

# How to Handle Fear-Pt 4

HOW TO HANDLE FEAR-Pt 3

HOW TO HANDLE FEAR-Pt 1

## HOW TO HANDLE FEAR PART 4

- [See Related Resources](#)

### Other Thoughts, Quotes, etc on... - HOW TO HANDLE FEAR -

- The fear of God is the greatest antidote against the fear of man. - Anon.
- Jealousy is the emotional response to the fear of losing something or someone we love.
- Fear is the sand in the machinery of life. -- E. Stanley Jones
- The Devil's "... modus operandi is to manipulate you with the mysterious, to taunt you with the unknown. Fear of death, fear of failure, fear of God, fear of tomorrow—his arsenal is vast. His goal? To create cowardly, joyless souls. He doesn't want you to make the journey to the mountain. He figures if he can rattle you enough, you will take your eyes off the peaks and settle for a dull existence in the flatlands." --Max L. Lucado
- God incarnate is the end of fear; and the heart that realizes that he is in the midst ... will be quiet in the midst of alarm. -- F. B. Meyer
- We fear men so much because we fear God so little. -William Gurnall
- Only he who can say, "The Lord is the strength of my life," can say, "Of whom shall I be afraid?" -- Alexander Maclaren
- Fear enfeebles. - Thomas Watson
- We are so afraid of being offensive that we are not effective. -Vance Havner
- Fear is generated by unbelief, and unbelief strengthened by fear. Nothing can cure us of fear till God cures us of unbelief. - Francis Burkitt
- Righteousness flows from only one principle—the fear of God. - John Calvin
- Just as obedience to the Lord is an indication of our love for him, so is it also a proof of our fear of God. - Jerry Bridges
- The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God, you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God, you fear everything else. -- Oswald Chambers
- I know not the way He leads me, but well do I know my Guide. What have I to fear? - Martin Luther
- Whatever you fear (or supremely respect) the most you will serve. -- Rebecca Manley Pippert
- I am sure that our Lord is looking for heavenly-minded Christians. His Word encourages us to trust Him with such a singleness of purpose that He is able to deliver us from the fear of death and the uncertainties of tomorrow. --A W Tozer
- What a man is, is more important than what he does. What he does is only a symptom showing what he is. That which a man does out of desire is what the man really is. That which a man does out of fear will reveal what he is. Whatever a man does out of hate will show you what he is within. What does he do—because of jealousy or appetite or weakness? That will show you what he is. -- A W Tozer
- Not death but sin should be our great fear. --A W Tozer
- Fear is the beginning of defeat. -Anon.
- No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear. - Edmund Burke
- Worry and fear are sort of Siamese twins. "Anxiety is a thin stream of fear, trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained." -- Arthur Somers Roche

### Related Resources:

- [Psalm 56:3 Faith Hand in Hand with Fear - Sermon by C H Spurgeon](#)
- [Isaiah 41:10 Away with Fear - Sermon by C H Spurgeon](#)
- [Isaiah 41:14 Fear Not - Sermon by C H Spurgeon](#)
- [Isaiah 12:2, Ps 56:8 41:14 Fearing and Trusting - Trusting and Not Fearing - Sermon by C H Spurgeon](#)
- [Matthew 14:31 Mr. Fearing Comforted - Sermon by C H Spurgeon](#)

IT SEEMS AS if **doubt** were doomed to be the perpetual companion of **faith**. As dust attends the chariot wheels so do doubts naturally becloud faith. Some men of little faith are perpetually enshrouded with fears; their faith seems only strong enough to enable them to doubt. If they had no faith at all, then they would not doubt, but having that little, and but so little, they are perpetually involved in distressing

surmises, suspicions, and fears. Others, who have attained to great strength and stability of faith, are nevertheless, at times, subjects of doubt. He who has a colossal faith will sometimes find that the clouds of fear float over the brow of his confidence. It is not possible, I suppose, so long as man is in this world, that he should be perfect in anything; and surely it seems to be quite impossible that he should be perfect in faith. Sometimes, indeed, the Lord purposely leaves His children, withdraws the divine inflowings of His grace, and permits them to begin to sink, in order that they may understand that faith is not their own work, but is at first the gift of God, and must always be maintained and kept alive in the heart by the fresh influence of the Holy Spirit. I take it that Peter was a man of great faith. When others doubted, Peter believed. He boldly avowed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, for which faith he received the Master's commendation, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." He was of faith so strong, that at Christ's command he could tread the billow and find it like glass beneath his feet, yet even he was permitted in this thing to fall. Faith forsook him, he looked at the winds and the waves, and began to sink, and the Lord said to him, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" As much as to say, "O Peter, thy great faith is my gift, and the greatness of it is my work. Think not that thou art the author of thine own faith; I will leave thee, and this great faith of thine shall speedily disappear, and like another who hath no faith, thou shalt believe the winds, and regard the waves, but shalt distrust thy Master's power, and therefore shalt thou sink." (Read full message [Mr. Fearing Comforted](#))

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Many people have faced frightening experiences, and sometimes nations have passed through times of terror. One such nightmare of human history was the frequent bombing of London and other English cities by Germany during World War H. Many Christians testified that those nighttime attacks were times of great peace because the Lord was with them. In this vein,

During WWII in the midst of frightening nighttime air raids one London church posted the following sign

**If your knees knock, kneel on them.**

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## **FEAR FOLLOWS GREAT EXPERIENCE** by Theodore Epp

### **Genesis 33:1-11**

Jacob had just experienced a wonderful night with God that resulted in his becoming the new man, Israel. But when he saw the danger--Esau and his 400 men--fear gripped his heart.

Great experiences do not guarantee constant faithfulness. Jacob's experience at Peniel was a stepping-stone to greater living, but it did not guarantee faithfulness on his part.

He had made significant progress during his 20 years with Laban, but he was not yet all that God intended him to be.

Even Paul wrote: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13,14).

Experiences that result from crises are like open doors that make it possible for us to enter a new aspect of our Christian walk. Thus, Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23).

We are to daily take our position in Christ and follow Him. Galatians 5:16 assures us that when we walk in the Spirit, we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

When we commit ourselves to following Him, the Holy Spirit controls our lives, and God lives His life through us.

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12).

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## **GUILT PRODUCES FEAR** by Theodore Epp

### **Genesis 43:1-18**

Jacob reluctantly let his sons take Benjamin to Egypt, and he gave them instructions as to what they should take along so they might be well received.

The sons did as Jacob instructed. They "took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph" (Gen. 43:15).

When Joseph saw his brothers--and Benjamin with them--he commanded the ruler of his house, "Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon" (v. 16).

Then conscience did its work again. The brothers had such guilt concerning Joseph that anything caused them to greatly fear--especially in the strange land of Egypt.

The ruler of Joseph's house "did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house. And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses" (vv. 17,18).

The brothers had been so brave before when they sold Joseph into slavery, but now even hospitality brought fear to them. When a person is guilty of sin, almost everything brings fear to him.

"And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men" (Acts 24:16).

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### **Life's Most Important Fear By Theodore Epp**

Romans 3:9-18

Romans 3:18 is not speaking of a reverential fear of God that a person has who recognizes Him as the great Potentate of all ages and as the Almighty God we serve. Rather, this verse refers to those who have no concern for the existence, character or attributes of God. They do not think that God merits any thought at all. They completely fail to recognize their accountability to Him.

People's basic problem--the root cause of all their trouble--is that they do not know God, and they do not fear meeting God when they die. People speak lightly of death because they do not want to face its realities. People have taken it for granted that God, if He even exists, will overlook what they do and will take care of them, regardless of how they live.

People's refusal to make God the God of their lives is the fountain from which all these evils flow. Solomon said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. 9:10). When people refuse to fear God, or recognize Him for who He is, they lack wisdom, and they experience increasing mental confusion. One needs only to consider the fields of modern music and modern art to see this. And in addition to the absence of wisdom and an increasing mental confusion, there is also moral and spiritual darkness.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding" (Prov. 9:10).

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### **"FAITH THAT CANCELS FEAR" - Chuck Smith**

Intro: There are two fears that seem to constantly assail our souls. Fear of the future, fear of the present. Moses in these final talks has been encouraging them, "Fear not, be of good courage, be not dismayed."

#### **I. THE NATURE OF OUR FEARS.**

##### **A. Fear of the future.**

1. Why do we fear future?
  - a. Always a certain fear of unknown.
  - b. We fear because we look to the wrong place, to the uncertainty.
2. We fear for future of this world, church, Christ, ourselves.
  - a. What is this world coming to?
  - b. The Church seems so apostate.
  - c. People seem to reject Jesus more & more.
  - d. What's going to happen to me?

##### **B. Fear of the present.**

1. How am I to escape my present dilemma?
2. It seems at times the bottom has fallen out from under us.
3. I fear those forces around me that seem to threaten the things I love.

4. Daily we are faced with situations that would tempt us to fear.

## II. THE ANSWER TO OUR FEARS.

A. As to the fear of the future "the eternal God is our refuge" or dwelling place.

1. Word eternal interesting, root is (sun rising), hence the beginning.

2. How would God help me as I fear what tomorrow might hold?

a. He would have me look at the past, He was there at the beginning.

1. World (He brought order out of Chaos).

2. Church (He founded it on Rock & gates of hell cannot prevail against it);

3. Christ (To an unbelieving world filled with paganism He manifested His power to heal & to save...)

4. Myself (It was God who drew me to Himself to begin with.) He did not draw me so He could later cast me away.

"looking unto Jesus..."

The God of the beginnings is my refuge.

B. As to fear of present "underneath are the everlasting arms."

1. How low can you get?

a. What is the point of absolute bottom?

2. When you get down to the very lowest possible position "underneath."

3. Arms always a symbol of strength.

a. Next time fear grips your heart and you begin to wonder if God can hold you up in this situation-look up: See the heavens. "When I see the heavens the work of thy fingers.

b. The heavens are work of His fingers, but underneath of you is everlasting Arms.

c. Word everlasting in Heb. much stronger than eternal vanishing point.

## III. WHY DO WE BECOME GRIPPED WITH FEAR?

A. I fear what I don't know & fear what I do know.

B. Fear is the result of an absence of faith.

C. We have our eyes on wrong things, "They endured as seeing the invisible." Start looking to God!

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## FEAR OF MAN BRINGS A SNARE:

[Pr 29:25](#) The fear of man brings a snare, BUT he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted. (KJV = but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.)

Gal 1:10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

We fear man's criticism, rejection, being left alone.

What is the "snare" or the result of being ensnared by the "fear of man"? We become men pleasers and we try to do whatever it takes to make men like me. We cannot be a bondservant of God and a slave of man. If you want to walk without the fear of man, then you must walk as a "God-pleaser". You must live with the abandon that whatever pleases your Father, you are willing to do NO MATTER WHAT MAN THINKS OF ME! And you can be secure in this truth (Pr 29:25b) for God will never forsake you (Heb 13:5) but man will.

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## Hidden Fears

1 Samuel 18:28-19:12

In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. --Psalm 56:11

John Matuszak was a 6'8", 280-pound football player for the Oakland Raiders. His public image was that of a havoc-wreaking, heavy-drinking, hard-hitting player who was as much of a threat off the field as on. But friends knew "Tooz," as they called him, as a 280-pound puppy dog just begging to be loved.

