen to us that is not for our good and our growth in Christ-likeness. When that truth guards our mind, we are prepared to handle the fears that may come. When we have such a mindset, we filter the fearful circumstances through the grid of an all powerful, all knowing God (click to study His attributes) Who loves us with a perfect love and Who is totally sovereign, in control of every circumstance. This mindset amplifies the great truth found in Isaiah 26:3,4 -- keep your mind (not your *feelings* which may deceive you) steadfastly fixed on Jehovah, stayed on the Truth about Him as revealed in His Word. The result will be that you will grow in grace and knowledge (2Pe 3:18-note) and in understanding that the Almighty, All Powerful God of the Universe loves you personally with a perfect unconditional love and that as you take refuge in this Truth, **fear** is cast out.

God has not given us a **spirit of timidity** but of power and love and discipline. (see note 2 Timothy 1:7)

In general fear does not come from God. **John MacArthur** notes that

"from a negative perspective, we can be sure that any spirit of timidity we might have is not from God. Both testaments speak of a fitting and proper fear of God, in the sense of awe and reverence. But deilia (Greek word translated "fear" or "timidity") is a timid, cowardly, shameful fear that is generated by weak, selfish character. The Lord is never responsible for our cowardice, our lack of confidence, or our being shameful of Him. The noun deilia (timidity) is used only here in the New Testament and, unlike the more common term for fear (phobos), carries a generally negative meaning. ([MacArthur, J. 2 Timothy. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44) and when a negative thought comes it is not from God but from the enemy of our soul. Acknowledge the truth in this Scripture when faced with fear, recognizing that instead of fear, the resources we have been granted from our heavenly Father include **power** (effective, productive, supernatural energy) and **love** (cf Ro 5:5-note - volitional and selfless love that desires and works for the best interests of the one loved) and **discipline** (a secure and sound mind with the added idea of a self-controlled, disciplined, and properly prioritized mind). When we experience fear, vacillation and apprehension we can be sure that it is because our focus is on ourselves and our own human resources rather than on the Lord and the truth about His available, all sufficient, supernatural resources.

**Annie Johnson Flint** beautifully expresses in rhyme where a believer's focus should rest when fears come in the windows of our mind, writing...

#### **BUT GOD**

Annie Johnson Flint

I know not, **but God** knows;  
Oh, blessed rest from **fear!**  
All my unfolding days  
To Him are plain and clear.

Each anxious, puzzled "Why?"  
From doubt or **dread** that grows  
Finds answer in this thought:  
I know not, **but He** knows.

I cannot, **but God** can;  
Oh, balm for all my care!  
The burden that I drop  
His hand will lift and bear.

Though eagle pinions tire,  
I walk where once I ran,  
This is my strength to know  
I cannot, **but He** can.

I see not, **but God** sees;  
Oh, all sufficient light!  
My dark and hidden way  
To Him is always bright.

My strained and peering eyes  
May close in restful ease,  
And I in peace may sleep;  
I see not, **but He** sees.

## POWER COMES FROM GOD

God makes His power available to believers

Finally, **be strong** (word study) (present imperative = command not a suggestion - emphasizes the importance that we chose to rely on His strength not ours - and present tense calls for this to be our continual mindset! **How are you doing, beloved?**) in the Lord (NB: The little preposition "in" means "in the sphere of" or in the "atmosphere" of, like a fish who functions best when "in the sphere of" the water in the fishbowl), and in the strength of His might. **Put on** (aorist imperative = Command to do this now! Don't delay! It conveys a sense that this need is urgent) the full armor (How much? **Is there some "chink" in your armor, some sin you need to confess and repent of? If so, humble yourself before God, admit it, plead with Him to grant you His gift of repentance** - cp Ro 2:4-note) of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes (word study) of the devil (diabolos - word study)." (see notes Eph 6:10, 11; see sermon by Wayne Barber)

God has broken Satan's power over believers through Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, which forever conquered the power of sin and death (see Ro 5:18, 19, 20, 21-see notes Ro 5:18; 19; 20; 21; 1Co 15:56, 57; He 2:14-note). Although our struggle continues in this life, we need to understand and appropriate the truth that God has provided His power, the strength of His Spirit, and His Word to enable us to obtain victory over fear. Earlier in his letter to the Ephesian saints Paul wrote...

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and **what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe**. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all." (see **notes** Ephesians 1:18; 19; 20; 21; 22; 23; sermon by Wayne Barber)

Paul prayed for the Ephesian believers to have spiritually enlightened minds, for he knew that this was the only means of truly understanding, appreciating and appropriating God's power to live obediently and victoriously. Note that the "surpassing greatness of His power" is the same power which raised Jesus from the dead and lifted Him by ascension back to glory to take His seat at God's right hand where He is enthroned over all rule and authority (over all demonic hierarchies). Believers have been given access to this same power at the time of salvation (cf. [Acts 1:8](#)) and it is our ever-ready resource when **fear** assails our mind. Paul was not praying that God's power be given to believers but that believers become aware of the power they already possess in Christ and use it accordingly (see similar prayer in Ep 3:14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 - see **notes** Ep 3:14; 15; 16; 17; 18; 19, 20; 21; see also sermon by Wayne Barber).

Also, in view of the truth that God has "raised us up with (Christ) and seated us with (Christ) in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ep 2:6-note), we also have authority (the right and the might) to refuse those **fearful thoughts** that come like fiery missiles from the evil one who is seeking to neutralize and immobilize God's saints. Dearly beloved, take hold of this "sword of the Spirit" with which you have been entrusted, that you may be truly more than a conqueror in the battle with fear.

