

# Fear

Fairview Missionary Church | Angola, IN

Scripture: Assorted

Speakers: Mark Compton, Joel Greenwood

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How are you? What a privilege it is to be able to stand here and talk about a few things this morning. One is going to be fear. But I was thinking, as we were worshipping, there are places around the globe that get persecuted just for thinking or having ideas or talking about Jesus. You know what I'm talking about? There are places where you could get hurt for doing this. END 00:27 END

And so I was just kind of sitting there going, this is awesome. We get to sing these praises together in this place. And none of us, at least I don't think any of you were going. I wonder if someone's going to come in here and do something bad. And so I just wanted to, with you, kind of saying, rejoice. We got to sit here and worship together well and sing some good songs about how awesome God is. What a privilege, right? END 00:57 END

Well, my name is Mark Compton. I've been working for fairview for 13 years. Give or take a little. And I started as fair views janitor as norm would say it. I'd like to see how many people remember norm fuller. In here. Okay. That's probably a little better than half. And pastor norm would show up on a Monday morning and walk around at maybe 6 o'clock in the morning and find about 60 things for me to do. END 01:25 END

And I'll tell you, on Monday morning, when I would show up, I was having like a nervous meltdown every Monday. What could he have on the list? And so I wanted to say, so some people are scared of the dark, right? Well, pastor norm probably had me in every crevice in the building. At least once over those years. And so my little joke in here was, I think I've crawled out of every hole in fairview. END 01:52 END

I wrote ha ha on there. Anyway, started as the janitor. Then I got to do youth ministry with some of you out there. I saw some familiar faces this morning. And now I get to do worship ministry, which all of them have been absolutely a delight. It's fun. It's a fun job to have. And then I wanted to add secondly, it's been an awesome church to bring my kids up at. END 02:22 END

It's been amazing for my kids to hear theology and deep things about God and the children's ministry. I have a boy in the youth ministry now, and they're all going to come up through. And then when they're done with that, maybe they'll come sit in here with us. But what an awesome place for my kids to grow up. We've been working through this series called king Jesus, and he really is a good king. END 02:48 END

We started processing through this song we sang this morning. This is our God. And it was with Jake two weeks ago, he said, we are going to spend time talking about sin and shame and sorrow over it. We got to have sorrow over our sin. And then Josh, eloquently talked us through some giants, including that shirt that had André the Giant's hand. Did you guys see that? END 03:17 END

It was like ten times the size of my hand. And this week I get the great pleasure of talking about the next line in the song that said, remember that fear that took our breath away. Do you remember singing that one? You ever had a fear that took your breath away? Anybody? Would you be willing to yell out a couple of fears that you've had over the years? END 03:44 END

What was it? New job? I heard one over here. Singing in church? That's a good one. Was there another one? My wife. Okay. That's not real fear, Steve. Anybody else, like a very, a fear you want to say. END 04:15 END

There was a little girl up here. I thought she was going to say spiders. She said she said stink bugs. I was like, spider, no. Any other bugs out there? Okay, anyway, we all have some fears, don't we? This was a statement that came across this week. People are afraid of things they don't understand. They did a little thinking about this and I came up with our fears are based on prediction, sorry, perception and prediction. END 04:47 END

I perceive that snake could bite me. Prediction, if I get too close, it will. Therefore, I'm scared. Does that make sense? Most of our fears are based on that. And so I was thinking the best possible thing for us is to realize that truth kind of kills that notion. The truth of the situation is, I've never been bit by a snake. That snake's probably going to scurry away. END 05:14 END

The next part I wanted to say was, normally, our understanding of God kind of kills our fears in our life. If God is awesome, he created the world, he's big, he's strong, he's powerful. He can do as he pleases. Then our fears are smaller than him. Kind of makes sense. So our understanding of who God is really helps in conquering fears. END 05:43 END

Let's check out a few fears that I found this week, and I'll tell a couple of funny stories about him. Here's a snake. So we have four boys and we're going to climb out in someday, but there are snakes out there. And my wife is very, very or has been very scared of snakes, hi, honey. She's probably watching. And we couldn't even barely go for a walk at poke and when we first started these little journeys. END 06:12 END

