

Fear! What's it Doing to You?



Many of our problems and burdens are rooted in fear! Fear is the great crippler. It fills not only mental institutions, but general hospitals too. It leads even children to suicide.

All kinds of crippling fears or phobias have been isolated by psychologists. They often make life quite unbearable for their victims, and, sometimes, for the victims' loved

ones too.

The simple fact is that everyone living in this sin-cursed world is by nature burdened with fear. And that includes you!

It all started with Adam. In the Bible's third chapter, Genesis 3 and verse 10, Adam said, "[was afraid." "[heard thy voice in the garden, and [was afraid, because [was naked; and [hid myself. "

LET'S NOT PLAY GAMES!

Yesterday morning in my devotional time with the Lord, He showed me my fears. And I spent quite a while meditating on Him and them.

Yes, He's done a great deal to relieve me of my fearfulness. But there's still more needing to be done.

Let's not kid ourselves. The idea of being entirely freed from our fears while here below is hogwash. We will always discover them lurking unexpectedly in the dark corners of our lives.

Paul admitted without embarrassment, "*When we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.*" -II Corinthians 7:5

Let's not play games. The world is a fearful place. And we do succumb to fear. Let's not pretend otherwise.

Every day we face all kinds of difficulties, problems, and pains. And to these we add all our worries. Some of these worries will become real problems. Most won't. But we may suffer as much from our fear of anticipated problems as we do from real ones, often more.

WE HAVE SPECIAL FEARS

As Christians we fear the same real and anticipated problems as do our unsaved friends. We fear for our jobs. We fear we won't have enough money. We fear illness. We fear our

children will become rebellious and unmanageable. We fear they'll get into drugs or other problems. We fear our spouses don't love us. We're crippled in our relationships because we fear what people will think of us. We fear time getting away on us so we can't get our work done or prepare for what's coming next.

Then Christians manage to add their own special fears. Are we facing a time of intense persecution? Will we be unable to buy or sell?

While we may have been delivered from the fear of eternal punishment, we fear answering to God for the deeds done in the flesh. So in that sense, if in no other, we really do fear death, though we know we shouldn't. And we can't honestly look forward to our Lord's second coming as a time of rejoicing.

We fear ourselves. Our anger. Our impatience. Our lack of confidence. Our lack of knowledge or wisdom. Our tongues. And so much more.

Many of us fear God, not in the healthy sense of awe and worship, but we fear he's angry at us for our sins and failure to live up to His standards. And especially for our anger with Him because He lets us down in so many ways and allows so many bad things to happen to us!!

We even fear our fears and our incapacity to handle them.

And this cripples our relationship with the Lord and others in so many ways.

LET'S NOT MAKE EXCUSES!

Just because it's a fact that you do fear, and you will fear, is not to say you can excuse your fears. It's not to say you're stuck with living, as you may be now, in constant fear Fear not very well buried under the pretense it isn't so.

God doesn't want that. He's planned something better for you.

"God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."
-II Timothy 1:7

POWER TO BE DIFFERENT We may never be free from the threat of fear, but we can be free from its dominion over us.

Now, *all* our freedoms are provided for *in Christ Jesus*. God provided for them at the cross. There we were in principle set free from them all, as we shall be fully and finally in practice, when we shall be like Him when we see Him face to face. Oh, glorious day. In the meantime, it's *in Him* we have freedom. His Spirit in us is free. His life in us is free. He in us is free. He knows no bondage.

And it's only as we partake of Him that we can be free. It's as we abide in Him. As we live in Him. As we're united with Him. As we look to Him. As we depend on Him. It's especially as we rest quietly and peacefully in Him.

TRUST IN THE LORD

Now, the opposite of fear is trust in the Lord. And if we will not trust Him, we can't partake of Him, abide in Him, live in Him, be united with Him, look to Him, or depend on Him. We certainly won't be able to rest ourselves easy in Him and His peace. And we can't be, we won't be, freed from our fears.