When Elisha's servant saw the city surrounded by "horses and chariots and a great army" (2Ki 6:14), he cried in fear

Alas, my master! What shall we do? (2Ki 6:15)

Elisha stood firm and maintained his God centered focus, declaring...

**Do not fear**, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." Then Elisha prayed and said, **"O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see."** And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw and behold the mountain was full of

horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha" (2Ki 6:16, 17) (Click devotional by Spurgeon)

**Larry Richards** writes that

**Fear** is never very far from any of us. Even when we have experienced God's blessing... we're prone to forget if some setback comes. Looking back and remembering what God has done for us brings comfort. Looking ahead and worrying about what might happen is both foolish and useless. (The 365 Day Devotional Commentary. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books)

**C H Spurgeon** prayed

May the Spirit of God assist us to leave the mists of fear and the fevers of anxiety and all the ills which gather in this valley of earth and to ascend the mountains of anticipated joy and blessedness. May God the Holy Spirit cut the cords that keep us here below and assist us to mount.

### WHAT CAN SEPARATE A BELIEVER FROM GOD'S PERFECT LOVE?

Paul expands on the character of God's "perfect love" by posing the rhetorical question...

**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, "FOR THY SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED." But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord'** (see **notes** Romans 8:35; 36; 37; 38; 39)

Don't miss what Paul just said about God's "**perfect love**" for His children. We gain a surpassing victory through the One Who loved (and continues to love) us. Even in the midst of the tribulation, in the midst of the distress, etc, we are not to think that God has withdrawn His love from us, for the truth about us is that we are "more than conquerors" through Christ.

**Warren Wiersbe** explains that Jesus

gives us victory and more victory! **We need not fear** life or death, things present or things to come, because Jesus Christ loves us and gives us the victory. This is not a promise with conditions attached: "If you do this, God will do that." **This security in Christ is an established fact, and we claim it for ourselves because we are in Christ.** Nothing can separate you from His love! **Believe it—and rejoice in it!** ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#)) (Bolding added)

**We need not fear** because the power of Christ is able to bring sweetness out of bitterness, strength out of weakness, triumph out of tragedy, and blessing out of heartbreak. The victorious life is not our life. It is Christ's life in and through us. It is His love that supports and enables us to courageously face and more than conquer every adversity. We are not grim stoics who grit our teeth and somehow manage to muddle through but instead we are victors who have found from experience that God is ever present in our trials and that the love of Christ will empower us to overcome every obstacle which tempts us to be fearful.

When **Chrysostom** was brought before the Roman Emperor and threatened with banishment if he remained a Christian he fearlessly replied:

"Thou canst not banish me for this world is my father's house." "But I will slay thee," said the Emperor. "Nay, thou canst not," said the noble champion of the faith, "for my life is hid with Christ in God." "I will take away thy treasures." "Nay, but thou canst not for my treasure is in heaven and my heart is there." "But I will drive thee away from man and thou shalt have no friend left." "Nay, thou canst not, for I have a friend in heaven from whom thou canst not separate me. I defy thee; for there is nothing that thou canst do to hurt me."

## FEAR AND PRAYER

**Be anxious for nothing**, but in everything by prayer (this Greek word for prayer focuses one's attention on God, His character and attributes) and supplication (specific requests) with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (see **notes** Philippians 4:6; 4:7)

**I sought the LORD**, and He answered me,

And delivered me from all my **fears**. (Ps 34:4) ([Spurgeon](#))  
(cf David's prayer in Ps 55, esp Ps 55:22 - [Spurgeon](#))

"From my distress **I called upon** the LORD;  
The LORD answered me and set me in a large place.  
The LORD is for me; **I will not fear**;  
What can man do to me?"  
(Ps 118:5-6) ([Spurgeon on v5](#); [verse 6](#))

The sons of Moab and the sons of Ammon... came to make war against Jehoshaphat... and **Jehoshaphat was afraid** and **turned his attention to seek the LORD**; and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah... Then in the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah... and he said, "Listen, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: thus says the LORD to you, '**Do not fear** or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for **the battle is not yours but God's**.' (2Chr 20:1-3, 14-15)

Take your burdens to the Lord. It is good to talk things over with others, but only the Lord can work in your heart and turn fear into faith. God knows everything the enemy says and writes, and He has a perfect plan. By faith, take everything to Him in prayer. Listen for God's message. The words of the enemy will discourage you, but God's Word will encourage you. In every battle, His word to you is, "*Do not be afraid*". After all, He has everything under control.

**Corrie Ten Boom** wrote

Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God

**Dr. Bob Jones, Sr.** adds that believers should

Never doubt in the darkness what God has told you in the light.

We become worried, anxious, and **fearful** when we fail to trust in God's wisdom, power and goodness, reasoning (falsely) that God is not wise enough, strong enough, or good enough to prevent disaster. In this setting, Paul instructs us to begin by focusing on God's character, being mindful of His wisdom, omnipotence, sovereignty, etc (if you've not pondered His attributes recently, click [Attributes of God](#) for a refresher). And what is the result of seeing His character, of petitioning Him specifically and of doing all this with an attitude of gratitude for your present circumstances? Peace -- that inward tranquility of the soul which comes from God! This peace includes a confident trust in His perfect wisdom and infinite power which in turn provides calm in the midst of the storms of life and which releases us from the grips of **fear**.

So when we are anxious and fearful, we need to go to God with a **thankful attitude** before we even utter a word. We can have such an attitude of gratitude by recalling God's promise that nothing will be allowed to occur in our life "but such as is common to man and (He remains) faithful, (and) will not allow (us) to be tempted beyond what (we) are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that (we) may be able to endure it" (1Co 10:13-note).

