



#1 Fear Is Enemy

Pastor Stephen Marshall

Message & Scripture Highlights:

Have someone read:

1 John 4:8

He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:18

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

Discussion Part 1:

There are over 365 forms of “Don’t be afraid” or “Fear not” throughout God’s Word. Talk about the difference between the absence of fear, and the decision not to tolerate or give in to fear. Was Joshua tempted to be afraid when he took over the leadership of Israel from Moses? Of course he was. That’s why God had to encourage him to “Only be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or dismayed.” (See Joshua 1:1-9)

S.Marshall thoughts:

If fear were healthy in any form, wouldn’t God have given us some condition or circumstance in which we should tolerate it? There is “NO fear” in love. God is love. You and I were made in the image and likeness of God, therefore in the image of love. My dear friend, you were not made to function, live, or exist with fear of any kind. The awe and wonder of God, which we call the “fear of the Lord”, is good. This is a modern term derived from the Hebrew word picture that tells us we are in awe of the hand we see. If it’s the enemy then the awe is awful. If it’s God the Father’s hand we see, then the awe is awesome - awe inspiring with life!

Have someone read:

Psalm 23:1-6

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. ² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. ³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. ⁴ Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. ⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over. ⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.

Discussion Part 2:

David the Psalmist had been through some pretty dangerous and scary situations in his life. God inspires him to write the famous 23rd Psalm not just as a prayer for himself, but for us. Discuss what this Word from God teaches us about life. Are we told that we will have no valleys? Are we promised a life with no enemies? Is the fear-free life ours because God insulates us from all earthly realities? Sum up this discussion with the resolve of the Psalmist's statement of faith; "I will fear no evil."

Stephen Marshall Thoughts:

In this Psalm a very important key is given to us for fearless living. Immediately following the "I will fear no evil" statement we understand how this is even possible. "You are with me." The reality that God Almighty, the Creator of the universe is with us, beside us, our Helper! Yes, it's true! Psalm 121:2 says "My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." That is beautiful, amazing, and awe inspiring. Don't miss "Your rod and Your staff they comfort me." These tools are symbolic for God's Word and Spirit. His Word directs, protects, and authorizes life. His Spirit is the transfer agent of power, love, and a sound mind.

Life Application:

Take a lesson from my niece Tawny and set yourself up for a peaceful sleep, a worry free mind, a love filled heart, and gracious living. Perfect love casts out all fear, so let love do the heavy lifting. If you have any fear, worry, or anxiety please do not feel condemned or like you're failing. Make room by making time for an increase in God's Word in your life. Memorize Psalm 23. It's only six verses! If you're ready for even more, memorize Psalm 91. If quoting God's Word from memory will lower your blood pressure, help you sleep, ease your mind, and pull the fire out of your anger - do it! Don't just talk about God's love, meditate on the Word of His love and like I said, let love do the heavy lifting.

Now Pray The Word:

Get someone (or a few people) to lead out in prayer based on the Truth talked about. Praying something like this based on 1 John 4, Psalm 23, and 2 Timothy 1:7:

"Father God we come before you with thanksgiving in our hearts. We are thankful that You love us with an unfailing love. Your love targets any worry, fear, and anxiety in our hearts and evicts it so we can live stress-free. We pray the 23rd Psalm and declare that You are our Shepherd. You lead us, guide us, and restore us. We will NOT be afraid because You are with us. You have NOT given us the spirit of fear or torment, but of power, love, and a sound, peaceful mind. We renounce fear in all forms right here at the foot of the cross, and in its place we receive Your love. All in the Name of Christ Jesus ... Amen." (Please feel free to pray for specific needs).