

Happy Mothers Day! I Can't believe I have been a Mom for almost 15 years. Its shocking to me to think I will have a freshman in High School and a 7th grader In the fall. When we moved to Pueblo Taylor was 15 months old and Josiah was on the way. We have had the honor of raising our kids in Pueblo and at Pueblo Christian Center.

When the Lord starts speaking to me about a theme. Its kinda like when you buy a new car and all of the sudden it seems like everyone is driving your car. It has been the same way with this message. The subject the Lord laid on my heart was fear. All of the sudden I'm hearing songs on the radio about fear. Who has heard the song by Zach Williams "Fear is a Liar"? Then if you happen to listen to way fm they have the worlds largest small group. Which is basically a devotion they email you if you join. And guess what right after I decided I was going to share on this topic that is exactly what the way fm's devotions were on. So I would say that this is a subject on Gods heart right now.

Fear is something we all have felt with at one time or another.

Fear is defined as - an unpleasant emotion caused by the belief that someone or something is dangerous, likely to cause pain or threat.

Fear is terror, fright, horror, alarm, panic, agitation, dread, distress.

When I think about the root cause of so many mistakes and spiritual pitfalls that have happened throughout my own life, the source seems to be the one and only, the ugly, fear. Fear will cause us to buckle and settle for less than God's best. It'll cause us to disobey after diluting our trust in Him, it will rob us of our peace and joy.

God actually commands us not to fear, or worry. The phrase "fear not" is used at least 80 times in the Bible, most likely because He knows the enemy uses fear to decrease our hope, limit our victories and ultimately paralyze us. Fear is a liar... Fear itself whispers in the ear of the believer in the hopes to exalt itself above the voice of God in your life. Anything that

we allow to exalt itself above the place of the voice of God in our lives becomes idol.

Fear also tries to masquerade itself as caution, or common sense. Now I'm not against using good ole common sense and I wish more people did. But what happens when God ask of you something that doesn't make sense (in the natural).

Is there ever a time in the Bible where God asks people to stare Fear in the face and do it anyway. To do obedience scared? What about Esther who could have lost her life by going before the King when she had not been called for. What about Moses who stuttered and was scared to go before Pharaoh and speak. What about Gideon who was hiding in fear from the Midianites when God shows up in his life and calls him to destroy the Midianites. The list could simply go on and on. God has never called us to play it safe. He has called us to be radical, obedient faith filled believers who stare fear in the face and do it anyway.

We just finished up our women's bible study on the life of Gideon. Gideon is a perfect example of a man that dealt with fear. In fact we are first introduced to Gideon when he is hiding from the Midianites in fear.

Judges 6:11 The angel of the Lord came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. **12** When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior."

Warrior? He has the wrong man. This angel of the Lord goes onto tell Gideon he is to save Israel out of the hands of the Midianites. So Gideon goes on to describe himself to the angel of the Lord. You know just in case he didn't know.

Judges 6

**15** "Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." ( Don't

you think Gideon had thoughts like “Lord your asking me to rise up and attack the every thing I’m hiding in fear from)

The Lord this wonderful sense of humor. Where he chooses to use the week things to confound the wise.

### 1 Corinthians 1:26-30 New International Version (NIV)

**26** Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. **27** But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. **28** God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are,

And this is why>>>>

**29** so that no one may boast before him. **30** It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

God chooses us and on purpose knowing our weaknesses. Then He ask things of us that are beyond what we think our abilities are. Can you imagine that? If He required it of our hero of the faith He will require it of us.

But here is the pitfall what voice will you listen to? The voice of fear mask as reason....That says things like ”You cant do that because....you fill in the blank.” Or that voice of fear that whispers all the what if’s... what if this happens or what if that happens..

For Gideon he had to start with being obedient with the first things asked of him....before he could gain the ultimate victory over the Midianites.

Judges 6

**25** That same night the Lord said to him, “Take the second bull from your father’s herd, the one seven years old.[b] Tear down your father’s altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole[c] beside it. **26** Then build a proper kind of[d] altar to the Lord your God on the top of this height. Using the

wood of the Asherah pole that you cut down, offer the second[e] bull as a burnt offering.”

**27** So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the Lord told him. ***But because he was afraid of his family and the townspeople, he did it at night rather than in the daytime.***

**28** In the morning when the people of the town got up, there was Baal’s altar, demolished, with the Asherah pole beside it cut down and the second bull sacrificed on the newly built altar!