Furthermore God promises to work out everything for our good in the end (Ro 8:28-note), adding that "after (we) have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called (us) to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish (us)" (1Pe 5:10-note) and finally that our "momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison" ([2Cor 4:17](#))

These are key principles for living the so-called "victorious Christian life". But we need to move beyond just memorizing these great verses, to the point that we let them be the grid through which we automatically interpret everything that happens in our life. We need to acknowledge that all of our difficulties are still part of God's purpose for our life. Being thankful can release you from fear and worry, for such an attitude is a tangible demonstration of trusting your situation to God's sovereign control. Jonah was surely fearful in the belly of the sea creature, and yet he was still able to declare

While I was fainting away, I remembered Jehovah and my prayer came to Thee, into Thy holy temple... I will sacrifice to Thee with the voice of thanksgiving... salvation is from the Lord. (Jonah 2:7, 8, 9, 10)

Jonah was confident of God's ability to deliver him if He so chose. In the same way the peace of God will help stabilize us if we react to our circumstances, however unusual or ordinary, with thankful prayer instead of fear and anxiety. The challenge of the practical Christian life is not to eliminate every uncomfortable circumstance from our lives (which won't be a reality until we are in glory), but to trust our sovereign, wise, good, and powerful God in the midst of every situation prone to produce fear.

**[God Moves in a Mysterious Way](#)**

by William Cowper

God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm  
Ye **fearful** saints, fresh courage take;  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
With blessing on your head.

During World War II, a German freighter picked up a missionary whose ship had been torpedoed. The missionary was thrown into the hold and at first was so filled with fear that he refused to even close his eyes. He goes on to tell us how he got through that first night

"I began communing with the Lord. He reminded me of His word in the 121st Psalm: 'My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold He... shall neither slumber nor sleep' (Ps 121:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 - See notes on Psalm 121)... So I said, 'Lord there isn't really any use for both of us to stay awake tonight. If You are going to keep watch, I'll thank Thee for some sleep!'" (Paul S. Rees, *The Adequate Man: Paul in Philippians*. page 106)

The missionary replaced his **fear** with thankful prayer, and the peace of God that resulted enabled him to sleep soundly. Dearly beloved, if you are "Much-Afraid", it is possible for you to enjoy peace and rest if you seek to cultivate the habit of looking to God with an attitude of gratitude.

When assailed by fears, seek to pray as did **Thomas a' Kempis**

O Lord, if only my will may remain right and firm towards Thee, do with me whatsoever it shall please Thee. For it cannot be anything but good, whatsoever Thou shalt do with me. If Thou willest me to be in darkness, be Thou blessed; and if Thou willest me to be in light, be Thou again blessed. If Thou vouchsafe to comfort me, be Thou blessed; and if Thou willest me to be afflicted, be Thou ever equally blessed. ([The Imitation of Christ](#)).

## WHO DO YOU FEAR? GOD or MAN?

The **fear** (trembling, shaking fear) of man brings a **snare** (captures & controls), but he who **trusts** in the LORD will be exalted (lifted up, kept safe and protected). (Proverbs 29:25) (See William Arnot's discussion - [Proverbs 29:25 The Fear of Man Bringeth a Snare](#))

Note once again the opposition of **fear** and **faith**, which are like oil and water. They simply don't mix! What is the **fear** that ensnares? In part is it not the tendency to seek to become men pleasers, trying to do whatever it takes to make men like us.

Paul wrote that

If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ. (Gal 1:10).

Believers cannot simultaneously be bondservants of God and slaves of men. If we want to walk without fear of men, we must first focus on walking as "*God-pleasers*".

William Gurnall (1617-1679 author the classic ["Christian in Complete Armour"](#)) was right when he said

**"We fear man so much,  
because we fear God so little."**

Each believer must make a conscious decision to live with an "*attitude of holy abandon*", an attitude that says whatever pleases my heavenly Father, I am willing to do regardless of what men may say or think (cf 2Cor 5:9). To the extent that we learn to **fear God**, we can overcome our **fear** of people. If we fear God we will find that we have nothing else to fear.

Ps 112:1 Praise the LORD! How blessed is the man who **fears** the LORD, Who greatly delights in His commandments ([Spurgeon v1](#))... **7 He will not fear** evil tidings. His heart is steadfast, **trusting** in the LORD. ([Spurgeon v7](#)) **8 His heart is upheld, he will not fear**, until he looks with satisfaction on his adversaries ([Spurgeon v8](#))

O **fear** the LORD, you His saints;  
For to those who **fear** Him,  
There is no want (lack, deficiency)  
Psalm 34:9 ([Spurgeon note](#))

One of the saddest examples of the consequences of the **fear of man** is found in the story of Israel's first king, Saul, who upon the occasion of his disobedience was informed by God's prophet Samuel that the Lord had rejected him from being king (1Sa 15:23). Upon hearing this horrible judgment Saul replied to Samuel

I have sinned; I have indeed transgressed (Hebrew means "overlooked" - Saul's confession was superficial for what God had called "rebellion" Saul referred to as an "oversight"! the command of JEHOVAH and your words, **because I feared the people** and listened to their voice. (1 Sa 15:24)

#### J Vernon McGee comments

Notice the low motivation of this man (referring to Saul). He said he was afraid of the people and so he obeyed their wishes. He wanted to please everyone. Many folks are like Saul. Lots of preachers try to please everybody. I heard about a prominent minister lately who has begun to compromise, and he says he is doing it because he wants to get along with everyone. That was Saul's approach. It is true that he confesses that he has transgressed, but his penitence is not genuine. ([Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

**Fear of man** rather than **fear of God** proved supremely costly to Saul. Although the following passage is referring to a different OT context, the principle in Paul's admonition to the Corinthian church is apropos --

Now these things happened... as an example and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. (1Cor 10:6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)

#### Jesus instructed His disciples

Do not **fear** those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather **fear** Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Mt 10:28 - click note).

