

Lesson # 37 – 05/18/2011

What Does the Bible Say About Fear?

**For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. ~
2 Timothy 1:7**

I'm going to start off this fear Bible study by posing what may seem to be a very simple question: What is fear?

Webster's dictionary says that fear is "to...expect with alarm." Now, as Christians, we are supposed to have a sense of expectancy, but a person who is experiencing fear lays in wait for what seems to be an unavoidable catastrophe. I have a strange feeling that this is not the kind of expectancy God had in

mind .

One of my favorite definitions of fear is that it is:

False

Evidence

Appearing

Real

That is more true than most people realize. **Statistics have proven that a vast majority of the things we fear never become reality.** But, in our mind's eye, the false fears can sometimes seem more real than anything else around us.

When we are looking to determine the true nature of something, the best place to look is in God's Word. So, in part one of this fear Bible study, we will carefully uncover what God has to say about the true nature of fear in the Bible.

What is Fear Really?

*For God did not give us a spirit of fear;
(of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear),
but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love
and of a sound mind.*

-2 Timothy 1:7

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There are a few important points that this scripture brings up.

1. **Fear is a spirit.**
2. **It is a spirit that God did not give to us.**
3. **And self-discipline, self-control and love are our protection from fear?**

Though we are talking about controlling emotions, fear is much more than *just* an emotion (*just as most emotions are*). Fear is a spirit. And it is a spirit that does not come from God.

Fear is a spirit of torment sent out by our enemy the *carnal mind*. But, we should not be surprised. The Bible says that "*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*" (Ephesians 6:12).

God says that "*the thief*" only comes to "steal, and to kill, and to destroy" (John 10:10 - *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*). And that is what the spirit of fear is sent out to do.

Fear is, quite plainly, a spiritual attack designed, not only to steal your peace, but your destiny in Christ. [As Believer's it is our responsibility to learn how to safeguard our mind against these attacks, and reclaim what God has in store for us.](#)

Fear Can Steal Your Miracle!

Fear has the power to steal the miracles that God wants to do in you, and through you. An excellent example of this is what happened to Peter in Matthew 14. He was on the edge of greatness, but his fear stole his miracle.

*About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them,
walking on the water... Then Peter called to Him,
"Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water."*

"Yes, come," Jesus said.

*So Peter went over the side of the boat
and **walked on the water** toward Jesus.*

*But when he saw the strong wind and the waves,
he was terrified and began to sink...*

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*Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him.
"You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt Me?"*
- Matthew 14:25,28-31 NLT



Of all of the disciples, Peter, with his great boldness yelled out - Hey, Lord, if it's really you, then give me the power to walk on water too!

And, amazingly, Jesus called Him out of the boat. And for a moment, a mortal man walked on water.

I want you to stop and think about this amazing miracle! Peter is the only man other than Jesus known to have walked on water!

Jesus was doing a miracle with him - Peter was changing the history of mankind as they knew it.

And, what happened?

Peter saw his circumstances - The waves were crashing -The wind was blowing. Suddenly, he began to fear. *Men can't really walk on water. I'm losing my footing? This is too hard!*

And, just like that, the way we remember history was changed forever.

People usually don't remember that day as a day when God defied the laws of nature and caused a mere man to walk on water. It is most often remembered as the day that Peter's fear got the best of him.

That thief, fear, stole Peter's miracle.

Christian Fear Is Double Minded

God says He did not give us a spirit of fear, but "of power and of love and of a calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control."

When we are afraid, our minds are not well-balanced as God describes. When we fear or doubt God, we are said to be double minded ([James 1:8](#) - *A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*).

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God says that when a person comes to Him...

*But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.
(no hesitating, no doubting)....
For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven
with the wind and tossed.
For let not that man think that
he shall receive any thing of the Lord.
A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*
-James 1:6-8

That is exactly what the spirit of fear wants to do to you. To make you unstable, unreliable, and uncertain about everything - Your thoughts, God's promises - Everything. Anyone who has ever been afraid can attest to the truth of that scripture.