**29** They asked each other, “Who did this?”

When they carefully investigated, they were told, “Gideon son of Joash did it.”

**30** The people of the town demanded of Joash, “Bring out your son. He must die, because he has broken down Baal’s altar and cut down the Asherah pole beside it.”

**31** But Joash replied to the hostile crowd around him, “Are you going to plead Baal’s cause? Are you trying to save him? Whoever fights for him shall be put to death by morning! If Baal really is a god, he can defend himself when someone breaks down his altar.” **32** So because Gideon broke down Baal’s altar, they gave him the name Jerub-Baal[f] that day, saying, “Let Baal contend with him.”

Did you notice that it was Joash Gideons father who defended him. The man who the scriptures said it was his idol.

Side note: When we face “idols” sin in our own life and we repent tearing down the strongholds it has had in our life. Not only will we be set free but others around us will be effected as well.

Gideon was obedient even when it was scary.

Our story with Gideon doesn’t stop with the destruction of the Asherah pole and Baal alter. Remember God sent an angel of the Lord to tell Gideon to deliver the people of Israel out of the hand of the Midianites.

But he had to deal with the sin in the camp first. There is no way the spirit of the Lord would have come upon Gideon for the victory that he needed if they were still worshipping other gods.

If you long for the presence of God. Live a life of repentance before Him. Constantly searching your heart for things that do not please Him.

Isn't it so good of God to walk us through steps of obedience... He doesn't ask us to tackle the mountain without getting us prepared. Obedience is preparation to receive the anointing.

\* Story- As I reflect back on my life I see several times that God required steps of obedience to be taken in order to go on. Moving from Texas to attend bible college (the only place I had ever lived) selling the landscaping business etc., hearing the sound of the trailer drive out of the driveway.

Where would we be today had we not been obedient to the call of the Lord. If we had allowed the voice of fear to be louder than the voice of God.

The Lord will give you opportunities to choose Him. It's almost like he's just checking to see if your heart is still fully His. Will you choose Him or comfort, security, familiarity?

So back to Gideon, after all of this Baal controversy after the sin was repented for, idols torn down and worship made to the Lord. Then in verse 34 the spirit of the Lord comes upon Gideon. He is filled with faith by the empowering spirit of the Lord. And he sets out to do the will of God. He blows his trumpet and goes to work gathering the troops to take down the Midianites.

### **Judges 7 New International Version (NIV)**

#### **Gideon Defeats the Midianites**

**7** Early in the morning, Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and all his men camped at the spring of Harod. The camp of Midian was north of them in the valley near the hill of Moreh. **2** The Lord said to Gideon, "You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, 'My own strength has saved me.' **3** Now announce to the army, 'Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.'" So **twenty-two thousand men left**, while **ten thousand remained**.

Verse 3 Shows me that God understands the influence we have over one another. Fear is contagious and dangerous. And the Lord knew He needed to purge it out of the group of men. Because He knew what he was going

to require of these men. And just as fear is contagious so is Faith! And He knew he needs faith filled warriors to complete the task given.

**4** But the Lord said to Gideon, “There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will thin them out for you there. If I say, ‘This one shall go with you,’ he shall go; but if I say, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ he shall not go.”

**5** So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the Lord told him, “Separate those who lap the water with their tongues as a dog laps from those who kneel down to drink.” **6** Three hundred of them drank from cupped hands, lapping like dogs. All the rest got down on their knees to drink.

**7** The Lord said to Gideon, “With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands. Let all the others go home.” **8** So Gideon sent the rest of the Israelites home but kept the **three hundred**, who took over the provisions and trumpets of the others.

Now just three hundred men are suppose to attack Midian. The odds were defiantly not in their favor.

**12** The Midianites, the Amalekites and all the other eastern peoples had settled in the valley, thick as locusts. Their camels could no more be counted than the sand on the seashore.

Umm thank God for Gideons obedience to tare down the Baal alter and Asherah pole. Sin had been delt, the spirit of God was upon him. And he’s going to need it.

Now the camp of Midian lay below him in the valley. **9** During that night the Lord said to Gideon, “Get up, go down against the camp, because I am going to give it into your hands. **10** If you are **afraid** to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah **11** and listen to what they are saying. Afterward, you will be encouraged to attack the camp.” So he and Purah his servant went down to the outposts of the camp.