If we genuinely accept this truth, it will ameliorate our fears and "*amalgamate*" our courage. We will come to realize that even if our Father allows our enemy to destroy our temporal, physical life, we lose only what is keeping us from enjoying the presence of our Lord eternally. To the extent that we grow in our fear of God, we are enabled to overcome our fear of people and circumstances. The greatness of God helps us overcome our fear of man.

In the Old Testament Daniel and his 3 friends found themselves confronted with the **fearful** prospect of a death sentence (Da 2:13-note) from the desperate despot Nebuchadnezzar who had experienced a strange dream. As the story goes Daniel and his friends boldly sought permission from the king to declare the interpretation of the dream (read Da 2:1-49-Daniel 2 Commentary). How could they be so **fearless** in the face of death? Because the four men had come to God's throne, they had no **fear** of Nebuchadnezzar's throne. They **feared** God and consequently had no **fear** of man. Read Daniel 3:1-30 (Daniel 3 Commentary) for a similar story of **fearless** courage exemplified by Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego who refused to bow to Nebuchadnezzar, choosing instead to bow to God alone. Because they **feared God rather than man** (Nebuchadnezzar) they were enabled to **fearlessly** declare

our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up." (Da 3:17,18)

**O God, give us all similar fearless hearts so aflame for Thee that we might fear men less and less. Amen.**

## FEAR CAN MAKE US FORGET GOD

I, even I, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you are **afraid** of man who dies, and of the son of man who is made like grass; that you have forgotten the LORD your Maker, Who stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; that you **fear** (to the point of trembling) continually all day long because of the fury of the oppressor, as he makes ready to destroy? But where is the fury of the oppressor? (NASB, Isa 51:12, 13)

As the nation prepared to leave Babylon and return home, they needed to strengthen their **faith** in Jehovah God. In this passage, God instructs the righteous remnant ("you who pursue righteousness, who seek Jehovah" Isa 51:1) by asking why do they **fear** men who wither like grass? Then God answers His question. He says that when we begin to **fear** man, we **forget** "I Am" our Maker, the omnipotent Creator.

The sermons of Deuteronomy (cf Dt 6:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12) stress the importance of memory **for**faith and the devastating effect of forgetfulness on God's people. Isaiah records that forgetting makes them fear continually in anticipation of the fury of the oppressor.

**Fear** causes us to forget Who God really is because **faith** and **fear** cannot coexist. ([see what we should forget!](#))

**Fear** focuses our eyes on the overwhelming circumstances (e.g., "human oppression" and "enemies") and not on the great "I Am" Who is anything and everything we will ever need. When we take our eyes off of God, we tend to forget Who He is and what His character is like -- all wisdom, completely sovereign and in control, perfect goodness, etc. And whatever is occurring in our life is filtered through all of His unchanging attributes. God is saying to us in essence

Take your eyes off of men, for they are going to wither and die like grass. Don't fear them. Remember Who I Am. I Am in control... even of those who would oppress you. Keep your eyes on Me for I will give you perfect peace which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand.

Whether opposed by human forces or oppressed by circumstances, we need to recall to mind that our God is Creator of all. When we are tempted to fret, we need to **look up** to our Creator, not ahead at our circumstances, for Jehovah is our Father and so **we have nothing to fear!**

Study these parallel passages on the futility of fearing men rather than God

Isa 51:7-8 "Listen to Me, you who know righteousness (know right from wrong), a people in whose heart is My law. **Do not fear** the reproach of man, neither be dismayed (shattered, broken, immobilized) at their revilings (Do not be afraid of people's scorn or their slanderous talk.) (**Why not?**) For the moth will eat them like a garment, and the grub will eat them like wool. But My righteousness shall be forever, and My salvation to all generations."

Isa 2:22 **Stop regarding man**, whose breath of life is in his nostrils; for why should he be esteemed? (Stop putting your trust in mere humans. They are as frail as breath. How can they be of help to anyone?)

Ps 118:6 Jehovah is for me; **I will not fear**. What can man do to me? (Spurgeon's note)

Lu 12:4,5 "And I say to you, My friends, **do not be afraid** of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: **fear** the One who after He has killed has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you **fear** Him!"

## CONFLICT AND FEAR: DO NOT BE AFRAID IN CONFLICT

Listen to the timeless words spoken through **Jehovah's prophet Moses**...

When you go out to battle against your enemies and see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you, **do not be afraid** of them; (**Why not?**) for the LORD your God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, is with you (Remember the Red Sea - He delivered you then. He will deliver you now). Now it shall come about that when you are approaching the battle, the priest shall come near and speak to the people. And he shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. **Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid or panic or tremble** before them, (**Why not?**) for the LORD your God is the One who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.' (Deut 20:1, 2, 3, 4)

You might say

But what if I get killed?" Where will you be then? Paul teaches we will "be absent from the body and... at home with the Lord. (2Cor 5:8, 9, 10, cp Ps 16:11-[note](#), Ps 17:15-[note](#), Ps 73:25-[note](#), Ps 73:26-[note](#), Ps 73:27-[note](#), Ps 73:28-[note](#))

Present with the Lord! We do not need to fear death. Once we see Him we will never wonder why we died when we did. We will be exalting and worshiping Jesus our Redeemer. We will not want to go back into this world! And remember no one can kill you without God's permission. You are invincible, indestructible and immortal until God says "*Come home*" (eg see God's two witnesses in Re

11:7- [note](#)).