And I'm very proud of her as we've been doing this. She has actually overcome this. She used to walk right behind me, worried a snake was going to jump out if a chipmunk you know the leaves. Now we're like walking, she doesn't even care. It's like happy as it goes. We even climbed the highest point in the Smoky Mountains this year. And she wasn't scared at any time going up that hill. Clowns, this is probably scared right now. So I put this picture up there. END 06:43 END

Clowns, this is her worst fear. I'm not just going to focus on her either. Getting sick. This is most people's fear. Is cancer? Even saying the word people are like, oh, why do you got to say that? You know? This is a fearful word. I think so. How about public speaking? Anybody want to come up here? I'll trade. This one's actually on the list really close to death. Well, most people are pretty scared to death. END 07:14 END

And then let's see what else I got. This is one for today's generation. Not fitting in. Or being different than everybody else. That's a pretty anxiety driven fear today in our culture. I was staring at this pie chart going, how could there possibly be 3% of people who don't have a fear of anything? Did you ever think about that? Are there people out there who aren't scared of anything? There's probably wrong. END 07:45 END

I thought I'd present to you a couple of my fears. When I was a little boy, I watched National Geographic and I saw a picture of volcano and thought I was going to die. I couldn't sleep that night, so I went out and like, mom, I'm going to die from a volcano. She goes, the closest one is like 2000 miles away. Leprosy? Read that in the Bible as a little boy in iguana. END 08:15 END

I was going to die from leprosy. How about providing for your family? This is current one for me today. Fear to me now is just an opportunity to grow in my relationship with Jesus. That's what it is for me. If I feel a fear, you know where it comes from, it starts coming up and it gets into your head, start swirling around. We all know that feeling. END 08:42 END

I really do attempt to try to get to my knees and start praying, say, lord, come on in. I'm going to need help with that one. And my relationship with him grows because each time he walks through those with me, and each time our relationship with him gets stronger because I have a new experience of him helping me with

the fear. That's what my last one is. Conquering a fear. So I have a friend who shared with me a story. It was not that long ago. And I wanted to kind of read it so I didn't get it wrong. END 09:13 END

Is that fair? So a friend of mine recently shared with me that in her journey, she said, before she had a relationship with Jesus, that her fears could be overwhelming, and they would stop her from doing things, possibly even good things in her life. In one of these things in the midst of fear, prevented her from singing a solo in performances that she would be in, including church. END 09:40 END

She eventually formed a relationship with Jesus, and she grew and matured and decided after being asked to take a solo that she would sing for church and sing the solo. This was a great step in conquering fears because they had been restricting her for years, but she knew that with God's help, she could move forward and tackling these challenges. And I kind of have a quote here. END 10:08 END

Each time I listened and obeyed him and not my fear, I would grow in my life and my relationship with Jesus and it became easier and easier each time. And I thought that's kind of the way it works. Each time you have a fear, you go to Christ, he helps you with that fear, then you try it. Does that mean you don't have any fear when you try it? No, you're still uncomfortable, but you try it. He helps you through it, and then you have that experience. END 10:38 END

So here's the next two lyrics in that song. Faith's so weak that we could barely pray, but he heard every word every whisper, would you pray with me? Dear God, we have all sorts of evidence in our life to walk with you through everything that comes. Especially fears, fears that restrict us from doing what you've asked us to do. END 11:05 END

Maybe it's to preach the gospel to a friend or a neighbor. Maybe it's to have courage to trust you in the hardest things, but I just pray today as Joel speaks, lord, that you would help us to have the courage to face our fears. In Jesus name, amen. Thanks, master, Mark. As you said, we all have fears. Two kinds of fears. We have irrational fears and we have legitimate fears. Most of the fears we think about our irrational. END 11:36 END