Why is Christian fear double minded? Because part of your mind may believe God's promises of love and provision, but your doubts and fears reveal hidden beliefs contrary to those promises.

**You can't believe Jehovah Rappha is your healer,
and then fear you'll die of cancer.**

**You can't believe Jehovah Jireh is your provider,
and then fear you'll go bankrupt.**

That is being double minded.

Imagine if your children had that much doubt in your **desire** or **ability** to care for them. That is why God says that a double minded person should not expect to receive anything from Him.

But, you don't have to be double minded, unstable and uncertain. You can have God's peace and learn how to faith your fears to death! In the online Bible class that I taught on renewing your mind and emotions, I share [a step by step guide for breaking spiritual strongholds like fear and doubt off of you once and for all](#). You truly can receive the mind of Christ, and be free from the bondage of fear.

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Do you Choose Faith or Fear

Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. Then He asked them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" ~ Mark 4:37-40 (

³⁷And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

³⁸And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

³⁹And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

⁴⁰And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

On a daily basis, every child of God makes a very important choice - will they live in faith or fear? Your fear Bible study is here to help you understand the major significance of this one decision, and give you the tools you need to choose wisely.

Fear is something that does not discriminate. Man, woman, child, or adult. At some point in our lives, we all have to come face to face with it, and Christians are no exceptions.

Franklin D. Roosevelt once proclaimed, "The Only Thing We Have to Fear Is Fear Itself!"

But why should we *fear* fear? Because, as I've said before *Fear* is a thief!

It starts out by stealing God's peace from our hearts. And, if we let it paralyze us from action, it can rob us of our true destinies in Christ.

As a Christian, fear should be your enemy.

In this lesson, we will look at Christian fear from God's perspective.

How Jesus Responded to Fear in the Bible

One of the amazing things about Jesus coming to earth is that He reveals the exact will of the Father to us. We are able to look at how He responded to His disciples while He was here on earth, and understand how God probably reacts to us in similar situations.

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One of the best examples of Jesus responding to the fear of the disciples is in Mark 4.

But soon a fierce storm came up.

High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water.

Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with His head on a cushion.

The disciples woke him up, shouting,

*"Teacher, **don't you care** that we're going to drown?"*

When Jesus woke up, He rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Silence! Be still!"

Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm.

Then He asked them,

"Why are you afraid?"

Do you still have no faith?"

This is such an interesting passage of scripture. When you read through it, you can really see it all unfolding in your mind's eye. But, let's look at it as a metaphor for a second.

Meet Suzie:

Suzie loves the Lord, and she believes that the Lord loves her. She is going along, living her life as normal, when, suddenly, a huge storm hits.

Just as the disciples watched as their boat began to fill with water, Suzie watches as her life seems to begin falling apart. Her finances are getting shaky and causing huge blow-ups between her and her husband.

She waits on God to come to the rescue, trusting that the storm will be over quickly, but things continue to get worse.

Finally, Suzie goes to God.

"God, don't you see what's Going on? *Don't you even care?*"

Does He see? Does He care?

Many times Flesh brings these same questions to our minds as believers. But, we know that, when a

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person serves God, our Heavenly Father "busies Himself with his every step." ([Psalm 37:23](#) - *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.*).

God says "the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid..." ([Matthew 10:30-31](#)

³⁰*But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.*

³¹*Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.*

But, has Suzie gone to God with a prayer of faith or fear?

She has gone to God in fear. And, to God, "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" ([Romans 14:23](#) - *And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*).

What Exactly is Faith?

We often hear the word discussed and tossed around, but what is faith?

Hebrews says that it is "the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses]" ([Hebrews 11:1](#) - *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*).

Just like fear, faith is our conviction, or belief, in a reality that we can't yet see. The only difference is that faith assumes God will come through for you, and fear assumes that He won't.