And no matter what you are called to go through, remember that

God is faithful, Who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it. ([1Cor 10:13](#))

Paul writes to the Philippians encouraging them

**In no way** (be) **alarmed** (this verb pictures a horse shying away in battle) by your opponents-- which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God. For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me." (see **notes** Philippians 1:29; 1:30)

We are not to be afraid in conflict. When we are not afraid in conflict, it shows that we have confidence in God. We trust that God will keep us in perfect peace if you keep our mind stayed on Him (cf Isaiah 26:3)

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WHEN YOU ARE AFRAID?

What did David the man after God's own heart do when he was fearful? Meditate on his response to fear. Consider committing these verses to memory. I can personally testify that these verses (which I had memorized) proved to be a genuine place of protection when I have been confronted with circumstances that produced otherwise overwhelming fears. When we hide guides Word in our heart, then His Words will be readily available to meditate upon when one is assailed by torrents of fearful thoughts whether they be to danger which is real or imagined. Someone has written an article entitled "What if God had an answering machine?" One of the "emergency" numbers listed to call when "much afraid" is Psalm 27!

Psalm 27

1 The LORD is my light and my salvation.

**Whom shall I fear?** (What is the implicit answer?)

The LORD is the defense ([see Hebrew word ma'oz](#)) of my life.

**Whom shall I dread?** (What is the implicit answer?) ([Spurgeon](#))

2 When evildoers came upon me to devour my flesh,

My adversaries & my enemies, they stumbled and fell ([Spurgeon](#))

3 Though a host encamp against me, **My heart will not fear**;

Though war arise against me, in spite of this I shall be confident ([note](#))

4 One thing I have asked from the LORD, that I shall seek:

That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,

To behold the beauty of the LORD, and to meditate in His temple. ([note](#))

5 For **in the day of trouble** He will conceal me in His tabernacle;

In the secret place of His tent He will hide me;

He will lift me up on a rock. ([note](#))

6 And now my head will be lifted up above my enemies around me

And I will offer in His tent sacrifices with shouts of joy;

I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD. ([note](#))

Note where David chooses to focus his faith in the face of **fear**. Faith is not an emotion or something we try to create within

ourselves. Faith is a spiritual grace which enables its possessor to look away from human terrors, and to confide in an unseen God. Faith is real and vital because of the object. Even little faith reposed in Jehovah, our Light, our Salvation, our Defense can have a wonderful transforming effect. The effect is not because we have faith but because of Who our faith is in! ([Spurgeon's devotional](#))

**William S. Plumer** commenting Psalm 27 writes that

Courage is a necessary virtue. In Jehovah is the best possible foundation for unflinching intrepidity.

Courage is built on faith--trusting God.

**John Knox** said

One with God is a majority.

When **Cromwell** was asked why he did not fear anyone, he said,

I have learned that if you fear God, you have no one else to fear.

**Alexander Maclaren** wrote that

Only he who can say, "The Lord is the strength of my life," can say, "Of whom shall I be afraid?"

**Defense** ("strength" in KJV, Ps 27:1) is the Hebrew word (**ma'oz**) describing a place of safety and protection and is translated by several terms including stronghold, fortress, fortified place; rock and strength. The most common use of this Hebrew word is as a figurative description of God Himself as our stronghold, strength, refuge, place of safety. Thus Nehemiah encouraged the Jews (read immediate context Neh 8:8, 9 to help understand Neh 8:10)

Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your **strength**. (ma'oz) (Neh 8:10).

**David** uses **ma'oz** frequently in the psalms:

Jehovah is their **strength**, and He is a saving defense to His anointed." (Ps 28:8) ([Spurgeon note](#))

Incline Thine ear to me, rescue me quickly; Be Thou to me a rock of **strength** (protection, NLT, refuge, NIV), a stronghold to save me." (Ps 31:2) ([Spurgeon note](#))

Thou wilt pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me; for Thou art my **strength** (protection, NLT, refuge, NIV)." (Ps 31:4) ([Spurgeon note](#))

The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD. He is their **strength** (fortress, NLT; strong city, ICB, refuge, NRSV, stronghold, NIV) in time of trouble." (Ps 37:39) ([Spurgeon note](#))

For Thou art the God of my **strength** (safe haven, NLT; stronghold, NIV; fortress, GWT); why hast Thou rejected me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" (Ps 43:2) ([Spurgeon note](#))

Behold, the man who would not make God his **refuge** (stronghold, NIV), but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and was strong in his evil desire." (Ps 52:7) ([Spurgeon note](#))

**Elsewhere** we find that

The way of the LORD is a **stronghold** (ma'oz) to the upright, but ruin to the workers of iniquity." (Pr 10:29)

Thou hast been a **defense** for the helpless, a **defense** for the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat; for the breath of the ruthless is like a rain storm against a wall." (Isa 25:4)

O LORD, my strength and my **stronghold**, And my refuge in the day of distress... (Jer 16:19)

The LORD roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth tremble. But the LORD is a refuge for His people and a **stronghold** to the sons of Israel (Joel 3:16)

And my favorite use of **ma'oz** below...