According to Los Angeles Times writer Mark Heisler, John Matuszak was "beset by fears he couldn't acknowledge." As a young boy, he was ridiculed for his gawky, beanpole appearance. And he had two brothers who died of cystic fibrosis. The tough-guy image that Tooz had created was a fortress for him to hide in. But he got trapped there. After years of alcohol and drug abuse, John died of a massive heart attack at age 38.

The story of King Saul bears some striking similarities. He too was a monster of a man, a fighter. He was also driven by fears (1Sa 18:29). Because he tried to cope with them in his own strength instead of turning to the Lord for help, his life came to an untimely end (1Sa 31:4).

Father, no matter how big we may appear on the outside, sometimes we feel very small on the inside. Forgive us for putting up a false front and pretending we're strong enough to handle life on our own. Help us to trust You more. — Mart De Haan ([Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Our weakness and fears can often be hid  
Beneath an exterior tough and strong;  
But it's best to admit that we're scared and weak,  
And trust in the Lord to whom we belong. —Fitzhugh

### Fear fades as faith grows.

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#### Anxiety by Arthur W. Pink

"Be anxious for nothing" (Phil. 4:6).

Worrying is as definitely forbidden as theft. This needs to be carefully pondered and definitely realized by us, so that we do not excuse it as an innocent "infirmity." The more we are convicted of the sinfulness of anxiety, the sooner are we likely to perceive that it is most dishonoring to God, and "strive against" it (Heb. 12:4). But how are we to "strive against" it? First, by begging the Holy Spirit to grant us a deeper conviction of its enormity. Second, by making it a subject of special and earnest prayer, that we may be delivered from this evil. Third, by watching its beginning, and as soon as we are conscious of harassment of mind, as soon as we detect the unbelieving thought, lift up our heart to God and ask Him for deliverance from it.

**The best antidote for anxiety is frequent meditation upon God's goodness, power and sufficiency. When the saint can confidently realize "The Lord is My Shepherd," he must draw the conclusion, "I shall not want!"** Immediately following our exhortation is, "but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God." (Phil. 4:6). Nothing is too big and nothing is too little to spread before and cast upon the Lord. The "with thanksgiving" is most important, yet it is the point at which we most fail. It means that before we receive God's answer, we thank Him for the same: it is the confidence of the child expecting his Father to be gracious.

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought (anxious concern) for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"  
"But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."  
(Matt. 6:25,33)

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#### Fear in the Book of Judges - Gideon's Army

In **Judges** we read...

**Judges 7:3** Now therefore come, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, 'Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him return and depart from Mount Gilead.'" So 22,000 people returned, but 10,000 remained.

Fear can have disastrous effects on an army and especially if over 2/3's of the army is fearful as in this case! So 22,000 people returned.

Put yourself for a moment in Gideon's sandals... imagine his heart sink as he watched his numbers dwindle by 2/3's in keeping with the instruction in [Dt 20:8]. They were keenly aware that up to 135,000 Midianites (Jdg 8:10-note) were camped just 3-4 miles north at the foot of the Hill of Moreh. What was the result? Many had greater **fear** of man than **faith** (trust) in God and so they departed from what appeared to be a humanly impossible situation. How could 32,000 untrained and unqualified Israelites hope to defeat a

heavily armed force of 135,000? One mighty God would be the soon coming answer. God wanted the victory in battle to teach Israel to trust Him and give Him the glory. In the Christian life if our victories make us self-reliant, they ultimately work against us and they dishonor the God we serve. What do you fear because you have failed to trust God?

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Ada Habershon wrote

"When I fear my faith will fail,  
Christ will hold me fast;  
When the tempter would prevail,  
He can hold me fast."

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On June 6, 1944, five thousand ships departed England for the Normandy coast and the greatest invasion of World War II. From this military event comes the story of the skipper who lectured his crew on fear, and said, "Fear is a very healthy thing." A third-class yeoman yelled in reply, "Captain, you're looking at the healthiest sailor in the United States Navy."

During Isaiah's time, King Ahaz and the people of Judah trembled like trees in a wind storm because of the Syrian and Ephraim alliance. Isaiah warned Ahaz and Judah about their misplaced fear; Syria and Ephraim were just two smoldering wood stubs that Assyria would put out in 722 B.C. Judah should fear a holy God, and in so doing, other fears would go away like the frequent east wind.

We tend to associate fear with punishment and danger, but that shows our limited understanding of it. Perfect fear comes from our sense of awe and wonder as we get glimpses of God. John says, "Perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18). Fear, for the Christian, is not so much about punishment as love. God-fearing people are God-loving people.

Fear can be healthy; but God must be the focus. In fearing God, we express not only awe but also trust and love. This frees us from rival and lesser fears and makes us both fearsome and fearless.

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The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe (Proverbs 29:25).

Fear of what others may think about us can play an important role in the way we act. The American Indians recognized this and used scorn and ridicule to promote social order. For instance, when a child of the Fox tribe was taught the do's and don'ts of Indian life, his elders didn't hold over his head an abstract rule of morality. Nor did they threaten him with punishment now or in the hereafter. Instead, they said to him, "The people of the village may say things about you."

Isaiah 51 also recognizes the power of peer pressure--but not as a motivation for right conduct. Whereas the Indians used fear of ridicule to induce good behavior, the Lord warned His people Israel that the "reproach of men" could be their downfall. Their concern with what others said about them could cause them to seek unholy human alliances and to make compromises. Instead, God called them to trust the Lord and seek only His approval.

This is also good advice for us, because "the fear of man" snares many Christians. If we order our conduct only by the approval or disapproval of others, we will be frustrated and left with a painful sense of insecurity.

When we find our fulfillment in doing what pleases God, the crippling terror of what others think will give way to the confidence of a healthy fear—a reverence for God that frees us to live for His approval. —M. R. De Haan II ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**The fear of God can deliver us from the fear of men.**

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### **The Fear of Man or Woman by Elisabeth Elliot**

"The majority of men have thought of women as sublime separately but horrible as a herd," noted the wise G. K. Chesterton.

Alas. Are we so formidable? Robert Bly, in his best-selling IRON JOHN, declares that men are petrified of female anger. Then there's a TIME correspondent named Sam Allis who says

"Women are often daunting obstacles to male peace of mind, and for all their brave talk, men remain utterly flummoxed by the situation."

"The fear of man bringeth a snare," according to God's Word.

Me seemeth the fear of woman bringeth a worse one. These comments have set me thinking (again) about fear in general. If men and women were surer of their God there would be more genuine manliness, womanliness, and godliness in the world, and a whole lot less fear of each other.

Jesus told us not to fear those who can kill only the body, but rather to fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell--in other words, fear God and fear nothing else. Moses, by faith,

"left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible" (Hebrews 11:27NIV).

When Daniel learned of King Darius's decree forbidding prayer to any god or man except the king himself, he proceeded with his regular manner of worship, on his knees, windows open,

"just as he had done before," and was caught in the act (Daniel 6).

He feared God; therefore, he feared neither the king nor the lions. His three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, faced with the choice between two evils, worshipping a golden image or burning to a crisp in a furnace, made an instant decision (Daniel 3). Fear of God made worship of an idol unthinkable. Fear of the fire was, by comparison, thinkable. That's manliness.

Uzziah, who became king of Judah when he was sixteen, was taught by Zechariah to fear God. A child who is not taught to fear wrongdoing when he is small will have great difficulty learning to fear God when he is a man. "Freedom from fear" is what Russell Kirk calls "a silly piece of demagogic sophistry," for we all have "a natural yearning for the challenge of the dreadful."

One of the nicest things any of the listeners to my broadcast, has written to me came from a little girl: "You make me brave." Sometimes I wonder what has happened to words like courage and endurance. What reason is there in our feel-comfortable society ever to be brave? Very little, and, when you think about it, we miss it, don't we? To be really brave is to lay oneself open to charges of hypocrisy, of being "in denial," or out of touch with one's feelings. Moses charged Joshua to be strong and very courageous. Courage is not the absence of fear but the willingness to do the thing we fear. Go straight into the furnace or the lion's den. Were those men out of touch with their feelings or with reality? No. Nor was the psalmist who said,

"When I am afraid, I will trust" (Psalm 56:3NIV).

There's a big difference between feeling and willing.

In George MacDonald's SIR GIBBIE the boy (Gibbie) is up in the mountains in a storm. He hears the sound of the river in flood and realizes it is headed straight for the cottage. He shoots after it.

"He is not terrified. One believing like him in the perfect Love and perfect Will of a Father of men, as the fact of facts, fears nothing. Fear is faithlessness... A perfect faith would lift us absolutely above fear. It is in the cracks, crannies, and guilty faults of our belief, the gaps that are not faith, that the snow of apprehension settles and the ice of unkindness forms."

Do you feel, in spite of all the promises of God, as helpless as a worm today? There's a special word for you too:

"Do not fear; I will help you. Do not be afraid, O worm Jacob, O little Israel, for I myself will help you" (Isaiah 41:14, NIV).(Daniel 3, 6 Fear of Man)

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Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes ... fear to whom fear (Ro 13:7note).

One night I heard a radio preacher say that we should fear only God. But I don't agree. Peter exhorted servants to be subject to their masters "with all fear" (1Pe 2:18-note) , and Paul said that wrongdoers should be afraid of civil authorities (Ro 13:4note) . A hierarchy of fear is an integral part of living on our sin-cursed planet. Our moral responsibility is to put the things we fear in their proper place.

A boy whose friends urged him to experiment with illicit drugs told me he was afraid they would think of him as a coward, but he resisted because he was more frightened of the consequences. A young man who volunteered for dangerous military duty admitted he was scared of being wounded or killed, but he had a greater concern about what would happen if the enemy won the war. Both of these young men did what was right because they recognized the priority of certain fears.

The Bible teaches that our greatest fear should be of displeasing God. A believer who is told that he must either commit evil or face the firing squad should be more concerned about disobeying the Lord than being shot. That's what Jesus meant when He said, "Do

not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28).

Fear is part and parcel of life here on earth. But this strong emotion can serve us well if we let our fear of God be supreme. —H. V. Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**Shame arises from the fear of men,  
conscience from the fear of God.**

—Samuel Johnson

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"Who are you that you should be afraid of a man who will die, and... who will be made like grass?" (Isaiah 51:12).

Phobias are nothing new to most Americans, but "cyberphobia" is. It's one of America's newest phobias. According to a team of business professors at George Mason University, a large number of people have cyberphobia—a serious fear of computers. Just being in the same room with one causes some to feel panic, have irregular heartbeat, breathing difficulties, dizziness, and trembling. One therapist says that these individuals have more than the normal fear of failure while learning to work with computers. They become so anxious that they fear passing out, going crazy, or losing control. This doesn't make sense to most of us, but then no phobia makes much sense. Yet the fear is real.

Many of us have another phobia that can be equally debilitating—the fear of the opinions and actions of others. Sometimes we think and act as if our fate and well-being rested solely in the hands of other people. Isaiah told us how it looks to the One who is in control when we become so afraid of people that we panic and forget to trust entirely in Him. He said that fearing the reproach of people is foolish because they are dying creatures who have little more real strength and longevity than grass (Isa 51:12). The Lord knows what great harm people can do to us (Isa 51:13, 14). But He has the last word. Our future and everlasting well-being depend on Him and Him alone. —M. R. De Haan II ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**Faith can break the stranglehold of fear.**

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So will I... bring their fears on them; because, when I called, no one answered (Isaiah 66:4).