Is there any wonder why fear is so displeasing in the eyes of your Heavenly Father.

-Hebrews 11:6 - But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Many Christians have mastered the first half of that verse - We believe that God is. But, it is the second half where we fall short - We must believe that He rewards those that seek Him with their whole heart. That is a part of faith and, without it, we are not fully pleasing our Lord.

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Choosing Faith or Fear Means Choosing Who You Will Believe



As Christians, when we realize we are afraid, we must stop and ask ourselves an important question. At that very moment, are we believing God, or are we believing flesh?

God says He will reward you for your desire to seek and obey Him. He says He's counted the very hairs on your head, and that **He** alone is your Provider and Protector.

But, flesh says, you are unworthy of God's rewards. He says that God must be using His wrath to teach and

train you. [In our online Bible class, Who's Controlling Your Thoughts, these little whispers are what I call "Lies of Destruction." They are little whispers from the enemy that seem harmless. The big danger of these lies - They feel true.](#) When the flesh whispers to you that the details of your life are too trivial for God to be bothered with, and that you must ultimately fend for yourself, it *feels* true.

That's when you have to make a conscious choice to [believe God's Word over your own feelings and emotions.](#) If you don't, these little lies of destruction will slowly erode your faith and fill your mind with fear.

When you choose faith or fear, in all reality, you are ultimately choosing who you will believe.

Of course, the choice between faith or fear is an easy one to make, but can be a hard one to keep!

Freedom From Fear

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. ~ 1 John 4:18 - *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*

As you master controlling emotions, one of the most difficult emotions to control is fear. It can sneak up on you when you least expect it, and once it has you, it can be hard to get free.

Many Christians don't realize it, but faith and fear are very similar in nature.

Both faith and fear are an unshakable belief in an unseen future. Neither is merely emotional, but both are spiritual forces. The only difference between the two is that one believes God will come through for you - The other believes He won't.

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God says that He has not given you the spirit of fear, but, He has given you love, power, and self-control (2 Timothy 1:7). They are your most powerful weapons in your battle for freedom as you master controlling emotions of fear, doubt, and worry.

God's Power + Your Self-Discipline = A Powerful Force

As I've said before, fear is a spirit. It is a sign of a spiritual attack from your enemy, the flesh.

But, knowing this should not bring even more *fear*.

God's power is living inside of you, and He has given you the power to stand against the enemy's attacks.

*Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.
Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to
stand firm against all strategies of the flesh.
For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies,
but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world,
against mighty powers in this dark world,
and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.
Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor
so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil.
- Ephesians 6:10-13*

¹⁰*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

¹¹*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

¹²*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

¹³*Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

For many Christians, [Ephesians 6](#) is a passage that seems powerful in theory, but they have no clue how to apply it to their own lives. That is one of the reasons why many of us experience so much fear - We feel like Flesh is beating up on us, but we have no idea how to fight back.

In our online Bible class on renewing your mind, I spent a lot of time teaching how [you can use your spiritual armor to Tear Down Mental Strongholds like fear, doubt, depression and anxiety](#). God has given you the weapons that you need to fight back, but if you don't know what they are, or how to use

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them, it is easy to become battle weary, and feel like giving up.

Another reason that many people struggle with fear is because they do not know God's promises for their life's challenges. That is where our self-discipline comes in.

God says that He hasn't given you fear, but self discipline ([2 Timothy 1:7](#) - *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*) - The ability to [control your emotions and thoughts, and not allow them to be manipulated by the enemy.](#)

How do you begin controlling emotions and thoughts?

You fill your mind with the promises of God. One of the best ways to safeguard your mind against the emotional attacks of the enemy is by meditating on God's Word on a regular basis. And, doing that takes self-discipline!

Whether we realize it or not, everyone meditates. The true meaning of meditation is to roll a thought over in your mind, over and over again.