Jehovah is good, a **stronghold** in the day of trouble, And He knows those who take refuge in Him. (Nahum 1:7)

## WITH WISDOM

Sound **wisdom** and discretion... they will be life to your soul, and adornment to your neck. Then you will walk in your way securely, and your foot will not stumble. When you lie down, you **will not be afraid**. When you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. **Do not be afraid** of sudden fear, nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes, for Jehovah will be your confidence, and will keep your foot from being caught. (Proverbs 3:21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26)

WHEN YOU FEAR WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

"When I am **afraid**, I will put my **trust** in Thee.

In God, whose word I praise,

**In God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid.**

What can mere man do to me?

**In God I have put my trust, I shall not be afraid.**

What can man do to me?"

(Ps 56:3, 4,11)

([Spurgeon's note; v4; v11](#))

The sure antidote for the poison of fear is faith in God (in [Psalm 56](#) above David reiterates his confidence in God), focusing on the truth about Him -- His sovereignty, His wisdom, His power, His goodness, etc. The truth about God can effectively deflect the enemy missile of fear. Next time you are afraid. Go to truth about God. Study His attributes so that you are secure in his unchangeable, faithful character. Drink deeply of the psalms in which fear was handled biblically. Then rest in the truth the Spirit illuminates for you. Bury your head in the bosom of the Father and let Him put His omnipotent arms around you and hear Him say (through His Word)

Hush child. I love you with a perfect love and all things will work together for good

><> ><> ><>

Other psalms to study and meditate upon when you experience fear

Ps 37, 46, 49, 57, 61, 62, 63, 91, 102

**What then shall we say to these things?**

**If God is for us, who is against us?**

Ro 8:31 (notes)

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**Why We Must Learn to Forget the Past** (from article in Illinois Medical Journal Article): There are two days in every week about which we should not worry—two days which should be kept from fear and apprehension.

One of these days is Yesterday with its mistakes and cares, its aches and pains, its faults and blunders. Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control. All the money in the world cannot bring back Yesterday. We cannot undo a single act we performed; we cannot erase a single word we said. Yesterday is gone.

The other day we should not worry about is Tomorrow with its possible adversities, its burdens, its large promise and poor performance. Tomorrow is beyond our immediate control. Tomorrow's sun will rise either in splendor or behind a mask of clouds—but it will rise. Until it does, we have no stake in Tomorrow, for it is as yet unborn.

That leaves only one day—Today. Any man, by the grace of God, can fight the battles of just one day. It is only when you and I add the burdens of those two awful eternities—Yesterday and Tomorrow—that we break down.

It is not the experience of Today that drives men mad—it is remorse or bitterness for something which happened Yesterday and the dread of what Tomorrow may bring. Let us, therefore, journey but one day at a time. (John Lawrence, *Life's Choices*, Multnomah Press, Portland, 1982, pp. 111-112)

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### Mr. Fearing - Vance Havner

John Bunyan never painted with greater skill a common human type when he gave us Mr. Fearing in *Pilgrim's Progress*. This dear soul lived all his days afraid that he would never reach heaven but made it anyway. Maclaren says, "There are none so far away from false confidence (as to this salvation) as those who tremble lest they may be cherishing it. They manage to distill for themselves bitter vinegar of self-accusation out of grand words in the Bible meant to afford them the wine of gladness and

consolation."

When Mr. Fearing reached the great river of Death he almost panicked. But the water had never been so low as it was that day and he got across not much above wetshod!

We have no reason to doubt or be timid about anything as sure as the salvation of our souls. But we are not all geared up alike and many have pillowed their faint hearts on the dear lines:

"When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
Bid my anxious fears subside!"

Satan, the accuser of the saints, takes great delight in worrying feeble believers who sigh when they should be singing. But when these people peruse the pages of God's Word, they will find that they are in company with David, Jeremiah, and Paul, who were sometimes tortured with fears and fightings without and within.

We may not always see the lifted-up Savior as we wish we might, but we can look when we cannot see, and we are saved by the direction of our looking, not the clearness of what we sometimes see. Jesus only said, "Look," and if we look and keep walking the way we are looking we will cross the river saying with Mr. Fearing, "I shall, I shall!"

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Inwardly Fashioned I am inwardly fashioned for faith, not for fear. Fear is not my native land; faith is. I am so made that worry and anxiety are sand in the machinery of life; faith is the oil. I live better by faith and confidence than by fear, doubt and anxiety. In anxiety and worry, my being is gasping for breath—these are not my native air. But in faith and confidence, I breathe freely—these are my native air. A John Hopkins University doctor says, "We do not know why it is that worriers die sooner than the non-worriers, but that is a fact." But I, who am simple of mind, think I know; We are inwardly constructed in nerve and tissue, brain cell and soul, for faith and not for fear. God made us that way. To live by worry is to live against reality. - Dr. E. Stanley Jones

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Fear Knocked, Faith Answered

Fear knocked at the door. Faith answered. There was no one there.

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### **Worry Is Fear's Extravagance**

Worry is fear's extravagance. It extracts interest on trouble before it comes due. It constantly drains the energy God gives us to face daily problems and to fulfill our many responsibilities. It is therefore a sinful waste. A woman who had lived long enough to have learned some important truths about life remarked, "I've had a lot of trouble—most of which never happened!" She had worried about many things that had never occurred, and had come to see the total futility of her anxieties.

An unknown poet has written: "I heard a voice at evening softly say,

- Bear not your yesterdays into tomorrow,
- Nor load this week with last week's load of sorrow.
- Lift all your burdens as they come, nor try
- To weigh the present with the by-and-by.
- One step and then another, take your way;/ Live day by day!"

