

Opening: Fear can be good and bad at the same time. Today we want to understand the difference between good and healthy fear, from bad and crippling fear. We also want to understand how we can recognize the difference and how we can overcome our fears so we can abide in faith. When our faith overcomes our fears, we will not just believe in the impossible, but we will do the impossible.

Key Verse: 1st John 4:16-18 16And we have come to know and believe the love that God has for us. God is love; whoever abides in love abides in God, and God in him. 17In this way, love has been perfected among us, so that we may have confidence on the day of judgment; for in this world we are just like Him. 18There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment. The one who fears has not been perfected in love.

1. The absence of God produces a dysfunctional fear.

- a. **The world is full of fears. I found a list of 20 common fears and 4 odd ones.**
- b. **Modern science classifies fear into 3 types, Primal, irrational, and rational fears.**
 - i. Primal fear is a fear we feel when we perceive we are in danger of not surviving.
 - ii. Irrational fear is when we fear something without a rational reason.
 - iii. Rational fear is a fear that occurs when there is a real and imminent threat.

2. The fear of the Lord is foundational for the believer.

- a. **Isaiah the prophet tells us that Jesus will carry the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah 11:2** And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
- b. **My encounter with the health Fear of the Lord**
- c. **Malachi 3:16-17** At that time those who feared the LORD spoke with one another, and the LORD listened and heard them. So a scroll of remembrance was written before Him regarding those who feared the LORD and honored His name. 17"They will be Mine," says the LORD of Hosts, "on the day when I prepare My treasured possession. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.
 - i. Fear in this context represent a person who has a healthy respect for God, understanding His authority, His power and just nature.
 - ii. These kinds of people agree with God and are speaking of God because they know Him. They are speaking of God with a health respect for Him.
- d. **Exodus 20:20** Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin."
 - i. When God came down on Mt. Sinai, the people trembled at the power of God present on the mountain. This demonstration by God was meant to show the Israelites that God was not like the idols they had known in Egypt. This fear was not bad but good.
 - ii. **Life Lesson: Good fear is fear that keeps us from sinning against God.**
- e. **Psalm 111:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!
 - i. The Fear of the Lord is good and abiding while we are on this earth to protect us and keep us close to Him.
 - ii. **Life Lesson: The fear of God is not meant to keep us away from Him but is meant to make us afraid to stay away from Him.**
 - iii. A mature Christian accepts this reality, while an immature Christian has not fully understood the full nature of God. He is love, He is Holy, He is Pure, He is Just, He is Righteous, He is Powerful and He is the Final authority over all creation.

3. The Fear of Man is evil

- a. **Proverbs 29:25-26** 25The fear of man is a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is set securely on high. 26Many seek the ruler's favor, but a man receives justice from the LORD.
 - i. The fear of man is the unhealthy respect we may show to unrespectable people simply because they are evil and may do harm to us.
 - ii. One of the works of the Holy Spirit is to make a Christian bold so that they can represent Christ in a world that can sometimes be intimidating.
- b. **Moses speaking to the judges of Israel in Deuteronomy 1:17** Show no partiality in judging; hear both small and great alike. Do not be intimidated by anyone, for judgment belongs to God. And bring to me any case too difficult for you, and I will hear it."
 - i. The fear of man will cause us to show partiality to others out of fear.

- ii. We are not preaching disrespect for man but merely understanding the proper order. There is a healthy respect for other people, and unhealthy fear of man that can stop us from serving God.
- c. **Jesus tells us not to fear men in Luke 12:4-5** 4I tell you, My friends, do not be afraid of **those (Men) who kill the body** and after that can do no more. 5But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear the One who, after you have been killed, has authority to throw you into hell. **Yes, I tell you, fear Him!**
 - i. One of the powerful truths about living a life for Jesus Christ is that we no longer fear death as we discussed a few weeks ago.
 - ii. The reason we no longer fear death is because we are now ready for it. We see our path in this life for what it is, temporary. This life is not the end and therefore we can say with the Apostle Paul “To live is Christ and to die is gain.”
 - iii. Jesus is warning the disciples that Satan if allowed will threaten a believer with death to get them to stop serving God. Whatever the lot God calls you to walk, do not let anyone stop you from serving Jesus.

4. The Holy Spirit brings a healthy Fear when present in our lives.

- a. The healthy fear of God expels the unhealthy irrational fears that Satan is trying to place upon us.
- b. Key Point: Irrational fears not rooted in truth are evidence that we still have some growth to do. That growth is accomplished in our lives as we draw closer to God in the Holy Spirit, not further from Him.
- c. Unhealthy fear is a witness and a sign that something in our relationship with God is not right.
- d. 1st John 4:18 **There is no fear in love**, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment. The one who fears **has not** been perfected in **love**.

5. The benefit of healthy fear

- a. Learn a lesson from the speeding driver. While we keep the law to not speed, we have no reason to fear retribution from law enforcement.
- b. A healthy biblical fear delivers us from running from God and punishment knowing that God is not our enemy but our friend.
- c. Healthy fear prepares us **for our future**, keeping **us safe** from harm. Remember **outside of God** your adversary is **better equipped** to deceive you than you are to **resist Him**. A healthy fear recognizes this spiritual truth and resists evil, not allowing it to gain a foothold.

6. What you are feeding on has consequences

- a. The movie industry has been creating more and more horror movies every year over the last 15 years.
- b. Market share: Horror movies have been growing in popularity and market share, doubling from 4.87% in 2013 to 10.08% in 2023. In 2023, horror movies accounted for 10.5% of ticket sales, which was double their average. Horror movies accounted for \$800 million dollars in revenue in 2023 and the number is growing.
- c. **Question? Do you live with unhealthy fear because you are watching unhealthy programs that are filling your mind and heart with opportunities for Satan to take advantage of.**
- d. **Job 3:25 “For what I fear comes upon me, and what I dread encounters me.** ** Job had unhealthy fears which He dwelt upon in his heart and mind. He played them in his heart and mind like a movie.
 - i. Be careful not careless, the days are getting darker, and spirits are transferred through audible and visual gates into our life.
 - ii. Some fears are rooted in severe trauma that we have not been healed from.
 - iii. Some fears are rooted in demonic oppression, that we have opened ourselves up to.
 - iv. Screenwriters for many movies, incorporate scenes, spells, curses that are real which they researched from real witchcraft, or pagan sources to include into the movie.
 - v. **Life Lesson: Some pursue evil in ignorance, but Satan never pursues anyone in ignorance.**

7. The Christians life is defined by Faith and not Fear.

- a. **2nd Corinthians 3:17-18** 17Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, **there is freedom**. 18And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed into His image** with intensifying glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.
- b. **2nd Timothy 1:7** for God gave us a spirit **not of fear** but of power and love and self-control.
- c. **Romans 1:17** 17For the gospel reveals the righteousness of God that comes by faith from start to finish, just as it is written: “ **The righteous will live by faith.**”
 - i. For the Christian to walk in faith, unhealthy fears must be dealt with, or at a minimum ignored in light of the truth of God.
 - ii. If you have unhealthy fears, begin to tackle each one with the light of God’s word and promises.

Closing: Turn the lights on, my story when I was alone in a home many years ago.