Many people like to be scared, but only in the world of make-believe. They keep going to horror movies, but they don't like to be faced with legitimate causes for fear. A writer who depicts the threat of communism in Central America is accused of using scare tactics. A Christian leader who dares suggest that some diseases may be God's judgment on sin is scorned. The general attitude is: "Never say anything about God's judgment to scare people into doing what's right."

Isaiah didn't hesitate to use fear in addressing God's people. Already afraid of the Assyrians, they accused him of treason because he warned the king against making an alliance with this nation. He responded, in essence: "You have far more reason to be afraid of what God will do than of what Assyria will do." He told them that if they made an alliance with Assyria God would punish them. The Almighty would become a rock to make them stumble, and a trap to take away their freedom.

The Bible declares that those who reject Jesus and continue in their wicked ways will find God to be their enemy. If this frightening thought motivates a person to trust Him for salvation, it has served a good purpose. Similarly, if fear causes a Christian to serve the Lord with new zeal, it has fulfilled a positive function. The fear of God is good because it leads to right living—even if it scares us. —H. V. Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**Fear God and you will have nothing else to fear.**

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## **FAITH OR FEAR — WHICH?**

Be anxious for nothing. Philippians 4:6-note

Worry is merely unbelief parading in disguise! The Scriptures repeatedly warn us against this grievous sin. Ian Maclaren ex-claims, "What does your anxiety do? It does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, but it does empty today of its strength. It does not make you escape the evil; it makes you unfit to cope with it when it comes. God gives us the power to bear all the sorrow of His making, but He does not guarantee to give us strength to bear the burdens of our own making such as worry induces."

An experienced physician decided to analyze the "worriers" who were his patients. He found that 40 percent of them were apprehensive over things that never happened. About 30 per-cent concerned themselves with past matters now beyond their control.

Another 12 percent anxiously feared the loss of their health, although their only illness was in their imagination. And the rest worried about their families, friends, and neighbors, but in most cases he discovered no basis for their fears.

A bassoon player once came to the great conductor Toscanini with furrowed brow and complained that his instrument would not sound the high E flat. Toscanini smiled and replied, "Don't worry. There is no E flat in your music tonight." The musician had been needlessly apprehensive. Many of our worries are like that — unfounded and unnecessary.

Worry is both unprofitable and ungodly. God's grace will be sufficient for each day's need. Take comfort in this thought, and tread the pathway of life with faith, not fear! ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I walked life's path with "Worry,"  
Disturbed and quite unblessed,  
Until I trusted Jesus;  
Now "Faith" has given rest. — G.W.

**Satan seeks to crush our spirit  
by getting us to bear tomorrow's burdens with only today's grace!**

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**Vance Havner** wrote:

God pity the preacher who has grown cross-eyed watching certain faces in his congregation to observe whether the message is acceptable or not. "The fear of man bringeth a snare" (Pr. 29:25), and the chilly countenances of resentful listeners who must not be disturbed have taken the heart out of more preachers than have all the infidels and higher critics. Well did Spurgeon say, "We admire a man who was firm in the faith four hundred years ago, but such a man is a nuisance today."

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Puritan **William Gurnall** wrote that...

We fear men so much, because we fear God so little. One fear cures another. When man's terror scares you, turn your thoughts to the wrath of God.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, but our fears are in the name of man.

To use oaths ordinarily and indifferently without being constrained by any cogent necessity, or called to it by any lawful authority, is such a sin as wears off all reverence and dread of the great God; and we have very great cause to suspect that where His name is so much upon the tongue there His fear is but little in the heart. --EZEKIEL HOPKINS

By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil, by the fear of man they run themselves into evil. -- JOHN FLAVEL

Our help is in the name of the Lord, but our fears are in the name of man. -- WILLIAM GREENHILL

The wicked is a very coward, and is afraid of everything; of God, because He is his enemy; of Satan, because he is his tormentor; of God's creatures, because they, joining with their Maker, fight against him; of himself, because he bears about with him his own accuser and executioner. The godly man contrarily is afraid of nothing, not of God, because he knows Him his best friend and will not hurt him, not of Satan, because he cannot hurt him, not of afflictions, because he knows they come from a loving God, and end in his good; not of the creatures, since "the very stones in the field are in league with Him"; not of himself, since his conscience is at peace. -- JOSEPH HALL

How can you affright him? Bring him word his estate is ruined; "Yet my inheritance is safe," says he. Your wife, or child, or dear friend is dead; "Yet my Father lives." You yourself must die; "Well, then, I go home to my Father, and to my inheritance." --ROBERT LEIGHTON

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**F B Meyer Our Daily Walk. COURAGE IN LIFE'S STORMS**

"There stood by me this night an angel of the God whose I am, whom also I serve, saying, 'Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Caesar: and lo, God hath granted thee all them that sail with thee.' Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even so as it hath been spoken unto me."-- Acts 27:23, 24, 25.

SAID A boy to his mother, "What is fear like? I have never seen him."

Paul might have said as much, because his life was hid with Christ in God. He had learned to detect the voice of Christ. Some cannot do so, for it needs the practised ear and the obedient will. But all through his Christian career the Apostle seems to have derived comfort and strength from special revelations. Through the murky darkness of the storm, Christ's ministering angel sped to his hammock, and standing beside him, bade him be of good cheer. And there is no storm that beats on our life which does not bring God's angels also to our help, though we may not see their forms or hear their voice. The one condition of Angel-help is that we belong to their Master. We must be able to say: "Whose I am, and Whom I serve."

The Prayer of Faith. In Acts 27:24 the R.V. rendering is "granted." It signifies that Paul had asked and God had granted his prayer, and given him his request. What a promise this is! It is said of Miss Havergal that she went to stay with a family not one of whom was definitely for Christ. On the first night of her stay she wrote her well-known hymn, "Take my life, and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to Thee." And during her short sojourn under that roof she won for her Lord the entire household. So we may claim that all who sail with us in the ship of our life shall become God's children.

The Courage of Faith is consistent with Commonsense. Even though Paul had God's assurance, he felt that he must do what he could, as though all depended on his sagacity. Faith ought not to make us act presumptuously or foolishly. Holy calm and stillness rule in the heart of him whose mind is stayed on God.

We are likely to encounter many storms in our life before we anchor in the Fair Haven of Eternity, but in the heart of every cyclone there is a point of rest; and in the fiercest storm that sweeps our world, we may hide in the secret place of the Most High, and sing Ps 46:1-11.

PRAYER - By day and by night, in life and in death, may I ever be true to Thee, O Lover of my Soul, my ceaseless Friend, my unchangeable Saviour. Into Thy hands I commit my spirit! AMEN.

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### F B Meyer Our Daily Homily

Genesis 46:3 **Fear not** to go down into Egypt.

Probably the old man, remembering the experiences of Abraham, was very fearful to adventure himself into Egypt. Besides, was it not as though, in going thither, he renounced the Land of Promise? Therefore this special bidding and assurance were the more necessary.

When our heart misgives us, let us look out for one of God's **fear-nots**. — His eye is ever upon the righteous, and his ear open to their cry. One upward glance or tremulous prayer will make Him ride on a cherub to our side, and whisper, "**Be not afraid; fear not, I am with thee.**"

God's promises are fulfilled in most unexpected ways. — He had always foretold that the seed of Abraham should outnumber stars and sands; but who would have supposed that the promise would be realized amid the pressure and persecution of Egypt? Yet so it happened. "I will there make of thee a great nation." We must not judge after the sight of our eyes, nor act on what is known as our common sense; faith is led by very uncommon paths. Trust and obey!

God's presence in Egypt acted as an antidote to its evil, and delivered from its tyrant's grasp. — Ah, my soul, thou mightest descend without **fear** into hell itself if God said, "I will go down with thee, and will surely bring thee up again." The Divine Presence is strength to the **fearful** — security and consolation in life, peace in death. It was probably thus that the Father spake to the Son by the lips of the Angel in Gethsemane: "**Fear** not to go down into the grave: I will surely bring thee up again." Thus He speaks to us. He is with us, and will deliver.

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### F B Meyer Our Daily Homily

Leviticus 26:6 None shall make you afraid.

But we are afraid, often very greatly so. How can we be secured from the dread of men and things which so easily besets us?

**We must be absolutely right with God.** — To walk in God's statutes, and keep his commandments, was the first condition of Israel's immunity from **fear**. When we know that there is no cause of controversy between us and God, we feel able to count confidently on his protection and deliverance. "Perfect love casteth out **fear**."

**We must count on God's faithfulness.** — He has put us where we are, and we dare not think He will withdraw from us, as Joab did from Uriah. We are his partners, summoned to co-operate with Him: will He allow us to incur responsibilities in his name, and then leave the burden on our unassisted resources? **Fear** will yield before a clear sense of God's might; but it is still more likely to yield before a deep sense of God's perfect faithfulness.

**We must rely on the environment of angel keepers.** — When David, during his flight before Absalom, slept in the open, he believed that the Angel of the Lord encamped around him. More are they which are for us than those that be against us. The mountain is full of horses and chariots of fire. Lord, open our eyes that we may see!

**We must believe that our enemies are less formidable than they seem.** — They surround us with their bluster and threatenings, they come against us in embattled array; but if we dare to go forward and do the right thing in the sight of God, they will vanish like a puff of smoke. “For, lo, the kings assembled themselves... They were arrayed, they were dismayed, they hasted away.”

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### **F B Meyer Our Daily Homily**

If we were not saved for our goodness, we shall not be lost for the lack of it. — When we have been betrayed into sin, in the keenness of our remorse, the **fear** is suggested lest God should put us utterly away. And there would be ground for the fear if we had been chosen because of our righteousness.

But since our original acceptance with God did not depend on works of righteousness which we had done, but on his mercy in Jesus Christ, it will not be undone by our failures. This thought does not lead to carelessness and indifference, but to a holy **fear** of sinning.

Trust Him, O suffering saints, doing his will in the teeth of opposition and hate! **Fear** not the faces of men; be not dismayed before their threats — He is with you to deliver you. They may fight against you, but they shall not prevail; their proudest threats shall fail of their fulfillment.

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### **F B Meyer Our Daily Homily**

Psalm 49:5 Wherefore should I **fear** in the days of evil?

Have I not God? At sundry times and in divers manners, He spake to, and succoured his saints. Will He not come to me, and cast around me the soft mantle of his protecting love? And if I love Him, do I need any beside?

“Who that one moment has the least descried Him, Dimly and faintly, hidden and afar, Doth not despise all excellence beside Him, Pleasures and powers that are not, and that are?”

Did He not walk with Enoch, and then take him home, before the deluge came? Did He not shut Noah in, with his own hand, that there should be no jeopardy from the overflowing flood? Did He not assure Abram that He was his shield and exceeding great reward, quieting his **fears** against any possible combination of foes? Did He not preserve his servant Moses from the fury of Pharaoh and the murmurings of Israel? Was not Elijah hidden in the secret of his pavilion from the wrath of Ahab? Did He not send his angel to shut the lions' mouths that they might not hurt Daniel? Were not the coals of the burning fiery furnace as sweet and soft as forest glades to the feet of the three young confessors? Has God ever forsaken those that trusted Him? Has He ever given them over to the will of their enemies?