Our Daily Bread

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### **Fret Not, Faint Not, Fear Not**

- Fret not—He loves you (John 13:1)
- Faint not—He holds you (Psalm 139:10)
- Fear not—He keeps you (Psalm 121:5)

Source unknown

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## **THE LANDMINE OF FEAR – CHARLES STANLEY**

Isaiah 41:10-13

Humans have legitimate reasons to live in fear—our world has many dangers. But although our environment is frightening, Christians are not to accept fear as a way of life. God's awesome promises allow us to live peacefully in our surroundings.

For our protection, God has instilled some natural apprehensions in us, like a fear of snakes or deep water. Our instinctive concern teaches us to respect these things until we know how to survive an encounter with them. The Creator also gave us a warning system so we'd react quickly to danger. For instance, if a car speeds toward us, an instant reaction of alarm could save our life.

In other words, some fears protect us. But constant, all-consuming dread is unhealthy. While we may feel afraid if we spot a snake, most of us don't worry much about having such encounters. Some people anguish over dangers that might occur—instead of

entrusting loved ones to God, they anxiously imagine all the ways injury might occur.

As anxiety grows, uncertainty builds up until it hinders our relationship with God. Fears about the welfare of loved ones, financial well-being, or eternal security all result from doubt regarding the Lord's provision. Then our attention is centered on our concerns rather than on the One who promises to hold us in His hand.

The Lord offers us strength because He understands how fear can torment us. Don't allow worry to blind you to His promises and thereby deprive you of the help that He always has available. The Bible reminds us: "My God shall supply all your needs" (Phil. 4:19).

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### **He Found a Burglar**

For several years a woman had been having trouble getting to sleep at night because she feared burglars. One night her husband heard a noise in the house, so he went downstairs to investigate. When he got there, he did find a burglar. "Good evening," said the man of the house. "I am pleased to see you. Come upstairs and meet my wife. She has been waiting 10 years to meet you." - William Marshall

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### **"UNBELIEF THE THIEF" - Chuck Smith**

Intro: The children of Israel suffered intolerable bondage in Egypt. God promised to give them their own land, to set them free in a good land. They are now on the border of that land. The spies have just returned.

#### **I. THE CONTRASTING REPORTS.**

##### **A. How the land appeared through eyes of faith.**

1. It flows with milk and honey, an exceedingly good land.
2. The cities are walled and very great, the children of Anax there.
  - a. Faith is not blind. It sees the obstacles.
  - b. Faith sees more than obstacles, it sees God's power to remove the obstacles.

##### **B. How the land appears through unbelief.**

1. It eats up its inhabitants.
2. We saw giants there.
3. We were like grasshoppers in their sight.
  - a. Unbelief distorts the truth, exaggerates.
  - b. Fear and unbelief: Siamese twins.

##### **C. The advice of faith.**

1. Let us go up at once and possess it.
2. We are able to overcome it.
3. The giants are bread for us.
4. Their defense is departed.
5. The Lord is with us.
6. Fear them not.

##### **D. The advice of unbelief.**

1. We are not able to go against the people. They are stronger than we.
  1. It measures only its own resources.
  2. It looks at own weakness.
  3. They saw the giants, not the Lord.

## II. THE TRAGIC CONSEQUENCE OF UNBELIEF.

### A. Despair and fear gripped the whole congregation.

1. Unbelief never content to abide alone.
  - a. It seeks to spread its doubts.
2. Fear is contagious.
  - a. Soon all the congregation are crying and murmuring against God.
  - b. If you have doubts, why not do the people a favor and keep them to yourself. If you must talk about them, then talk to God.

### B. They wanted to stone Joshua and Caleb for the good report and encouragement.

1. Those true friends that really want to help you, you strike out at them.

### C. They failed to enter into the promises.

1. These people lived and died without coming into God's fullness for them.
2. They traveled 4th class when God had purchased 1st class for them.

## III. THE CAUSE OF UNBELIEF.

### A. Losing sight of God.

1. "I can do all things through Christ..."
2. Never see yourself apart from Him.

### B. Measuring ability by our own capacity.

## IV. WHAT LESSON IN THIS STORY FOR ME?

### A. Hebrews 4.

### B. God has promised you a full, rich, overflowing life.

1. A life of peace, joy and rest.
2. Many of you have come out of the bondage of Egypt, but have not entered into the fullness of the Christian walk.
  - a. You are in the wilderness.
1. God is with you, you see His works.
2. You lack joy and peace.

### C. What is the overflowing life God has promised?

1. Life in the Spirit.
2. You must enter in by faith.

## Thompson Chain References

For the greatest benefit from the following Scriptures, read the text, not passively but instead consciously and actively "interrogating" the text (interrogate with the 5W'S & H), making a list in your life journal of what the Spirit of Christ (Ro 8:9note) teaches you (1Jn 2:27, Jn 14:26, 16:13) about God and about man. Obey any instructions or commands you encounter, as you allow the Holy Spirit to renew your mind and to "cultivate faithfulness" (NAS, Ps 37:3-[see note](#)). Then offer prayers and praise to your Father for graciously teaching you these profitable, eternal truths (cp 2Ti 3:16, 17-notes).