Those fears of heights are of snakes or of bugs or sharks or whatever arts. Else, but then there's, of course, you know, logistic like real fears, fears of death and fears of pain and fears of being sick and things like that as I was thinking of some irrational fears when I was growing up. I remember as a child that I was afraid to wear pajamas that didn't have footies in them because I thought there were crabs in the bed that were going to pinch my toes when I went to sleep. So I had to wear footie pajamas. END 12:05 END

Now that's a completely irrational fear. Obviously for multiple reasons. One because there's probably not crabs in my bed. And two, even if I had footies on, they can still pinch your toes, right? But this was an illegitimate fear that I had. It must have been from watching a cartoon or something like that where I got this idea, but I remember wearing footie pajamas for way longer than I should have. All right? And just so you know, I didn't wear them last night, okay? I'm done with footy pajamas, but how do we actually work through some of these fears that we have physically, emotionally, spiritually? END 12:38 END

How do we get through these illogical as well as the realistic fears that we suffer? Now, of course, fears change as we grow and as we mature. I'm no longer afraid of crabs in the bed. They're going to pinch my toes. But we all have fears. Thinking about toddlers, they're often afraid of monsters that are under their bed. Children, as they get older, are afraid to be away from their parents. They go through the season of life, often around preschool or kindergarten time, or they're afraid to be away from their parents. END 13:09 END

Teenagers as pastor Mark said are afraid of not fitting in adults as they get older, many adults are afraid of losing their four O one K or not having enough to be able to provide for their family. Now, today, my fears aren't about crabs pinching my toes, but I do have fear that my children are going to choose to not walk with

the lord. That's a fear that I have. That's a realistic fear. I certainly have the fear of being a failure as a pastor or a father or a husband. END 13:40 END

And as I think about those fears that we have in life, some of those realistic fears, I have to believe that God doesn't want us to live life in those fears. He doesn't want those to control us, to manipulate us, to hinder us from doing what he has planned for our lives. And in fact, I know he doesn't want us to live in those fears because Jesus said in John chapter 14:27, peace, I leave with you. END 14:09 END

My peace, I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. He doesn't want us to live in this life of fear. He wants us to have a peace, a peace that truly surpasses understanding. At the same time, our lord and savior, Jesus, knows that we're going to struggle with fear. He knows we're going to struggle with anxiety. He knows we're going to struggle with doubt and all of those things that can come into our lives. END 14:41 END

And he allows us to work through those things. As I've gotten older, I've come to the conclusion that every moment of fear in my life, those realistic moments of fear proved to be an opportunity where I can either grow closer in my walk with Jesus or further away from him. As I was thinking about moments of fear in my life, that song talks about fear that takes your breath away, all of us have had those moments where something happens that literally it's hard simply to take your next breath. END 15:13 END

Your heart feels like it skips a beat. And so here are some things that came to my mind. Maybe you were walking through the store in town and you looked down the aisle and you saw somebody that in your past, something drastic or traumatic had happened. Maybe they were abusive to you. And so you saw them and just seeing their face took your breath away. And a less serious note, maybe you were at Cedar point and you were standing in line for the next roller coaster. END 15:42 END

And you're getting closer and closer and the roller coaster goes flying by you and your heart just skips a beat. And you kind of can't take that next breath. Maybe it was when you were on a trip to the Grand Canyon and you're afraid of heights and you got to that very edge where you looked down in this huge open canyon and it just took your breath away and you had to take a few steps away from the edge. Maybe it's when you were golfing and I've had this happen with some of my friends and you're afraid of snakes and you hit your ball into the weeds and against better judgment you go into the weeds to look for your ball. END 16:16 END

And you find a snake there and it takes your breath away. Maybe it's when you're in a car and somebody pulls out in front of you and you just narrowly miss them and you know what happens to your heart just this last Tuesday I took my son to Chicago that's where he wanted to go for his 13th birthday and I'm not a city guy and so we're driving into Chicago and one of the very first things that happens once we get into the city is a car just barely misses hitting us and my heart skips a beat and it took about an hour before I got calmed down from that. END 16:46 END