Wherefore, then, should I **fear** in the day of evil? I may be standing on the deck, whilst the ship is beset by icebergs and jagged splintered rocks; the fog drapes everything, as the way slowly opens through this archipelago of peril: but God is at the helm — why should I **fear**? Days of evil to others cannot be so to me, for the presence of God transmutes the evil to good.

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### **F B Meyer Our Daily Homily**

Psalm 124:1 If it had not been the Lord who was on our side.

Here is an If which cannot be an if. It is never a matter of uncertainty whether the Lord will be on our side or not. For the Lord Jesus in his incarnation and death has taken his place beside us for evermore. He is always on our side, so long as we keep his paths and walk in his ways.

“Though unperceived by mortal sense, Faith sees Him always near, A Guide, a Guardian, a Defence; Then what have you to **fear**?”

There are in all human lives hours of overpowering anxiety, when we feel as though it were impossible to live another moment — exposed to danger, separated from dear ones, not knowing what an hour may bring forth. Then, as you look up, you find that the Lord is beside you, sharing your anxieties, and affording you his inviolable protection. You cannot descry Him by the eye of sense, but you know Him to be there, and neither man nor devil can prevail against you.

When we look back on life, as the psalmist does here, we become aware of the myriad instances of Divine protection. We were not so vividly conscious at the time; we might even have had fits of depression and counted ourselves bereft. But if we narrowly consider the perils from which we have been rescued, when we were about to be swallowed up quick, we become convinced that

He was there. In life and death and judgment, Jesus, your Advocate, will ever stand at your side and “silence all who would condemn. So that with good courage you may say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not **fear**: what shall man or devil do unto me!”

**“Cast all your care on God! That anchor holds!”**

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### **F B Meyer Our Daily Homily**

Psalm 130:4 - There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.

Yes, thank God, there is forgiveness, because at his right hand He liveth for evermore who put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Forgiveness at any moment for the sins of a life; repeated forgiveness for the sins of every hour; forgiveness instantaneously upon confession. He pardoneth and absolveth all those who truly repent and unfeignedly believe in Him of whom the Gospel speaks. And when God once speaks forgiveness, it can never be unspoken. Fear and doubt and misgiving may question, but cannot revoke it. Based on the Blood of the Covenant, on promises ratified by the most solemn assurances, there is irrevocable forgiveness with God. Weary, sinning, ashamed soul, the fountain of God's forgiveness springs perennially from his heart; as clear and full as when that fountain was first opened for sin and uncleanness. Take it and go your way. Even if there be no rush of emotion, or sense of pardon, yet dare to believe that your cries and tears and confessions have been heard and answered.

Just because God is so ready to forgive, there is wrought within our hearts an ever-deepening dread of giving Him pain. There is forgiveness with Him, that He may be feared. There is a greater fear in the heart of the true child of God of grieving his Father than there is in the unregenerate of the penalty of transgression. The element of fear comes back into our nature, refined and purified through the fires of love. There is no fear in love; and yet love fears with a perpetual dread of giving needless pain. Because God is a consuming fire of tender love, let us serve Him with godly fear.

“What is thy fear, O soul? The fear of that dark place,  
Or fear to lose the joy of thy Creator's face?”

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### **F B Meyer Our Daily Homily**

Isaiah 8:12,13 The Lord of Hosts, let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread.

The land was panic-stricken for fear of the coalition of Samaria and Damascus. The politicians were seeking the alliance of Assyria, whilst the superstitious had recourse to familiar spirits and wizards. Amid the panic the voice of Isaiah is heard bidding the people fear with only one kind of fear. Not their fear, but the fear of God; not their dread, but his. The apostle Peter quotes these words, when he says, “If ye should suffer for righteousness' sake, blessed are ye; and fear not their fear, neither be troubled; but sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord” (1Peter 3:15-note, r.v.).

On the prairies men often fight fire with fire. Against the career of the wall of flame there is but one resource; before it reaches the terrified fugitives they must light a fire to sweep the ground bare, that when the advancing horror reaches the spot there will be no fuel left for it to feed on. So with the heart of man, the only true preservation from fear of our fellows is an overmastering fear of our God. Sanctify Him in your hearts. Let Him be your fear and dread.

It is remarkable that Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac. And this appears to have quieted his heart in the presence of Laban. When the fear of God is strong, the thought of grieving Him, or incurring his just wrath and indignation, is most cogent in warning us from sin! This delivers us from all other fear. One of the greatest sentences a man can utter when tempted to sin or threatened with suffering for the uprightness of his life or the correctness of his creed, is to say simply, quietly, and strongly: “I fear God, and have no other fear.” Fear Him: so shall ye be established; so shall ye prosper.

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### **F B Meyer Our Daily Homily**

Daniel 10:19 O man greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto thee, be strong, yea be strong.

Why should we fear? We are loved, greatly beloved; loved to God's uttermost; loved to the gift of his Only-begotten; loved to tears; loved to blood-shedding and death. It is said that Jesus, having loved his own, which were in the world, loved them unto the end; not to the end of his human ministry, but to the uttermost of what love can be (John 13:1, r.v., marg.).

Why should we fear? Has God done so much, and will He not do all? Has He brought us out of Egypt to let us perish in the wilderness? Is He so careful of the soul, and so careless of all beside? There are mysteries—mysteries of life and death, of sin and sorrow, of this world and the next; but fear not: God is ours, and we are his by immutable and indissoluble ties.

Let us possess ourselves in peace. We cannot understand, but we can trust. We may not know the way we are going, but we can

lean back on the heart of our Guide; standing in the cleft of the Rock we can look out in peace on dreaded evils as they pass away together, dismayed and amazed. If only we are acquainted with God, we shall be at peace, and thereby good will come to us. They fear who look at circumstances, and not into God's face.

And we shall be strong—strong to endure; strong to achieve; strong to wait; strong to carry the battle to the gate; strong to set our face like a flint, when the hour strikes for us to go to the cross; strong to be glad when the crowds ebb away from us to follow the dear Master, Christ:—"Be strong to hope, O heart! Though day is bright, The star can only shine in the dark night. Be strong, O heart of mine and look towards the light"

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### **F B Meyer Our Daily Homily**

Matthew 28:5 The angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye!

The emphasis is on the pronoun ye. The angel meant, As for these sentinels that are quaking in dread and becoming as dead men, it is meet and natural that they should do so. They are strangers to Him whom ye seek, and are set here to do the work of his foes. But there is no need for those that seek Jesus to fear.

Are you seeking the forgiveness of your sins through his blood? Fear not! Do not fear that they are too many to be forgiven. Do not fear that you have not the right faith. Do not fear that you will find his door shut. Do not fear that He will always be remanding you of what you have cost Him. Do not fear that He will let you drift from Him again. Ye seek the Lord who was crucified. Fear not!

Are you seeking a closer identification with his death? Fear not! There is no possibility of realizing the life which is life indeed, except through identification with the death and grave of Jesus. We must sink deep down into reunion with Him who lay there as our representative. But as God takes us at our word, and begins to strip us of all we had taken pride in; as the fear of what may be involved crosses our hearts with its chill dread — again we may be assured as we hear the angel say, "Fear not, ye who seek Jesus that was crucified."

And when at last you are seeking to follow Him through the valley of shadow — Fear not! You will never see Him as He is, till this mortal is surrendered, and the house not made with hands entered. But if the heart faints, and the flesh fails, fear not ye, who through that mysterious change seek Jesus that was crucified, but now liveth for evermore at the right hand of God.

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### **F B Meyer Our Daily Homily**

1 Peter 3:14-note Fear not their fear, neither be troubled. (r.v.)

It was a time of very real and fiery trial when Peter wrote these words. Persecution was already beginning with the House of God. The first mutterings of the awful storm which was to break in Nero's terrible atrocities were making themselves heard throughout the Roman world. The intention of this Epistle, therefore, was to encourage these scattered saints, that they might not be overwhelmed. Some who read these words may need similar comfort.

Remember, beloved fellow-believers, that Jesus has suffered; your Lord and Master has trodden these thorns before you. See, they are flecked with his blood. Would you not desire to be fellow-partaker with Him in his sorrow, that you may share his glory? It is only in suffering that we can properly identify ourselves with the great anguish of the world, or learn to comfort or pray for others. And, probably, none know the innermost tenderness and companionship of Jesus like those who daily fill up that which is behind of his sufferings. Besides, their fear is much worse in anticipation than in actual experience. Probably God entirely delivers his martyrs from those physical tortures which to onlookers might seem unbearable.

This has been the perpetual testimony of the Armenian refugees. Miss Codrington's story of her experiences in China, and Dr. Baedeker's statement of what he has learnt in his wide experience amid the refugees and imprisoned saints in all parts of Europe support and confirm the same conclusion. Sanctify Jesus Christ in your heart as Lord and King. Maintain a good conscience; do not be turned aside for fear of man; and when you come to suffer, ye will find the fire has lost its sting.

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### **TWO KINDS OF FEAR**

- Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints!--Psalm 34:9
- Perfect love casts out fear.--1John 4:18

I felt fear when I thought of going home. Because of my carelessness, our lovely console TV had fallen out of the trunk of my car and was badly marred. No, I wasn't afraid that my wife would yell at me or hit me. What I feared was the look of disappointment I would see in her face. Yet home was the place I wanted to be.

My fear was the kind of fear we should feel in relation to God. This is the mature fear advocated in Psalm 34:9 and many other Scripture passages. It is the fear of disappointing the Lord because we love Him so much, and because we so much appreciate His love for us.

The fear of punishment is an immature fear. This is the fear that is cast out by the "perfect love" mentioned in 1 John 4:18. This kind of fear isn't entirely bad, though. It's often a factor in causing a person to believe in Christ, and it may also keep a Christian from serious sin. But as we grow in our faith, we will obey God because we love Him so much that we don't want to disappoint Him. Pleasing Him will be our supreme desire.

Lord, deliver us from an immature fear of punishment by developing in us a deep awareness of Your love and a profound desire to please You. - H V Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

O may our love grow more and more  
As we get close to God  
So that we fear displeasing Him  
More than we fear His rod.  
--Sper

The highest motive for obeying God is the desire to please Him.

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"Fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body" (Matthew 10:28).

All sorts of fears obsess believers. Although some may be legitimate, most are vague, nameless feelings of apprehension. They rob us of confidence and joy, and keep us from spiritual health and effectiveness. The Bible has the solution to this problem. When we learn the fear of God, we will not be controlled by earthly terrors.

A young boy living in Holland when it was occupied by the Nazis during World War II, wrote the following in his journal: "Last week three German officers stopped my dad in the hallway. They held him at gunpoint and forced him to open the steel door leading to the basement. One of them ordered Dad to show the crawl space under the hallways. He said if he didn't tell where the hidden weapons are, he will be shot. Dad usually is not a great hero. He's even afraid of the dentist. But this time he is not afraid at all. One of them cocked his Luger and held it against my Dad's temple. Dad recited the Bible verse that was on his mind, 'And fear not them who kill the body, ... but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.' The Germans looked at each other, shrugged their shoulders, and then left. The steel heels of their boots made a clanging noise on the iron stairway."

This boy's father feared God more than he did the enemy. Having that kind of attitude will help us put all our fears in perspective. — D. C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We need not fear the darkness of this world,  
for we have Christ the light.