Now, where does trust grow and fear flee? In His presence. Where are we usually most intensely in His presence? In prayer times in which we most especially see Him in His Word, love Him, worship Him, adore Him, honor Him, praise Him, thank Him, give Him glory, and rest quietly in His peace. Then, in times throughout the day when we withdraw within to look to Him away from ourselves, and there in our spirits commune lovingly, restfully, quietly, peacefully with Him.

There we're reminded that Romans 8:28 is true and that our Almighty God of infinite love, our loving heavenly Father, is working all things together for our good -even, and perhaps especially, those things which frighten us most!

Then, in those times alone with Him, and repeatedly throughout the day, let go of everything to God. Not just specific fears. EVERYTHING. Just let go of it all to God. Release it. Let it go.

Let Him be God. Let Him be in charge. That's trust. That's rest. That's release from fear. Now, my dear friend, I have to say it. If you won't take time for the Lord, please don't complain about being in bondage to your fears.

POWER TO LOOK AT FEAR UNAFRAID

We tend to think that, if we ignore fear, it'll go away. It doesn't. It grows. It often becomes a mountain so large we can scarcely see anything else. Yet, though it's blocking our clear vision of virtually everything else, we don't see it clearly. We don't want to. We want to play ostrich, burying our heads in the sand.

Only the Lord, and genuine confidence in Him, can enable us to change that sick habit. Looking to Him in quiet confidence, we can look at the fears and their causes unafraid. This is not to say we should spend any great amount of time looking at them. Our time needs rather to be spent looking quietly and confidently to Him. We look at them only long enough to recognize that as we're in Him they're not adequate reasons for fear. They're reasons rather for gratitude that He's bigger than them all and both willing and able to handle them in the way that will result in our eternal benefit.

This is the "*sound mind*" that II Timothy 1:7 refers to. Anything less, anything other is a form of insanity. The only real sanity is having God at the center of everything. To have myself, my fears, or anything else at the center is to be eccentric, off center.

THE POWER OF LOVE.

Remember God hasn't given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and a sound mind.

The love of God shed abroad in our hearts and reflected back to Him as love for Him, that's what leads us to trust Him. Yes, or partake of Him, abide in Him, live in Him, be united to Him, look to Him, or depend on Him. And most especially to rest in Him. And

there only, resting in quiet confidence in Him, can we have freedom from fear or anything else that binds us.

Then, too, it's His love shed abroad in our hearts that enables us to love others. Even the unlovely.

WE BRING FEAR ON OURSELVES

Now, do you know one of the big sources of fear and hurt that many of us experience? Our angry, impatient, unkind, unloving responses to others. I remember so well finding that out.

I'd react badly to someone else for whatever reason. Then they were displeased, upset, or angry at me. I hurt. And I was afraid. I didn't want the pain. So I found it hard to relate relaxedly to people.

But we don't have to endure this any longer!

Instead, first step back away from the confrontation. Then turn quietly, even meekly, to the Lord in love.

Realize there's no need of a negative response on your part. After all, what they do is their problem, not yours. You aren't called on to straighten them out. You're not to be in control. God is. Let Him be. Just ignore their actions, if that's the best you're capable of at the moment. Better still, bow your heart, and if possible your head before the Lord. Accept His quieting of

your spirit, His gentling, His peace. Commit yourself, them, the whole circumstance to Him.

If you reach back at all, be sure it's in love. Or don't. See the unbelievable difference it makes.

And give God praise. This is the victory that overcomes, not only the world, but our fears too, even our faith: --our confident trust in our Almighty God of love, our Father Who is always with us.

Look away from your fears to rest in Him. *He's* in charge. *He* knows no limitations. *He* knows no fear. And you're in Him.

ChristLife Inc.
1642 Michigan Ave.
Niagara Falls, New York 14305
716-284-7625
1-800-676-3172
pastormarr@adelphia.net
www.pastormarr.com