You know that feeling that just happens strange things happen even in our bodies when we experience moments like that. The Bible is clear that in these moments of fear, not just those ones that are small or illegitimate, fears, irrational fears, but in some of those more serious moments, the Bible is clear that God is with us. END 17:11 END

In those seasons of fear and anxiety and doubt, those serious moments of fear that God promises that he will walk with us Deuteronomy chapter 31:6 says be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them for the lord your God goes with you and he will never leave you nor forsake you. He promises us that he will be with us, even in those seasons of fear and doubt. END 17:40 END

One of the best ways for me to picture this and what it means to have my Heavenly Father with me in my seasons of anxiety or fear or doubt is the idea of a child who is clinging to their parent in a moment of being terrified, right? We all have seen this image before where a child, you're meeting somebody and the child is

scared. And so they're kind of hugging their parents leg and they're hiding behind them. And they just kind of peek out because they trust their parent is going to protect them and be there in the midst of that time. END 18:11 END

And so the child finds comfort in knowing that somebody loves them and cares for them. And it's not going to let something bad happen to them. And so they have somebody who's stronger and wiser, who loves them and is going to walk through that moment with them. So I couldn't help but ask the question, when you are in your moments or seasons of fear, what or who are you holding on to? Who do you go to in your seasons of anxiety and doubt? END 18:40 END

Now, we all have favorites depending on the situation. So depending on what we're going through and what our fear is, for some of us, we decide to hold on to our bank account. If that bank account has enough money in it, then we feel secure and we feel taken care of. And we feel like, okay, everything's gonna be okay in my life. For some of us, because of the craziness that's going on in the world, we hold on to a political party. And so we believe that that particular political party is going to save our nation in all of the corruption that exists. END 19:12 END

For some of us, we have a person that we trust. And so we go to that person, whether it's a spouse or a mentor, or somebody else. And so that's the person that we lean on. For others of us, we decide that we're just going to lean on our own hard work and determination that I'm going to be able to pull up my bootstraps and get whatever done needs to happen. And so that's what we depend on. For others, because of the craziness that exists in our world and the wars that are taking place, we put our trust in the military, thinking, well, we have the best military in the world. END 19:43 END

And so we're going to be okay. Now, these things and people are not wrong in and of themselves, but not one of them can make the promise that God makes to us. Not one of these things is going to be that foundation that is never going to leave us or forsake us. That's why the psalmist says in psalm 46 versus one through three, he says, God is our refuge and strength. And ever present help in trouble. END 20:11 END

Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way, and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though it's waters roar and foam, and the mountains quake with their surging, the psalmist is saying, the lord is going to be my refuge. He is going to be my foundation. It doesn't matter what is going on in my family, with my relationships, financially, with the world politically, the lord is going to be my foundation. END 20:39 END

And I can tell you personally that the more I watch cable news, the more I need to read verses like this. That God is in control. The more that fear creeps into my heart and into my life, the more I need to stand upon his promises. And like so many things in life, when I have these moments of fear or doubt, they either draw me closer to God or further away from him. END 21:06 END

And so today I thought it would be good for us to share some things that we can do in our moments of fear because some of these fears are ones that you are experiencing in these very moments. Maybe it's the fear of a diagnosis that a doctor has given you. Maybe it's the fear of going home and what your spouse is going to say to you when you arrive there, that maybe they're going to say they're done. Maybe it's a child who has walked away from the lord. And your heart just breaks. What do you do in those seasons? END 21:37 END

I want to give you just 5 practical things that you can do and you're not going to be shocked by them. They're not life altering or things that you would have never thought of before, but there are things that work. And so we'll start with number one, read scripture, real shocking, right? You didn't expect to come to church and hear the pastor tell you to read the Bible. But that's what I'm telling you. In your moments in seasons of fear, find peace in God's words. END 22:04 END

There are hundreds of verses about fear, and I believe that is so because God knew we were going to struggle with it so much. And so over and over again, these scriptures tell us do not fear. Put your trust in him. He is our foundation. David says in psalm 34 versus four and 5, I sought the lord and he answered me. He delivered me from all my fears. Those who looked to him are radiant, their faces are never covered with shame. END 22:33 END