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### **Charles Spurgeon Morning and evening March 3 AM**

"I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." - Isaiah 48:10

Comfort thyself, tried believer, with this thought: God saith, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." Does not the word come like a soft shower, assuaging the fury of the flame? Yea, is it not an asbestos armour, against which the heat hath no power? Let affliction come—God has chosen me. Poverty, thou mayst stride in at my door, but God is in the house already, and he has chosen me. Sickness, thou mayst intrude, but I have a balsam ready—God has chosen me. Whatever befalls me in this vale of tears, I know that he has "chosen" me. If, believer, thou requirest still greater comfort, remember that you have the Son of Man with you in the furnace. In that silent chamber of yours, there sitteth by your side One whom thou hast not seen, but whom thou lovest; and oftentimes when thou knowest it not, he makes all thy bed in thy affliction, and smooths thy pillow for thee. Thou art in poverty; but in that lovely house of thine the Lord of life and glory is a frequent visitor. He loves to come into these desolate places, that he may visit thee. Thy friend sticks closely to thee. Thou canst not see him, but thou mayst feel the pressure of his hands. Dost thou not hear his voice? Even in the valley of the shadow of death he says, "Fear not, I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God." Remember that noble speech of Caesar: "Fear not, thou carriest Caesar and all his fortune." Fear not, Christian; Jesus is with thee. In all thy fiery trials, his presence is both thy comfort and safety. He will never leave one whom he has chosen for his own. "Fear not, for I am with thee," is his sure word of promise to his chosen ones in the "furnace of affliction." Wilt thou not, then, take fast hold of Christ, and say

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“Through floods and flames, if Jesus lead,  
I’ll follow where he goes.”

### **A BOLD DECLARATION**

“Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
And though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea.” (Psalm 46:2)

“The very hairs of your head are all numbered” (Matt. 10:30).

Spurgeon comments that this verse literally means what it says. God’s wisdom and knowledge are so great that He even knows the number of hairs on your head. His providence descends to the minute dust particles in a summer storm. He numbers the gnats in the sunshine and the fish in the sea. He controls the massive planets that shine in the heavens, and He deals with the teardrops that trickle from your eyes. He who supports the dignity of His throne in the splendor of heaven maintains it in the depths of the dark sea. There is nothing above, under, or around you that is not determined by His counsel and will.

I am not a fatalist, but I strictly hold to the doctrine that God has decreed all things that come to pass and that He rules over all things for His glory and good. What have we to fear? The unbeliever looks at the lightning and is apprehensive, but the Christian believes that it follows a predestined path, and he contemplates it with confidence. At sea, when the waves dash against a ship and toss it to and fro, some panic because they think that this is all chance. But believers see order in the waves. They hear music in the wind and are at peace because the tempest is in God’s hand. Why then should we fear?

In all this world’s convulsions, in all temporary distress and danger, we can remain calm, collected, and boldly say with confidence, “I know God is here and all this is working for my good.”

“Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling” (Ps. 46:2).

Think on these things.

### **How to "Neutralize" Your Fear**

The secret to neutralizing fear is to embrace the threatened disaster and count it as not too high a price to pay for obedience to Christ. This attitude of faith may not totally eliminate the uneasiness and apprehension. It will, however, allow you to go ahead and act in obedience to Christ. The problem of fear is not the fear itself, but the fact that we allow it to immobilize us. Being afraid is no sin. Shrinking back fearfully from obedience is sin. Fear can stop you in your tracks as a Christian .but it does not have to. You can trust God (and) move ahead in obedience because you understand fear and know how to deal with it. (Wayne McDill, Making Friends for Christ, p. 103)

When you fear that the worst will happen, your own thoughts may help to bring it about. “Fear,” a writer once said, “Is the wrong use of imagination. It is anticipating the worst, not the best that can happen. **Paralyzed by Fear**

Black Bart was a professional thief whose very name struck fear as he terrorized the Wells Fargo stage line. From San Francisco to new York, his name became synonymous with the danger of the frontier. Between 1875 and 1883 he robbed 29 different stagecoach crews. Amazingly, Bart did it all without firing a shot. Because a hood hid his face, no victim ever saw his face. He never took a hostage and was never trailed by a sheriff. Instead, Black Bart used fear to paralyze his victims. His sinister presence was enough to overwhelm the toughest stagecoach guard. (Today in the Word, August 8, 1992)

### **Fear of Ridicule**

Anytime we are engaged in a work for God, we are likely to encounter the poison-tipped arrows of ridicule. A barrage of truth mingled with lies, innuendo, malicious gossip and implied threats is the normal experience of leaders. Malice arises from fear. And fear is a common response to someone else’s success. So expect to have your faults thrown in your face, your folly mocked and your real progress belittled. When this happens, by all means allow yourself to be cut down to size, but do not let yourself be dismayed or intimidated. Remember that the chorus of contempt has a diabolical conductor whose aim is to make your knees buckle. He likes tongue-tied, ineffective Christians and plays on your secret fears and inferiorities to make you one of them.

I am full of fears and chasms of inferiority. Whenever I have listened to the enemy pointing them out I have stopped working for the kingdom. Yet in those moments when I have refused to listen to him and have feebly walked in obedience, I have been astonished at what God has done with my feeble performance. - John White

A man who hid for 32 years fearing punishment of pro-Nazi wartime activity says he used to cry when he heard happy voices outside, but dared not show himself even at his mother’s funeral. Janez Rus was a young shoemaker when he went into hiding at

his sister's farmhouse in June, 1945. He was found years later after she bought a large supply of bread in the nearby village of Zalna. "If I had not been discovered, I would have remained in hiding. So I am happy that this happened," Rus told a reporter. Throughout those years he did nothing. He never left the house, and could only look down at the village in the valley. (Today in the Word, October 17, 1993)

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- Sometimes the Lord calms the storm. Sometimes he lets the storm rage and calms his child.
  - Fear knocked at the door. Faith answered. No one was there.
  - Fear is generated by unbelief, and unbelief strengthened by fear. Nothing can cure us of fear till God cures us of unbelief. - Francis Burkitt
  - Only he who can say, 'The Lord is the strength of my life' can say, 'Of whom shall I be afraid?' - Alexander Maclaren
  - The presence of God does so stay the soul and quiet the heart that fear, which hath torment, is driven away. - Spurgeon
  - If you are enabled to rise above fear in times of alarm then will those who see you say, "This is a man of God and this is God's work upon his soul. - Spurgeon
  - Live so that you need not change your mode of living, even if your sudden departure were immediately predicted to you. When you so live you will look upon death without fear. - Spurgeon
  - Human action is frequently the hasty result of passion or fear, and is followed by regret and alteration. - Spurgeon
  - Fear is the sand in the machinery of life. - E. Stanley Jones
  - We are so afraid of being offensive that we are not effective. - Vance Havner
  - Those who would be fearless must keep themselves guiltless. - Matthew Henry
  - His (ED: Our Adversary) modus operandi is to manipulate you with the mysterious, to taunt you with the unknown. Fear of death, fear of failure, fear of God, fear of tomorrow—his arsenal is vast. His goal? To create cowardly, joyless souls. He doesn't want you to make the journey to the mountain. He figures if he can rattle you enough, you will take your eyes off the peaks and settle for a dull existence in the flatlands. - Max L. Lucado
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Needy miners and settlers in British Columbia, engaged in stripping abandoned Fort Alcan of lumber, electrical appliances, and plumbing, made an amazing discovery. While dismantling the jail they found that the mighty locks were attached to the heavy doors, and two-inch steel bars covered the windows, but the walls of the prison were only patented wallboard of clay and paper, painted to resemble iron. A good old heave against the walls by a man not as strong as a football tackle would have burst the wall out. Nobody ever tried it because nobody thought it possible. Many Christians are prisoners of fears that are nothing when pushed against. Satan cannot do anything against a child of God, but he loves to put barriers of papier-mache in the path of a believer to make him think that there is no progress in the direction of the will of the Lord. When by faith we push against it we will be free. —Eternity

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**James McConkey** recounts an illustration of the futility of fear - Somewhere we have read a story like this. A traveler upon a lonely road was set upon by bandits who robbed him of his all. They then led him into the depths of the forest. There, in the darkness, they tied a rope to the limb of a great tree, and bade him catch hold of the end of it. Swinging him out into the blackness of surrounding space, they told him he was hanging over the brink of a giddy precipice. The moment he let go he would be dashed to pieces on the rocks below. And then they left him. His soul was filled with horror at the awful doom impending. He clutched despairingly the end of the swaying rope. But each dreadful moment only made his fate more sure. His strength steadily failed. At last he could hold on no longer. The end had come. His clenched fingers relaxed their convulsive grip. He fell—six inches, to the solid earth at his feet! It was only a ruse of the robbers to gain time in escaping. And when he let go it was not to death, but to the safety which had been waiting him through all his time of terror.

5-year old Johnny was in the kitchen as his mother made supper. She asked him to go into the pantry and get her a can of tomato soup, but he didn't want to go in alone. "It's dark in there and I'm scared." She asked again, and he persisted. Finally she said, "It's OK—Jesus will be in there with you." Johnny walked hesitantly to the door and slowly opened it. He peeked inside, saw it was dark, and started to leave when all at once an idea came, and he said: Jesus, if you're in there, would you hand me that can of tomato soup?" (Victory in the Valleys, Charles Allen)

### **Personal Check List**

#### **Leighton Ford writes...**

When I am conscious of the fear of failure holding me back, I go through a kind of personal checklist:

1. Does this fear come basically from pride, a fear that I will not live up to my own expectations or to those of others?
2. Do I remember that God has called me first to faithfulness, then to efficiency?

3. Do I trust that the Holy Spirit is working before me, with me, and through me?
4. Do I remember that I am called to be neither more nor less successful than Jesus Christ was?
5. Do I remember that God does his greatest work when I seem to be weakest? Isn't that, after all, the mystery of the cross?

#### What Makes People Hesitate to Share Their Faith?

What makes people hesitate to share their faith? Here are some of the fears that have been mentioned to me:

1. "I am afraid I might do more harm than good."
2. "I don't know what to say."
3. "I may not be able to give snappy answers to tricky questions."
4. "I may seem bigoted."
5. "I may invade someone's privacy."
6. "I am afraid I might fail."
7. "I am afraid I might be a hypocrite."

Overcome by sin Perhaps the most common fear, however, is that of being rejected. A survey was given to those attending training sessions for the Billy Graham crusade in Detroit. One question asked, "What is your greatest hindrance in witnessing?"

1. 9% said they were too busy to remember to do it.
2. 28% felt the lack of real information to share. None said they didn't really care.
3. 12% said their own lives were not speaking as they should.
4. But by far the largest group were the 51% whose biggest problem was the fear of how the other person would react!

(Leighton Ford, Good News is for Sharing, p. 15, 65)

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#### The Fear of Man Bringeth a Snare

The pioneer evangelist Peter Cartwright spent 70 years in the work of the Lord and always preached the Word of God without fear or favor. One Sunday he was asked to speak at a Methodist church in the southern part of the United States. During the song just before the message, the pastor whispered to him that Andrew Jackson had just entered the sanctuary. He cautioned Cartwright to be very careful of what he said lest he offend their famous guest. The evangelist, however, knowing that "the fear of man bringeth a snare" (Pr 29:25), was determined not to compromise the truth. He also knew that great leaders need the Lord as much as anyone, so he boldly proclaimed the gospel. In fact, halfway through his sermon he said, "I understand that Andrew Jackson is present in the congregation today. If he does not repent of his sins and accept Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, he will be just as lost as anyone else who has never asked God for His forgiveness."