**13** Gideon arrived just as a man was telling a friend his dream. “I had a dream,” he was saying. “A round loaf of barley bread came tumbling into the Midianite camp. It struck the tent with such force that the tent overturned and collapsed.”

**14** His friend responded, “This can be nothing other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, the Israelite. God has given the Midianites and the whole camp into his hands.”

**15** When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he bowed down and worshiped. He returned to the camp of Israel and called out, “Get up! The Lord has given the Midianite camp into your hands.”

The Lord is so good and patient. Gideon is still afraid and the Lord knows it. So He allows Gideon to hear what the enemy is saying. Oh that we would be know in the enemies camp a trip hazard. May we be a people so devoted to the Lord that the enemy quakes not just when we pray but as we go about our normal lives.

**15** When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he bowed down and worshiped. He returned to the camp of Israel and called out, “Get up! The Lord has given the Midianite camp into your hands.” **16** Dividing the three hundred men into three companies,( he placed swords, knives, and weapons in their hands) Nooo... **he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them, with torches inside.**

#### **2 Corinthians 10:4 (KJV)**

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

Sounds a little crazy going to battle with no weapons. The voice of fear wants us to reason. Saying this is crazy there is no way we can win this battle with trumpets, empty jars and torches. Have you seen how out numbered we are, Gideon has lost his mind. But Gideon had the Spirit of God on Him. He had heard the report of the enemy and was confident in what the Lord wanted to do. He had Faith in the face of fear. He understood that the war could never be won without doing it Gods way. He knew when God is for you who can be against you.

Just as the Lord is with Gideon He is with us.

Deuteronomy 31:8 “He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”

Romans 8:28 “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

Combat fear by believing he'll turn your situation around for good, simply because he has a wonderful purpose for your life, no amount of mistakes can hinder.

Isaiah 43:1 “Don't fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine.”

By Gideon tearing down the idols he solidified that he belonged to the Lord.

I've been a Christian for 33 years now, and I'm still in awe that God, who created the universe, cares about every detail of our lives. We belong to an all-powerful, all-knowing, victorious father who cares deeply about us. When we really meditate on this truth, it's hard to remain fearful about the trials we face. By focusing on Him, and how He considers us his prized, redeemed ones, our focus naturally shifts from fear to faith. Jesus himself expressed fear to the point of sweating blood, so God understands fear. But whatever you're fearing- a health crisis, family problem, financial struggle- focus on the power of a God who calls you by name, and commands fear to flee from you heart.

1 John 4:18 “Perfect Love Casts Out All Fear”

“How could love fight fear?” I think this verse can be rather vague and difficult to grasp. But when we really meditate on this scripture, and how God's love has made us less fearful through life, I believe it's simpler than we realize. God is love. Perfect love. And the closer we come to him, the less power fear has over us, because we feel God's continual presence-his strength, his comfort, and his guidance.

When faced with even the deepest most crippling of fear, we need to trust God with the confidence a child ascribes to a loving parent. The key is abiding in that love, on a daily-even hourly-basis. It has to be more than a Biblical truth in our lives. We need to experience it continually.



Psalm 18:2 “The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer.”

Speak these words over the cause of your fear. God is our hiding place. For David, this meant sitting in a cave praying as trained warriors bypassed his route. For us, it's more like sitting in our car on lunch break with worship music blasting, refusing fear, and praising instead. We weren't saved and redeemed only to limp through life riddled with fear and anxiety. God can only be our rock if we let him. Trust him to deliver you from every fear coming against the truth not only in his ability, but his desire to deliver you. Fear has no place in the heart or mind of a believer. Ask God to increase your trust and faith in his willingness and ability to deliver you completely from fear and anxiety. Ask for a deeper revelation of his love, and watch how powerfully he moves.

What is it that God is calling you to? Does it scare you to death?  
With God all things are possible.

What is the one thing you tell God “Oh anything but that Lord”. What is that thing you won't let go of because deep down you think you can handle it better than God?

Do you find yourself stuck in your relationship with the Lord?

First thing we need to do is deal with Baal “sin” in your life. Sin will always give a foothold to the enemy. But brokenness and repentance brings the spirit of God.

And be faith filled and ready to be obedient when the Lord speaks. He will take you on an adventure of a life time and give you amazing testimonies to pass on for generations to come.