David and the psalms over and over again calls God his rock, his foundation, his fortress, his tower that he runs into. They're like the wings of an eagle that wrap around him to protect him. He understood that his Heavenly Father was the one that would walk with him. Peter says, in first Peter, chapter three 14, but even if you should suffer for what is right, Peter says, you are blessed. Do not fear their threats. Do not be frightened. END 23:03 END

Do not be frightened no matter what people say or what they do. Do not be frightened the apostle Paul in Romans chapter 8 says, for I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future nor any powers, neither height nor depth nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus, our lord. It doesn't matter what happens amongst you around you. END 23:34 END

The apostle Paul is saying nothing can separate you from the love of God. Read his word, allow it to give you strength in those seasons. Number two, pray, again shocking, right? Read God's word and pray. When you are afraid, don't be shy. Don't be ashamed to bring your fear before God. Don't feel like you have to put on a mask and hide it because he already knows what you're afraid of. END 24:05 END

He already knows your doubts. He already knows your concerns. He already knows what you're going through. Bring it to him. Even in the moments when you don't know what to say or you don't know what to do, I've told you before, but just say the name Jesus. Just allow that name to come out of your mouth. Just cry out for help. Paul says in second Timothy chapter one verse 7 for the spirit that God gave us does not make us timid, but it gives us power, love, and self discipline. END 24:35 END

You and I have been given a sound mind by the spirit of God, and we have a spirit of power that has been put within us. Spend time in prayer, the apostle Paul said to the philippian church, rejoice in the lord always, I will say it again, rejoice. Let your gentleness be evident to all for the lord is near. END 24:58 END

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation by prayer and petition with Thanksgiving, present your request to God, and if you do that, Paul says, the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ, Jesus. END 25:19 END

Even when you have those legitimate fears, we can present those to God and the apostle Paul says that when we do that, that the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard our hearts. Even in the midst of our season of anxiety and doubt and fear, we can have a piece that comes from God. The third thing that I recommend reading scripture, prayer, the third thing is listening to worship music. END 25:51 END

There's a reason that when we gather together on a Sunday morning, we sing songs of praise. The primary reason is to simply offer thanks and praise to the God who loves us and deserves our praise. The ulterior reason why we sing worship and praise music on a Sunday morning is because there is just something about hearing these words of praise being lifted up to God that help us in our seasons of anxiety and fear and doubt. END 26:19 END

There's something about listening to worship music that just draws us into his presence. Number four, practical way to deal with fear, focus on eternity. I have found in my own life that many of my fears fade when I have the correct perspective. Most of my fears have to do with the here and now, not the then and there. Most of my fears have to do with what I'm wondering what's going to happen between now and then because I can't know what's going to happen. END 26:51 END

And so my fear is because of the unknown. It's the uncertainty. And I have found in my own life that if I will allow my perspective to be focused on eternity, recognizing that this is not my home. I'm just passing through this place that Jesus has already conquered everything that's going to happen here. I have found that when I put my perspective on eternity, it helps me with my fears. The final thing, just a practical thing for you to do. END 27:21 END

When you're in a season or moment of fear is just to breathe. Just breathe. Take the next breath. Sometimes that's all you can do, and that's okay. Just take that next breath. One at a time. If you need to visualize this happening, imagine that you're breathing in his spirit and you're letting the fears go with your exhale. Just breathe in God's goodness and let go of the fear. Stand on his promises. END 27:49 END

I want to leave you with a challenge because our goal in going through this series and talking about today with our fears is not just that you would acknowledge or be able to recognize or speak your fears. Our goal is that you would be able to overcome your fears. You never really get over some fears. But you can't overcome them through the blood of Jesus. And so one of the challenges that I have for you is not just to be able to speak them to yourself, to recognize and to admit some of the fears and struggles and doubts you have. END 28:23 END