Instead of becoming angry, Jackson admired the preacher for his courage. He listened with keen interest to the message and felt such deep conviction that after the service Cartwright was able to lead him to the Lord. From that moment on, the two became the best of friends.

The fear of man should never keep us from speaking out for Christ. The gospel is a powerful message, and the indwelling Holy Spirit will impart power to our words (2Ti 1:7-note). Holy boldness is needed, and if we trust Christ, holy boldness will be given. - H. G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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#### Proverbs 1:1-7 Fear Escape

In our increasingly dangerous world, think of what we have to fear: Ominous terrorist threats, frightening crime rates, increasing natural disasters, sobering energy crises, ... God.

Yes, God. Ironic, isn't it, that in a world full of fearful things, the single source of our refuge and safety is also the One we are instructed to fear?

Consider Solomon's words: "In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence, and His children will have a place of refuge" (Pr 14:26). Then look at the next verse: "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life."

We try to avoid life's fearful things because they interrupt our peace. Yet we are told to move toward fear—the fear of God. For those who “fear the Lord, ... He is their help and their shield” (Ps. 115:11).

Our faith in God can deliver us from the fears of the world (Ps 23:4)—but only because our faith relies on a fear that is different from worldly fear. Pr 29:25 says, “The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe.”

To fear God is to sense His awesomeness. When we acknowledge that greatness and trust in Him, we no longer want to sin against Him. He becomes our refuge from the fears of this world. In Him we find peace. —Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Fear Him, ye saints, and you will then  
Have nothing else to fear;  
Make you His service your delight;  
Your wants shall be His care.  
-Tate & Brady

Those who fear God need not fear the world

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**The following resources deal more with care, anxiety or worry all of which are very closely related to fear...**

**Octavius Winslow** writes the following devotional entitled

### **THE LORD MY CARE-TAKER...**

**"The Lord is my portion, says my soul."**

**"He cares for you."--1Pe 5:7-note**

This may be with you, my soul, a day of anxious care. The sun shines brightly, all nature is clad in beauty, and every object smiles. But with you it is a cloudy and dark day, and your heart is sad--a care presses you, anxiety shades you. And now you are casting about if perhaps you may respond to it--yet with much unbelief, despondency, and fear as to the result. But, be still! The Lord, who is your Portion, is enough for each cloudy day, and is enough for this. Come, sit down and meditate a while upon this truth, and see if this pressure may not prove a real uplifting, this anxiety a sweet repose, and this cloud reflect a silver light, by stirring you up to prayer, and leading you to learn more experimentally and blessedly what Jesus is in His all-sufficiency for all our needs (Philippians 4:13-note). Thus,

"Out of the eater will come forth meat,  
and out of the strong will come forth sweetness."  
(Judges 14:14-note)

If the Lord cares for us, then without any figure of speech He is our Care-taker. Though all worlds, all beings, all events, all creatures, are hanging upon His arm, and yet we have not a care, infinitesimal though it be as an atom, or light as a cobweb, but the Lord cares for it. Can anything more truly and impressively illustrate the greatness of Jesus than this--that, as great is He, nothing in the history of His saints is too small or trivial for His notice and regard. Alas! we deal too imperfectly with God in the little sins and the trifling acts of disobedience in the daily duties of life. It is one of the believer's highest attainments in grace to live to God in small things. We think, for the most part, that because God is so great, He can bend His infinite mind only to objects and things that are great. Whereas, we forget that, He who is so great that the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, has condescended to say

I dwell with him also who is of a contrite and humble spirit. (Isaiah 57:15)

But He cares for us. My soul, has not Jesus proved it? Did He not care for you when He embarked in the work of your salvation? Did He not care for you when you were dead in trespasses and in sins? Eph 2:1-note) And when the Holy Spirit convinced you of sin, and broke your heart, and led you in holy contrition to the cross, did not Jesus manifest His care for you then by raising you up from His feet, enfolding you in His arms, and applying His atoning blood to your conscience, saying to your tempest-tossed spirit, 'Peace, be still,' and there was peace?

The Lord cares for you still. He cares for your needs, for your trials, for your temptations, for your sorrows. Still more, He cares for your holy, happy walk--for the doubts and fears and tremblings which sometimes assail you--for the darkness which often enshrouds you--for the loneliness and solitude of the way by which He is

leading you home to Himself.

Only cast your care upon Him, whatever it may be, with a child's simple, unquestioning, unhesitating faith, and be anxious only how you may most love, trust, and glorify Him. Make His service your delight, His honor your study, His truth your care, and sweet peace will spring up in your soul, shedding its soothing influence throughout your whole being.

"Don't be anxious about anything--but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be known unto God. And the peace of God (this is the Christian's true heart's ease), which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Php 4:6; 4:7-see notes Ph 4:6; 4:7)

But if you go to Him with your care, and return with it still corroding, shading, and crushing you, it is not because the Lord refuses to take it upon Himself, but because you refuse to transfer it to Him. You go, and you come away with it still entwined around your heart, and wonder that you find no relief. But, leave with Him your care, be it the care of your soul or the care of the body, hang it upon His arm, lay it upon His heart, and sweet will be the repose your Father in heaven will give.

### "HE CARES FOR YOU."

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**F B Meyer** (from his book **Tried by Fire**) has the following chapter based on 1 Peter 5:7...

#### **CARE, AND WHAT TO DO WITH IT**

"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." (1Pe 5:7-note.)

EVERY word of this precious verse is golden. And the fact of its standing here as a Divine command is a proof, not only of what is possible for us to do, but of what God is prepared to enable us to do. His commands are enablings; his words are power-words; his light is life. If only you are willing to live this glad, free, uncareful life, and dare to step out on the waves of his carefulness, you will find that, with the resolve to obey, there will come from Him the wondrous power that makes obedience possible.

And it is in the highest degree necessary to obey this precept. So only can we be peaceful and strong. We cannot stand the strain of both work and worry. Two things come between our souls and unshadowed fellowship with God, sin and care. And we must be as resolute to cast our care on the Lord as to confess our sins to Him, if we would walk in the light as He is in the light. One yelping dog may break our slumber on the stillest night. One grain of dust in the eye will render it incapable of enjoying the fairest prospect. One care may break our peace and hide the face of God, and bring a funeral pall over our souls. We must cast all our care on Him, if we would know the blessedness of unshadowed fellowship.

But, besides the blessedness we lose in giving way to care, we must remember that such behaviour sorely grieves and dishonours God. It grieves Him, as love must grieve when suspected of insincerity. And it also sorely dishonours Him. We judge a parent by the report given of him in the words and behaviour of his children. If they seem half-starved and miserable, or look wistfully to us for a dole of help, or complain bitterly of the hardships of their lot, we conclude--however wealthy he may be as to his income, or munificent as to his gifts--that he is hard and cruel: and we withdraw from him as far as possible. So, if the world judges of God by the looks and words of many of his professed children, is it wonderful that it is less attracted than repelled? Either there is no God, or He is powerless to help, or He does not really love, or He is careless of the needs of his children--such must be the reflections of many, as they look on the weary, careworn, anxious faces of God's professed people, and remark in them the same long deeply-ploughed furrows as the years have made for themselves.

We are either libels or Bibles; either harbour-lights or warning signals; either attractions or detractors; and which we shall be depends very much on what we do with CARE.

Of course there must ever be the discipline and chastisement of life. Our Father deals with us as with sons: and what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? And these strokes of his rod, these cups mingled by his hand, must be bitter to the flesh. But all this is very different from "care." There may be pain--but no doubt of the Father's love, no worry about the issues, no foreboding as to the long future, which to the eye of faith shines like the horizon-rim of the sea on which the sun is shining in its utmost splendour, while dark clouds brood overhead.

Care, according to the Greek word, is that which divides and distracts the soul, which diverts us from present duty to weary calculations of how to meet conditions which may never arrive. Fret; worry; anxiety; the habit of

anticipating evil; crossing bridges before we reach them; the permission of foreboding fears about the future; all that attitude of mind which broods over the mistakes of the past and dwells on the shadows which coming events may cast, rather than on the love and will of God--this is Care.

## **1. OUR TREATMENT OF CARE.**

**Casting all your care upon Him.**--The Greek verb indicates not that we must keep doing it, but do it once for all.

Who does not know what it is to awake in the morning with a sense of heaviness and depression, and, before one is well aroused, to be conscious of a voice whispering a long tale of burdens to be carried, and difficulties to be met, as the hours pass on!

"Ah," says the voice, "a miserable day will this be."

"How so?" we inquire, fearfully.

"Remember, there is that creditor to meet, that skein to disentangle, that irritation to soothe, those violent tempers to confront. It is no use praying, better linger longer where you are, and drag through the day as you may. You are like a victim in the tumbrel going to be guillotined."

And too often we have yielded to the suggestion. If we have prayed, it has been in a kind of hopeless way, asking God to help, but not daring to think He would. There has been no assurance, no confidence, no calm within, no tranquility without. Alas for some! They always spend their lives thus. One long, weary monotone of anxiety--struggling against winds and waves, instead of walking over the crests of the billows; treading a difficult, stony pass, instead of being borne along in one of the twenty thousand chariots of God.

How infinitely better to cast our care upon the strong, broad shoulders of Christ! Treat cares as you treat sins. Hand them over to Jesus one by one as they occur. Commit them to Him. Roll them upon Him. Make them his. By an act of faith look to Him, saying, "This, Lord, and this, and this, I cannot bear. Thou hast taken my sins; take my cares: I lay them upon Thee, and trust Thee to do for me all, and more than all, I need. I will trust, and not be afraid." As George Herbert says so quaintly in his sonnet, put care into Christ's bag. There is no surer path to rest than to pass on to Jesus all the anxieties of life, believing that He takes what we give at the moment of our giving it; that it instantly becomes a matter of honour with Him to do his best for us: and surely it is a sacrilege to take back any gift which we have put into his hands. "Blessed be the Lord, who daily beareth our burden" (Psa. 68:19, R.V.).

There are two or three preliminaries before this committal of care is possible. We must have cast our sins before we can cast our cares; in other words, we must be children in the Father's home. Then also we must be living in God's plan, sure that we are where He would have us be, camped under his brooding pillar-cloud. And, in addition, we must have yielded up our lives to Him, for Him to have his way in them. Nor must we neglect to feed our faith with promise. Without her natural food she pines. But when these conditions are fulfilled, it is not difficult to

**"Kneel, and cast our load,  
E'en while we pray, upon our God,  
Then rise with lightened cheer."**

The cup may still have to be drunk, the discipline borne, the work done; but the weary ache of care will have yielded to the anodyne of a child's trust in One who cannot fail.

## **2. DIFFERENT KINDS OF CARE.**

**There is care about our growth in grace.**--It is very unreasonable; and yet how common! We fret because we fear that we are not getting on fast enough, and run to and fro in our anxiety to pick up something from other people. As well might a lad in an infant class fret because he may not enter the higher classes of the school. But surely his one business is to acquire the lessons set before him by the teacher. When those are learnt, it will be for the teacher to give him other and harder ones, and to advance him to positions where quicker progress may be made. And it is for us to learn each day the lessons which the Lord Jesus sets us, and to leave to Him the responsibility of leading us forward in the knowledge and love of God. Cast the care of your growth and attainments on the great Leader of souls, and be content to sit at his feet, learning the lessons He assigns.