### Seven Reasons for Encouragement

- Blessings in the Journey of Life - Ge 26:24 Nu 21:34 Jdg 6:23
- Supplies in Famine 1Ki 17:13
- Protection in Peril 2Ki 6:16
- Strength in Weakness Is 41:10
- Companionship in Trial -Is 43:1, 2, 3
- Overshadowing Care -Matthew 10:30, 31
- Life Beyond the Grave -Revelation 1:17, 18

### Fearlessness of the Righteous

- Job 5:21 ;Psalms 3:6 ;Psalms 27:3 ;Psalms 46:2 ;Psalms 91:5 ;Psalms 112:8 ;Psalms 118:6 ;Proverbs 3:24 ;Isaiah 8:12 ;Isaiah 12:2

### Fear of God

- **Enjoined** -Deuteronomy 10:12 Deuteronomy 13:4 Joshua 4:24 Joshua 24:14 1Chronicles 16:30 2Chronicles 19:7 Proverbs 3:7 Ecclesiastes 12:13 Isaiah 8:13 Matthew 10:28 Luke 23:40 Romans 11:20 1Peter 1:17 1Peter 2:17 Revelation 14:7
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- **Promises Concerning** - 1Samuel 12:14 Psalms 25:12 Psalms 31:19 Psalms 103:13 Psalms 147:11 Proverbs 1:7 Isaiah 50:10 Malachi 3:16 Luke 1:50 Acts 10:35
- 
- **Reverential (Examples of Righteous Men Dominated by)** - Nehemiah 5:15 Job 1:8 Jn 1:9 Jn 1:16 Acts 5:11 Acts 9:31 Acts 10:2
- **Servile (Heathen Nations under the Power of)** - Genesis 35:5 Exodus 15:16 Exodus 23:27 Joshua 2:11 2Chronicles 14:14 2Chronicles 17:10

### Fear

- **Godly Examples of Righteous Men Dominated by** - Nehemiah 5:15 Job 1:8 Jn 1:9 Jn 1:16 Acts 5:11 Acts 9:31 Acts 10:2
- **Of God Enjoined** - Deuteronomy 10:12 Deuteronomy 13:4 Joshua 4:24 Joshua 24:14 1Chronicles 16:30 2Chronicles 19:7 Proverbs 3:7 Ecclesiastes 12:13 Isaiah 8:13 Matthew 10:28 Luke 23:40 Romans 11:20 1Peter 1:17 1Peter 2:17 Revelation 14:7
- **Guilty (General References to)** - Genesis 3:8 Genesis 45:3 Leviticus 26:17 Psalms 53:5 Proverbs 28:1 Isaiah 2:19 Isaiah 24:17 Isaiah 33:14 Isaiah 66:4 Daniel 5:6-note Micah 7:17 Hebrews 10:27
- **Needless on the Part of Christians, examples of** - Matthew 14:30 Matthew 17:6 Mark 4:38 Mark 5:33 Mark 16:5 Luke 1:12

### Fear of Man

- Deuteronomy 1:17; 1Samuel 15:24; Proverbs 29:25; Isaiah 51:12; Jeremiah 38:19; Matthew 26:56; Luke 12:4 ;John 7:13; John 9:22 ;John 12:42 ;John 19:38 ;Galatians 2:12

## Biblical Resources How To Handle Fear

1. How To Handle Fear Part 1
2. How To Handle Fear Part 2
3. How To Handle Fear Part 3
4. How To Handle Fear Part 4
5. [The Fear of the Lord](#)

### Related Resources:

- Anxiety (merimna) - Word Study
- Anxious, be anxious (merimnao) - Word Study
- [Anxiety-Worry-Quotes, Devotionals & Illustrations](#)

- Jesus' solution "Do not be worried" Mt 6:25ff
- Paul's Solution - Philippians 4:6; Philippians 4:7
- Peter's Solution - Cast your cares on God - 1 Peter 5:7
- [Numbers 14:22-23 Unbelief the Thief - from Pastor Chuck Smith](#)
- Worry - What is it?
- [Overcoming Fear and Insecurity - Bible Study - In Touch Ministries](#)
- [Faith vs. fear - what does the Bible say?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about fear?](#)
- [Is it true that fear is a liar?](#)
- [How can a Christian overcome the fear of witnessing?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about having a phobia?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about panic attacks?](#)
- [How can I overcome my fear of the end of days?](#)
- [What does "perfect love casts out fear" mean?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about worry?](#)
- [How is the fear of man a snare \(Proverbs 29:25\)?](#)
- [How is the fear of the Lord the beginning of wisdom?](#)
- [What does it mean to have the fear of God?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about anxiety?](#)
- [How can I overcome the fear of death? How can I stop being scared of dying?](#)
- [What Can I Do With My Worry?](#) Booklets From Discovery House
- [When Fear Seems Overwhelming](#) Booklets From Discovery House
- [Overcoming Worry](#) Booklets From Discovery House
- [John Piper's Studies on Fear & Anxiety](#)
  - [Anxieties: To Be Cast Not Carried - 1 Peter 5:1-11](#) - John Piper
  - [Battling the Unbelief of Anxiety - Matthew 6:25-34](#) - John Piper
  - [Fear Not, I Am with You, I Am Your God Isaiah 41:1-13](#) - John Piper
  - [Fear Not, You Worm Jacob! Isaiah 41:14](#) - John Piper
  - [Perfect Love Casts Out Fear 1 John 4:17-19](#) - John Piper
- [Fear of Death by Henry Law \(1797-1884\)](#)
- [Spiritual Fears by Henry Law](#)
- [Fear And Its Remedy](#)
- [Facing Fears - Charles Stanley](#)
- Devotionals on How to Handle Fear
- [Five Fears](#) by C H Spurgeon
- [Faith Overcoming Fear](#) -- Biblical sermon by David Curtis
- [Freedom From Fear](#) by Steve Zeisler
- [Life Dispels Fear](#) by Ron Ritchie
- [Faith Conquering Fear](#) by Ray Stedman
- [Why are you Afraid?](#) by Ray Stedman
- Forsaking Our Fears by Brian Bill
- [A Worried Christian?](#) by John MacArthur
- [God's Way of Peace - A Book for the Anxious](#) by Horatio Bonar