But my recommendation, my challenge to you this morning is that you would be able to speak those fears, share those fears with someone else. We strongly encourage everybody to be in a life group, and this is one of the reasons why we encourage you to be in a life group or a small group at the church so that you have others that you don't have to be ashamed in front of you. You can just be honest and not have to put on a mask and say, you know what? I'm struggling with this right now. END 28:51 END

Whatever it is, relationships, finances, health, whatever it is. I'm struggling with these things. And I'm afraid of what it's going to mean in the future. And they can read the word with you and they can pray with you, and they can spend time with you. Don't let your fear rule your life. Because Jesus has already conquered it. Resist the temptation to live in fear because of the lies and the deception of the enemy. END 29:18 END

You all know that one of my favorite verses in scripture is John chapter ten. Where we read the thief comes only to steal kill and destroy. That's the enemy of our soul. That's his plan. He wants to bring fear and doubt and anxiety into our life. He wants to kill us. But Jesus says, I have come that you may have life and have it to the full. He doesn't want you just to survive just to make it through. He wants you to live a full and abundant life. END 29:48 END

A full and healthy life. That is his desire for you. And so my prayer is that in reading his word and being reassured and spending time in prayer, listening to worship music. Making sure that your perspective is on eternity, learning just to breathe when it feels like you can't take your next breath. Sharing your fears with others that you would be able to overcome those fears through the blood of Jesus. END 30:17 END

One of the greatest fears that we have as followers of Jesus sometimes is sharing our faith with others. It's one of the things that if a pastor preaches a message on, you're like, yeah, I'm not really going to listen to this one. You begin to get the butterflies right away because the idea of sharing your faith with somebody is scary because you don't want them to think you're some kind of wacko or crazy or whatever else. So one of the challenges that we've had during this entire series is that you would just invite somebody to a church service and next week we're going to gather together and we are going to celebrate the resurrection of our lord and savior Jesus Christ. END 30:53 END

And so we're going to present the good news of Jesus about his death and resurrection and the truth that if you and I would repent of our sins that if we would proclaim with our mouth, Jesus is lord and believe in our heart that God raised him from the dead that we can know we will be saved. And so we are going to present that good news next week and so I encourage you. Invite somebody. Somebody you love somebody you care

about. Invite them over to lunch afterwards. Take them out to eat. Many of you have seen the hands and the foyer with all of the sticky notes of names on them. END 31:23 END

Those are names of people that we are praying for. We're going to invite them to church. We're going to share the good news with them. I encourage you if you haven't put a name up there that you would after service just write a name and just stick it somewhere on there to know that others are also praying for them. That they would come to know the goodness of Jesus. Here's one of the things that helps me. When I invite somebody to church or I share about my story, is that I don't need to be afraid when I'm standing before somebody, somehow feeling that I am better than or greater than them because I'm simply standing before them as a sinner that's been saved by grace. END 31:57 END

I love the words of the blind man standing before the Pharisees and the sad you see is that they're questioning him about Jesus. They're trying to figure out what's going on and what's happened. And he just simply comes to the conclusion. Listen, guys, all I know is I was blind and now I can see. And the only thing in between that happening was a man named Jesus. And so you and I have the same story. END 32:27 END

All I know is I was lost. And now I'm found. And the only thing that happened in between there was a man named Jesus. Let me pray. Heavenly Father, I know that there are people in this room today as well as people that are listening on the radio and watching online that are just in a real season of fear right now. END 32:54 END

And we all would be afraid if we were experiencing what they are experiencing. Maybe they just had a doctor's appointment. The doctor told them some news. That brought fear. Maybe some of them had a conversation with a family member, just this last week. That makes the future uncertain. And so there's fear. END 33:20 END

Maybe there's things in our own life in our past that we have not dealt with that we have struggled with, and they just bring fear. Lord, it is my prayer, and I know it is your desire. That we would be able to overcome these fears. By the power of your spirit. And so I pray for that peace that surpasses understanding. END 33:49 END

I pray for boldness and courage to walk into those fears. Knowing that you are our refuge. And so it's in Jesus name we pray. END 34:00 END