**There is care about our Christian work.**--How to maintain our congregations? How to hold our own amid the competition of neighbouring workers? How to maintain the efficiency and vigour of our machinery? How to

adjust differences between our fellow or subordinate workers? How to find material enough to supply the incessant demand for sermons and addresses? How to shepherd a large flock of souls? What elements of care are hidden in each of these! And in what numberless cases the look of weary anxiety betrays the heartache within!

But one is inclined to ask sometimes, Whose work is it? If it is yours, resting on your shoulders only, there may be some reasonableness in the carrying of care. But if, as is surely the case, the work is your Master's, the burden should be his also. The prime worker is not you, but Christ. He is working through you. You are but his servant. All that you are responsible for is to do what He bids to the uttermost of your power; and He must bear all the cost and responsibility beside. If things are not going smoothly, go and tell Him, and cast all the anxiety of it back on Him, leaving it to Him to extricate or reinforce you.

**There is care about the ebb and flow of feeling.**--Our feelings are very changeable. They are affected by changes in the weather and temperature, by the state of our digestion and liver, by over-weariness, by want of sleep, by a thousand nameless causes. No stringed instrument is more affected by minute changes than we are; and we are apt to worry when the tide of emotion is running fast out, defying our efforts to retain it. But, if we are not conscious of any sin or negligence to which this subsidence of emotion may be attributed, we may cast the care of such an experience on our Saviour. He knows our frame; and, as we pass down the dark staircase, let us hold fast to the hand-rail of his will, willing still to do his will, though in the dark. "I am as much thine, and devoted to Thee, in the depths of my being now, as when my heart was happiest in thy love."

**There is care about household and commercial matters.**--Servants, with their frequent changes; employers, with unreasonable demands; customers and clerks; creditors and debtors; children, with the ailments of childhood, and the waywardness of youth. To mention any one of these is to touch a bitter spring of care. There are some whose businesses are specially liable to cause anxious, worrying thoughts. Many Christians always think that they must come to beggary; they refuse to enjoy the good things within their reach, because of certain dreaded possibilities. Alas! for that phantom workhouse which bounds the pathway of so many lives, but which is never reached! But each of these sources of worry may become a means of grace, a bond between Jesus and the soul, if placed at his feet, and definitely entrusted to his care.

Do not be satisfied with rolling yourself on God, roll your burden also. He who can carry the one can carry the other. When a tiny boy, trying to help his father move his books, fell on the staircase beneath the weight of a heavy volume, his father ran to his aid and caught up in his arms boy and burden both, and carried them in his arms to his room. And will God deal worse with us? He cannot fail or forsake. He can smite rocks, and open seas, and unlock the treasuries of the air, and ransack the stores of the earth. Birds will bring meat, and fish coins, if He bid them. He takes up the isles as a very little thing--how easily, then, your heaviest load: while there is nothing so trivial but that you may make it a matter of prayer and faith.

So Leighton sweetly says:--

"When thou art either to do or suffer anything, when thou art about any purpose of business, go, tell God of it, and acquaint Him with it--yea, burden Him with it--and thou hast done for matter of caring. No more care, but sweet, quiet diligence in thy duty, and dependence on Him for the carriage of thy matters. Roll over on God, make one bundle of all; roll thy cares, and thyself with them, as one burden, all on thy God" (Psa. 36:5)

### **3. THE REASONABLENESS OF THIS METHOD OF LIFE.**

"For He careth for you." Of course, if we persist in acting only for ourselves, we must do the best we can for ourselves; but if we can hand over all matters to God, we shall find that He will do infinitely better for us than we had dared to hope. Such is God's love to us that He always goes far beyond our farthest anticipations. "Exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

If the father is providing for to-morrow's needs, why should his little boy leave his play, and lean pensively against the wall, wondering what had better be done? If the pilot has come on board, why should the captain also pace the deck with weary foot? If some wise, strong friend, thoroughly competent, has undertaken to adjust some difficult piece of perplexity for me, and if I have perfect confidence in him, and he assures me that he is well able to accomplish it, why should I fret longer? The thing is as good as done, since he has taken it in hand.

Doubtless there seems a marvellous chasm between Him and you. But it is bridged by the silver arch of Divine care. God cares for you so much that He came Himself in the person of his Son to redeem you; there was never a time He did not love you, brood over you, and care for you. He cares for you so much as to listen to

your least sigh or cry amid the beat of heavenly music and the acclamations of the blessed. The mighty heart of Deity itself is full of a fathomless carefulness for all that concerns you. No mother cares over her sick child as He over you. Each movement and need and desire is read long before expressed or even felt.

Let us trust Him. Tongue cannot tell the completeness, the delicacy, the tender thoughtfulness of the care that will gather and shelter us, as the nervous, careful hen gathers her brood under her wing. "I would have you without carefulness." (F. B. Meyer. *Tried By Fire*)

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Octavius Winslow in his book **Help Heavenward** ([Online Index](#)) has a chapter based on the truth in 1 Peter 5:7...

## Human Care Transferred to God

### Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you— 1 Peter 5:7

Were we to take the world's estimate of the real value and happiness of a life of faith in God as the true one, how gloomy, joyless, and forlorn a life would it appear! The world imagines that there is nothing substantial, bright, or social in the religion of Christ—no reality, sunshine, or companionship! But how mistaken! We cite, as disproving this view, the precept we propose in this chapter to illustrate and enforce, which enjoins the transfer of human care to God. Where, in the world's wilderness, grows the flower of heart's ease as it blooms and blossoms here? "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." How full of soothing and repose are these words! What cares have they lightened,—what anxieties have they removed,—what burdens have they unclasped,—and what springs of joy and comfort and hope have they unsealed in many a sad and oppressed heart! But do you not, beloved reader, need to be put in constant remembrance of this divine secret of rest amidst toil, of repose amidst disquietude, of soothing amidst corroding cares, and of confidence and hope in the midst of change and depression? Bewildered and oppressed by the multitude of anxious thoughts within you, is there not a danger of being so absorbed by the care as to overlook the Caretaker? to forget the heart's ease in the overwhelming of the heart's anxiety? Verily we think so. Hagar, pining with thirst, and blinded by grief, saw not the well of water flowing at her side. The disciples in the storm, filled with alarm, and absorbed by fear, recognized not the Lord Jesus walking to them upon the waves which threatened the foundering of their vessel. Thus often is it with us—thus may it be now with you. We look at the want, and not at Him who supplies it; at the storm, and not at Him who controls it; at the care, and not at Him who assumes it. Is not the voice of the Lord mightier than the voice of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea? Is not the Caretaker greater than the care itself? Yet how we limit the Holy One, and magnify and multiply our cares, anxieties, and sorrows! But for the immutability of our redeeming God, whose unseen hand guides, and whose power, almost insensible to ourselves, sustains us, our care would consume us. How often we are upheld, we scarcely know by whom; kept in peace, we scarcely know how; preserved in safety, we scarcely know why. But "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him;" and, sooner or later, we learn that Jesus has done it all, and has done it for His own glory. Fain would I, beloved reader, proffer you a little help heavenward by inciting you to this transfer of anxious thought and chafing care to God. Lightened a little of your burden, with a more trustful heart and gladsome spirit you will speed your way homeward to that heaven of perfect repose, upon whose threshold you will leave the last anxious thought, and lay down the last earthly care, your weary, panting soul pillowed in eternal repose.

The world through which we pass heavenward—and oh, forget not, Christian pilgrim, it is a passage soon passed—is a world laden and crushed with care. Earthly care confronts us at every step, and in all whom we meet. The knitted brow, the restless eye, the compressed lip, the fevered expression, the bated breath, are as true an index of the mind oppressed with anxious thought, the heart shaded with human sorrow, as the dial is of the sun's altitude. It is true the great device of the world is to conceal its care from others. But its transient gleam of artificial joy—the forced smile, the excited laugh, the unnatural levity, which imparts an air of happiness and freedom from eating care—but betray to the keen, penetrating eye of the spiritual observer that inward restlessness of the spirit, that lowering anxiety of mind, which can ill be concealed.

**"If every man's internal care  
Were written on his brow,  
How many would our pity share  
Who move our envy now!"**

But it is of the care peculiar to the Lord's people that we particularly speak. And here we must be cautious to distinguish between the carefulness that is proper in a child of God and the carefulness which is the result of a distrust of God—the offspring of unbelief. We are to be careful, undoubtedly, to maintain good works, or our

faith is vain; to take care of our own house, or we shall be found worse than the infidel; we are to care for the interests and prosperity of Christ's Church, or we ignore our individual membership; we are to be careful to walk holily and circumspectly, as followers of the Lamb, or we dishonour Christ. Now this implies a heavy weight of holy care, unslumbering vigilance, and unceasing prayerfulness on our part. These are cares which especially appertain to, and are inseparable from, our Christianity. But let us consider that state of anxious carefulness which so much weighs down the spirit, so beclouds our spiritual joy, and is so corrosive of the best, holiest, and finest feelings of the soul, but which a simple, childlike confidence in our heavenly Father's promise, care, and love should chasten and moderate, yea, entirely remove. Hence the precept,

"Casting all your care upon him;  
for he careth for you."

We may attempt to classify, but it would be impossible to enumerate, the cares which contribute so much to the mental anxiety and depression of the Christian. The cares of this life enter deeply into the carefulness of which the Lord seeks to lighten us. In proportion to the spiritual tone of the mind, and the closeness of the heart's converse with God and heavenly realities, will be the tenderness of the believer to the chafing and pressure of temporal cares. The more heavenly we grow, the more acutely sensitive do we become to the encroachment and influence of earth and earthly things. In this connection let me remark that I fear too little prayerful consideration is felt by the Church in behalf of her Christian men of business. Sustaining responsibilities, burdened with cares, depressed by anxieties well-nigh crushing,—earnestly desirous, and that very desire intensifying their feelings, that integrity and uprightness should preserve them, that by no faltering, no receding, no departure from the strictest line of Christian consistency should the cause of Christ be dishonored and their Christian character be compromised,—are they sufficiently borne upon our sympathies and prayers? Do we, in measure, make their burdens, their dangers, their anxieties our own? Do we ask for them of God the grace that will keep them in prosperity, and for the strength and comfort that will sustain and soothe them under the pressure and perils of anxious care? Does the Church of God sufficiently sympathize with her Christian merchants? May not the low standard of commercial morality, which in some departments of trade has obtained in this and other lands,—the sad defection from honesty, probity, and uprightness which has marked the business transactions of some whose names have stood high in the Church's roll,—the frauds, the defalcations, the nefarious dealings,—be traceable, in a great degree, to the Church's unfaithfulness in her duty respecting them? Verily we think so. Oh, let us pray more for godly men of business! Their snares are many; their perils are great, their cares are crushing, their anxieties are absorbing! They demand our Christian sympathy, our tender forbearance, our unceasing supplications, that, in all the temptations and intricacies, perils and anxieties, by which their path is begirt, God may hold them up, and conduct them through,—kept from the low arts of trade,—from the questionable practices of the world,—from an inordinate anxiety for wealth,—from every the slightest deviation from the straightest and strictest line of Christian integrity, from the taint and evil of the world, to the honor of the Church and the glory of their Lord. Christian brethren, we proffer you our sympathy, and breathe on your behalf our prayers! You may often lay an anxious, aching brow on your pillow at night, not knowing how you will meet the stern claims of the coming day,—your commercial standing—dearer still, your Christian character—at stake. Be still! There is ONE who careth for you! Compose yourself to rest, in the calm assurance that on the morrow God will crown your obedience to the precept by His fulfillment of the promise—

"Casting all your care upon him;  
for he careth for you."

