

Alleviating Fear
Exodus 14:1-10;13,14

Fear is part of our lives - Greek - "phobos" - we get our word "phobia" -all kinds of fear 1000+

Claustrophobia - fear of tight places

Acrophobia - Fear of heights

Lygophobia - Fear of darkness.

Logizomechanophobia - Fear of computers.

Phronemophobia - Fear of thinking. (Women think all men have this)

*Hippopotomonstrosesquipedaliophobia - Fear of long words.

Phobophobia- Fear of phobias.

* All of us - even Christians - have fears - Even Paul

Paul - 1Co 2:3 *I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling.*

- My experience at Houghton - public speaking

One of Satan's most effective weapons to keep us from fulfilling God's purpose - we stop because of fear
100+ Xs in Scripture God says,- "*Do not be afraid*" "*do not fear*"

*** I. How Fear Affects Us**

Great example - people of Israel (Ex14:1-3)

God tells Moses to travel in circles so Pharaoh will think they "*are wandering around...in confusion, hemmed in by the desert.*" The Lord actually led them into a cul-de-sac

Mts N & S, Red sea E - Pharaoh coming from West.

People see Pharaoh coming and what is their response?

Ex. 14:10 *They were terrified and cried out to the LORD.*

Fear affects us in at least two ways... It cripples our faith and it changes our focus.

*** 1. Fear cripples our faith**

Israelites - witnessed 10 plagues, pillar of cloud & fire - God's visible presence had been continually with them

But fear crippled their faith - they accused Moses of bringing them into the desert to die

When we are afraid - we don't act on God's direction - it cripples our faith

All of a sudden we're depending on ourselves rather than God

*** 2. Fear changes our focus**

Their focus had been on God's freedom for them - 400 yrs of

Been treated ruthlessly as slaves, forced to make bricks & back-breaking work in fields

Moses was now leading them to freedom and the promised land.

But now fear has made them change their focus

Ex 14:12 *Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians'?*

Lie - Ex 4:31 - when Moses came to free them *they bowed down and worshiped the Lord*

Fear causes us to resist change & to live in the past

Israelites want to go back to the "Good 'ol days" - we don't like change

Good 'ol days - no heat in winter, no plumbing, no A/C - we tend to forget the negative

Israelites thought they preferred the brutal slavery of the Egyptians

Why? Because fear changed their focus.

God has a "promised land" for your life - a purpose for your life

Fear changes our focus and causes us to miss God's purpose for our life

What do we fear? Losing your job? Ageing, rejection, not being able to pay bills?

* The word FEAR (False Evidence Appearing Real)

Born with only 2 fears: falling & loud noises. All others are learned - which means they can be unlearned

Don't be like man with talent, buried for fear (Mt 25:25)

Mt 25:25 *So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground.* - he did nothing

We often hide our talents and gifts because of fear.

*** II. How To Alleviate Fear**

*** 1. Remember God's power**

To calm Israelites fear - Moses tells the Israelites - *"the Lord will fight for you."*

Lord tells Moses to lead them to Red Sea, Moses must raise his staff, will divide - sounds foolish

Result - driving wind all night - cross on dry ground

Egyptians follow, God makes wheels fall off,

Ex 14:26 *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen."*

Moses records this story in detail to help us remember God's power at times of fear.

* 2Ti 1:7 *For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (fear), but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.*

This verse tells us that God, through the Holy Spirit, supplies us with three things.

*** a. God supplies us with His power**

Without God's power, we will always be plagued with fear

1 Sam. 17 - story of David and Goliath (godless, 9 ft. tall giant - challenges the Israelites)

1Sa 17:24 *When the Israelites saw the man, they all ran from him in great fear.*

A contagious fear swept through the Israelite army

David (shepherd boy) understood the power of God.

He remembered - he (w/God's power) already killed a lion and a bear

David went out to the giant with 5 stones (why 5? Maybe he'd miss with the first few? - 4 brothers)

1Sa 17:45 *David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty.*

Then he does it!

2Ti 1:7 *For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (fear), but a spirit of power,*

*** b. God supplies us with assurance of His love**

God's love helps us overcome our fears.

* 1Jo 4:18 *There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear,*

Fear is the result of our lack of faith in God's love for us.

As Christians we should never fear the future because of God's power & love for us.

We can alleviate fear by focusing on God's incredible love for us.

Promise to remember:

* Ro 8:39 *Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*** c. God supplies us with a sound mind (self discipline)**

God gives us self-discipline or self control - we don't become hysterical/paralyzed by fear when problems come
H.S. enables us to keep cool heads when "giant" fears come our way

When all Israelites were paralyzed w/fear, David (cool, calm & collected) comes along with God's peace

*** 2. Remember God's promises** (How to alleviate fear)

Someone once said, there is a promise for every fear you have.

What are you afraid of? Find a promise and memorize it.

Why memorize? When Satan tries to put fear in your heart, you can drive it away with a Bible promise
Jesus Himself used Scripture to fight against Satan.

* Ps 27:1 *The LORD is my light and my salvation-- whom shall I fear?*

* Isa 41:10 *So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

* Pr 3:25-26 *Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for the LORD will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being snared.*

* De 31:6 *Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."*

* Pr 29:25 *Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.*

* Ps 37:1-6 *Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away. Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.*

* Isa 41:13 *For I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.*

* La 3:22,23 *Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.*

* Joh 14:27 *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

Depend on His promises as children

Remember when the disciples were trying to keep the children from bothering Jesus?

Mr 10:14 *When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.*

We talk about "child-like faith". Children are born to trust. Our children want to trust us when we promise
That only works until we start breaking some of our promises.

God always keeps His promises. We need to become child-like in our faith and trust Him always.

If we can remember God's power and His promises and live and act according to those...

* **"We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."**