

Fear – Good and Bad

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalm 56:3

Introduction:

1. We recently had occasion to briefly cover this subject, but let us look at it a little more closely.
2. It is neither a lack of faith or a sin to be somewhat fearful at times of news or events in your life.
3. There are economic events unfolding before our eyes that cause fear of losing jobs and investments.
4. *No Fear!* is a foolish joke by wicked scorners, for every wise man will have proper, measured fear.
5. But every wise Christian responds to his fears by trusting in the Lord, who will help in any matter.
6. Much, much more could be said on this subject, for the Bible and life show it to be very important.

Fear of God

- A. This is Solomon’s conclusion of analyzing life and the whole duty of man (Eccl 12:13-14).
- B. The blessings of fearing the Lord are many (Ps 25:12-14; 112:1-3; 128:1; Pr 31:30; etc., etc.).
- C. What is fear of the Lord? A reverent desire to obey and please God by total love and faith.
- D. There is only a little terror with God, and it is mixed with bold joy (II Cor 5:11; Psalm 2:11).
- E. We want the fear of God that moves us to godly repentance, not hide among trees (Ge 3:10).
- F. You increase your fear of God by devouring His word and living by precepts and examples.

Fear of Authority

- A. It is proper to fear those God has put in authority e.g. parents, kings, masters, husbands, etc.
- B. Children are commanded to fear their parents based on God’s personal character (Lev 19:3).
- C. Honoring parents properly is reverence; making light is never right (Heb 12:9; Deut 27:16).
- D. God assumes men fear their masters, and He commands it (Mal 1:6; Eph 6:5; I Peter 2:18).
- E. Wives are commanded to fear husbands, which is related to reverence (I Pet 3:1-2; Ep 5:33).
- F. We are to fear and honor kings and other civil rulers (Prov 24:21; Eccl 8:1-5; Rom 13:1-7).

Fear of Man

- A. The fear of man brings a snare, by pressure to conform our conduct to please men (Pr 29:25).
- B. Think of Aaron and the golden calf, ten spies, Goliath, twenty thousand of Gideon’s army, the blind man’s parents, Peter’s denial, Pilate before the people, and many more examples.
- C. It was this fear of man, the Jews, that intimidated Peter into hypocrisy at Antioch (Gal 2:12).
- D. What can men do to you? Worst case? Kill you and send you to heaven today (Luke 12:4-7)?
- E. Consider the rhetorical questions and reminders that God gives fearful saints (Is 51:12-16).
- F. Consider the promise of God’s judgment on revilers for righteousness sake (Isaiah 51:7-8).
- G. Who cares what others think of you? The most important matter is what God thinks of you.

Fear of Circumstances

- G. Fear of imminent or certain danger is a normal response to bad news or dangerous situation.
- H. A man with no fear is either too stupid to fear or too arrogant to fear. Real men know fear.
- I. God created the fight or flee response that produces adrenalin for extra courage or strength.
- J. The Lord Jesus was fearful in His human nature of the crucifixion (Lu 22:41-44; Heb 5:7-9).
- K. The apostle Paul feared danger, threats, and disappointments on many fronts (II Cor 7:5).
- L. David feared, as Saul and the Philistines tried to kill him (Ps 34:4; 55:4-5; I Sam 21:10-12).
- M. Old age and loss of courage brings fears that did not exist at other stages of life (Eccl 12:5).

- N. The C-word causes fear, but not debilitating terror, and we would seek comfort in Christ. We do not fault Hezekiah for weeping to the Lord with desire to remain alive longer (Is 58:1-3).
- O. Do storms bother you? Consider our Lord's words to the fearful apostles (Matthew 8:23-27)?
- P. Our Lord compares us to sheep and lambs, which are fearful and timid animals, not lions!
- Q. It is good to know Luke's addition to Matthew's worry warning (Matt 6:25-34; Luke 12:32).
- R. Consider it well! We have a *Father* who considers it a *good pleasure* to give us the *kingdom*!
- S. But God's timid lambs remember that He knows the hairs of their heads and values them above many sparrows (Matthew 10:29-31). How can they fear anything?

Fear of Death

- A. If you could have feared, how would it have helped your conception, gestation, or birth?
- B. If you thought about them, how much would your fear help your heart, spleen, or kidneys?
- C. Paul said it was far better to depart and be with Christ, is not this how we should view it?
- D. Jesus has defeated death, so we can and should mock its claims against us (I Cor 15:51-58).
- E. Death is a family reunion for the righteous, a departure to a better world, joining the general assembly above, planting our body for a new one, going to sleep in Jesus, etc., etc.

Fear of Judgment

- A. Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be confounded (I Pet 2:6; Rom 9:33). Do you believe?
- B. Read I John 3:14,19-24. Your heart is foolish and weak. Believe God's promise here instead!
- C. Read I John 4:7,12,16-21. Learn God's love and return it to Him and others. It casts out fear!
- D. If you desire further comfort, get the sermon series on audio or paper ... "No Fine Line."

Judgments of Fear

- A. If you choose to reject your Creator and Saviour, He will choose your fears (Isaiah 66:4)!
- B. God warned Israel of the fear He would send on the disobedient (Lev 26:36-37; Deut 32:25).
- C. God promised Israel He would send fear into their enemies (Ge 35:5; Ps 53:5; II Kgs 7:6-7).
- D. Since He knows you better than anyone else, He can and will cause you terror (Pr 1:24-27).
- E. The fearful are in hell (Rev 21:8), but their fear is faithless dread of men that causes them to deny Christ: these are opposite of the overcomers, who live and reign with Christ forever: these are not the lambs of Christ's flock who have faith and fear mixed while here on earth!

Cures for Fear

- A. God is able to give courage, if you lack it yourself, as He did King Saul (I Samuel 10:9,22).
- B. God has given us of His Spirit, and His Spirit and our new man do not fear (II Timothy 1:7).
- C. Call upon the Lord, for He loves even the fearful, and He can and will deliver (Psalm 34:4).
- D. David encouraged himself in the Lord, when he faced fearful circumstances (I Samuel 30:6).
- E. Righteousness is a cure for fear, for guilt and shame and the flesh are not brave (Prov 28:1).
- F. The gospel tells us of Jesus, Who delivered us from fear of death and bondage (Heb 2:14-15).
- G. Delight in its great message of comfort and courage (Is 35:3-4; 40:1-2; 41:10-14; Jn 12:15).
- H. Learn the gospel! Delight in the gospel! Understand its certain terms of your total salvation!
- I. Fearfulness is contagious (Deut 20:8), so associate with the fearless, and encourage others!
- J. Learn passages like Psalm 27:1-6 and 46:1-5 and 91 and Isaiah 12:2 and Habakkuk 3:17-19!

Conclusion:

1. Have you seen or can you imagine a child jumping to a father's arms? Jump into your Father's arms!
2. Consider what great things God has done for you, and believe He will yet do greater things for you.
3. Sing some songs of Zion that promote confidence and courage, "Thus Far the Lord Has Led Me On," or, "How Firm a Foundation," or, "God Will Take Care of You," or, "He Leadeth Me," and so on.

For Further Study:

1. The sermon outline, "The Fear of the Lord," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/fear-of-the-lord.pdf>.
2. Sermon, "When Things Are Hopeless," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/when-things-seem-hopeless.pdf>.
3. The sermon outline, "No Fine Line," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/no-fine-line.pdf>.
4. The sermon outline, "Safety is of the Lord," ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/safety-is-of-the-lord.pdf>.