The issue that most Christians have is not that they do not know how to meditate. It is that they are meditating on their problems, and not their promises. They do not discipline their minds as God has instructed us to.

*For the weapons of our warfare are not physical
[weapons of flesh and blood], but they are mighty before God
for the overthrow and destruction of strongholds,
[Inasmuch as we] refute arguments and theories and reasonings
and every proud and lofty thing*

that sets itself up against the [true] knowledge of God;
and we lead every thought and purpose away captive into the obedience of Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One)

-2 Corinthians 10:4-5

⁴*(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)*

⁵*Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*

The more that you discipline yourself to meditate on God's Word, the easier it will become to reject thoughts that don't line up with it. And, that's what fears are - Thoughts that do not line up with God's

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promises to you.

Fear says God will not help you this time.

Fear says your children won't come back to the Lord.

Fear says that your finance will never improve.

Fear says that your marriage is ruined.

Fear says the opposite of what God says.

Your Key to Freedom From Fear!

God also says that He has not given you a spirit of fear, but that He has given you love. But, as Tina Turner would ask, "What's love got to do with it?"

***There is no fear in love;
but perfect love casteth out fear:
because fear hath torment. - 1 John 4:18 - There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear:
because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.***

Perfect love drives out fear. But where do we find perfect love? Our parents? A spouse?

If you look for perfect love in these place, you will only be disappointed.

The only place where you can experience perfect love is in an intimate relationship with your Heavenly Father.

As you develop that intimate relationship with Him, His perfect love will become more and more real to you, and your fears will become more unrealistic than your faith.

God says that if we are tormented by fear, "this shows that we have not fully experienced His perfect love.

That is something that should really make us all stop and think. When a fear creeps up inside of you, it should be a red flag that you need to continue deepening your relationship with God.

So, how do you begin controlling emotions of fear, doubt and worry? Your faith in the unyielding love of your Heavenly Father is what removes fear from your mind, regardless of your circumstances.

God has promised:

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*"For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD.
They are plans for good and not for disaster,
to give you a future and a hope."*

-Jeremiah 29:11 - *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*

God has made out plans for your life, just like any good parent, because He loves you. But, unlike any earthly parent, He has the power to bring those plans to pass. Knowing that small piece of truth can help you overcome fear in a big way.

That does not mean that the spirit of fear will never try to to attack you. But, it does means that your shield of faith can become strong enough to resist it.

Next time you feel yourself starting to worry, follow these simple steps for controlling emotions of fear.

5 Steps To Controlling Fear

1. Recognize the fearful thought as a threat.
2. Think of God's promise for that situation (if you don't know what it is, find out!)
3. Pray and tell God your concern.
4. Praise God for His promise to provide your needs.
5. Refuse to worry about it any more. If it comes to your mind again, confess that you have given it over to your Heavenly Father in prayer. Then begin praising God that He heard your prayers and that the prayers of the righteous availeth much (**James 5:16 - *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.***).

****No matter how many times fear tries to return, continue repeating step 5. Eventually, the flesh will get the hint!****

If you have heard my testimony, you know that I battled for years with controlling my emotions. In fact, I was so plagued by fear and anxiety that I was put on one medication after another in an effort to "fix me." But, it was only through applying God's promises on renewing my mind and controlling my thoughts that I was truly set free!

The very truths that God revealed to me to set me free from the bondage of fear and anxiety, those alone are what I based our online Bible class, *Who's Controlling Your Thoughts?* on. I've had Christian after Christian tell me that class changed their lives. But, I know in my heart that it is not the class that did it, but the transformational Biblical truths it holds.

Join us for Prayerline Bible Study
424-203-8400 – Passcode:648568 then #
Monday Evenings – 6:00 p.m. PST

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If you are struggling with fear, doubt or anxiety, pray and ask God if He would have you take this powerful online Bible class on renewing your mind. [Discover how to break free of mental strongholds and receive the mind of Christ.](#)