Thus, then, our temporal cares, to us often so depressing, are objects of God's consideration. If godliness has the promise of the life that now is, it follows that no earthly care that saddens the heart or shades the brow is beneath His notice or regard. How many a child of God is struggling with large domestic claims and but slender revenues! Who can tell the troubled thoughts, the anxious feelings; the painful forebodings that pass through that mind! One only knows it. To Him there is nothing little, nothing insignificant, nothing beneath His notice and regard. Are you a widow, with narrowed income and heavy demands? Are you an orphan, combating with loneliness and want? Are you a man of business, sustaining heavy liabilities, involved in perilous investments, and weighed down by ceaseless anxiety and care? Veiled from every eye but God's may be your pressure. These worldly engagements, these temporal cares and anxieties, are not too mean for Him.

Then, there often presses upon the heart the anxiety to know the path of duty in which we should walk. This is no small care to the child of God. We are often brought to a stand-still, and are, as it were, at our wits' end. Two paths, intersecting each other, diverging to the right and to the left, confront us, and we are perplexed to

know which one we should take. Oh for a voice, distinct and familiar, behind us, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it!" In proportion, too, to the tenderness of conscience, and to the closeness and softness of the walk, will be the intense anxiety of the mind to know, and do, and even suffer the will of God. If such be the case with you, be assured that, though your faith and patience may be tried, the Lord will not leave you long in darkness and uncertainty. If the question be, How shall I know the will of my heavenly Father in this matter? you shall not in the end mistake it; for God cares for you.

But there are greater cares than these—the spiritual cares of the soul—which often press heavily upon the heart. You are anxious to know that you have an interest in Christ's redeeming love,—that your name is written among the living in Jerusalem,—that your sins are pardoned,—that your person is adopted, accepted, saved,—and that after death you will reign with Jesus for ever. You are anxious, too, that your Christian walk should be obedient, perceptive, believing; that you should be more heavenly-minded, growing in knowledge, and grace, and divine conformity to the will of God and the image of Jesus. Ah! these are cares before which all others vanish into insignificance! There are no anxieties, no cares, no burdens like those which touch the present and future interests and well-being of the soul! How many a man would freely and joyfully part with all his worldly possessions for spiritual peace of mind, and for an assured hope of the future! Oh to be quite sure that we are SAVED! What is rank—what is wealth—what is learning—what is fame in comparison with this?—the dust, the foam, the dream, the shadow! Anxious soul! think you that you nurse that spiritual anxiety alone? that no eye is wakeful to see, that no ear is bending to listen, that no heart is interested to sympathize? Ah, yes! He who travailed in sorrow for your salvation is personally, tenderly cognizant of the anxious, the profoundly anxious, desire of your soul that there may not rest the shadow of a shade of doubt and uncertainty upon the fact of its everlasting safety. You are not alone in this soul-exercise. Jesus is with you. The travel of your heart after him, the panting of your spirit for His salvation, the longing of your soul for an assured interest in His love,—your tears, your sighs, your desires, your prayers, your watchings,—awaken in the heart of your Saviour the deepest, tenderest response. Ah! if the cares, anxieties, and solicitude you feel for your soul lie upon your heart with a pressure so intense as to shade the sunshine of life by day, and to bedew your pillow with tears by night, think you that He does not yet more closely entwine your precious and deathless interests around His heart, who bought you upon the cross, and who wearily trod many a step to seek and find you in the cloudy and dark day, and who will deck His brow with you as a sparkling jewel, when He cometh having on His head His many crowns!

But upon whom is the believer to place this care? There is no difficulty in determining. The transfer is at once from the human to the Divine, from the finite to the Infinite. We have but one true Burden-bearer—one Almighty Caretaker; even Him whom God has made strong for Himself and strong for us—the Mighty and the Almighty Saviour. In the matter of care the Lord would have us deal immediately and only with Himself. This is the controversy He has with us—our unwillingness to make the transfer to Him. Oh, could you be assured that the friend you best loved on earth could lighten the burden and chase away the care, ere the evening's sun had set, would you not be found breathing your sorrows into his ear, and reposing your anxieties upon his heart? But to go to God—to pass by the human, and deal only with the Divine—to repair to the arm that was transfixed, and to the bosom that bled upon the cross, and repose your burden upon its power and love, oh, how difficult!—just because it is faith dealing with the Invisible. And yet, no task so easy, or, in its issue, more blessed—just because it is faith dealing with the Mighty One. But God, guardful of His honor, will not yield this controversy, and, jealous of His love, will not abate one iota of His claim. To Him the transfer must be made. Behold the key that unlocks the mystery of His dealings! Why has He smitten, as with paralysis, that arm upon which you leant? Why has He chilled, as with death, that bosom on which you reclined? Why has He exhausted, as by a burning drought, that cool spring, whose tide you quaffed? Why has He beclouded those sunny slopes, upheaved those verdant banks, which gave to the landscape of your life an aspect so picturesque, and to life itself a repose and a charm so exquisite? Oh, but to win, and woo, and draw you more closely beneath His own outstretched arm, and within His own sheltering bosom! He and He alone will share, and by sharing will soothe and exhaust, your care. Christ loves you too well, has bought you with a price too dear, has entwined you with interests too costly and precious, and has prepared for you a heaven and a destiny too glorious and lasting, to admit a rival, or unite with a partner in this office of Caretaker of the Church. Oh, thank Him for clearing the path by removing, so kindly and so gently, the object that intercepted your approach to Him, so that no angel, no saint, no minister, no church, no friend, should come between Christ and you, veiling Him for an instant, or in the slightest degree, from your eye.

But you will ask, How is this transfer of care to be made? In the directions which we suggest we would give prominence to the exercise of unquestioning faith. Here there must be a taking God at His word. Our warrant

for an act apparently so impossible and presumptuous as the transferring of every thought of anxiety, and feeling of sadness, and pressure of want, to the Great JEHOVAH must be as divine and unquestionable as the act itself. That warrant is God's revealed, infallible, unalterable word—"Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." Your faith must credit, receive, trust in, and act upon this word without demur or condition, immediately and unreservedly, because it is the word of the living God! You must believe that God's power is able, and that His love is willing, and that His grace is sufficient to assume the transfer,—that Christ, who has borne the heavier pressure of your curse, and your sins, and your very hell, is prepared to sustain, succor, and comfort you, removing your burden of care by absorbing it in Himself. O wondrous act! O precious life of faith! How happy to us! How glorifying to God! Beloved, can you not, will you not, believe that Jesus at this moment stands prepared to make all your care His own? that He means what He says when He invites you, the weary and the heavy-laden, to Himself for rest? Think you that He is taunting your sorrow, sporting with your care, trifling with your feelings, mocking your confidence, and asking you to believe, only that He might betray; to trust, only to deceive? Oh no! This is not the Christ of the Bible. Did He ever deal thus with a poor sinner! Was it ever known that He invited to His feet an anxious, care-depressed, burdened soul but to spurn that soul from His presence? Never! Oh, He is too true, too loving, too gentle, too kind, too faithful a Saviour for that! Will you, then, wound Him with your doubts, dishonour Him by your unbelief, and force from under you, buffeting, as you are, amidst the waves, this divine, sustaining plank—faith in the word and promise of the only true and living God?

Not less potent is prayer as a mean of transferring care to God. God often sends the care to rouse us to call upon Him. We want an errand, and He sends a trial; we want an impulse, and He sends a sorrow; we want earnestness and importunity, and He sends the heavy and the continuous stroke—all His waves breaking over us. Prayer is the safety valve of the soul. The heart would break, the spirit would sink, despair would fold its dark shroud around us, but for the privilege of access to God through Christ. Many a burdened believer has exclaimed, "Why sit I here nursing in lonely grief my sorrow? I will arise and give myself to prayer." And the moment he has formed the resolution, ere he has presented or even framed his petition, unutterable relief has come. "When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." What, then, is your sorrow? Is it sin? Arise, and in prayer pour out your confession to Christ, and cast this burden on the Sin-bearer. Is it temptation? Disclose it to Him who was once tempted too, and by the same Tempter, and who thus, from experience of what they feel, knows how to succor them that are tempted. Is it want? Betake yourself to the throne of grace, and let your requests be made known unto God, and in quick and ample response He will supply all your need. Oh, try the experiment of prayer! All others may have failed you—try yet this one! Spread your care before the Lord. His providence and grace stand pledged to meet your every necessity.

**"Hast thou a care, whose presence dread  
Expels sweet slumbers from thy bed?  
To thy Redeemer take that care,  
And turn anxiety to prayer.**

**"Hast thou a wish, with which thy heart  
Would feel it almost death to part?  
Entreat thy God that wish to crown,  
Or give thee strength to lay it down.**

**"Hast thou a friend, whose image dear  
May prove an idol worshipp'd here?  
Implore thy God that nought may be  
A shadow between heaven and thee.**

**"Whate'er the wish that breaks thy rest,  
Whate'er the care that swells thy breast,  
Spread before God that wish, that care,  
And turn anxiety to prayer."**

**"He careth for you."** Such is the encouragement to a compliance with His holy precept. The care of God

extends over all.

“Thou openest thine hand, and suppliest the wants of every living thing.” (Ps 145:16)

“Thou givest them their meat in due season.” (Ps 104:27)

Oh, what a God is our God! But if such is God’s goodness to His enemies,—for He maketh His sun to shine on the evil and the good,—what must be His goodness to His children! If he has regard to the raven, and feeds it when it cries, will He, think you, be indifferent to the plaintive note of His “dove, His undefiled one?” It is an especial care with which God cares for you. He cares for your temporal interests;—not one worldly anxiety, not one want of the life that now is, is too insignificant for His regard. He cares for your spiritual interests—for your soul’s prosperity, for your mental peace, for your joy of heart, for your growth in grace, for your character, your reputation, your usefulness. It is personal care. He careth for you. He careth for your individual cares, for your personal interests, never for an instant merging and forgetting your individual claims upon His interest, protection, and love in the great body of His Church. What encouragement this to betake yourself to the Lord, transferring all care from your heart to His! Let me conclude this chapter with one or two cautionary observations.

Do not anticipate care. This is to exceed the limit, which God has prescribed. With the future you have no concern, as you have no knowledge. A covenant God has, from eternity, provided for that future. It is all in the everlasting covenant of grace, and will unfold and assume just that form and complexion which thy God sees best. By anticipating care, and thus antedating your future, you grieve the Spirit of God, wound your own peace, and unfit yourself for present duty and trial. When that care comes—if come it should—it will bring with it its own support, and a fulfillment of the promise—

#### **He careth for you**

Sit not brooding over your state, deploring its existence, and lamenting your want of more faith, and grace, and love. Arise, responsive to the precept, and cast your burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain both you and it. This inordinate absorption within yourself will bring to you no relief, no heart’s ease, and no nourishment to faith. One uplifted glance—one sight of Jesus—one believing touch of the promise of God, will bring more repose to your anxious spirit, more succor to your burdened mind, than a lifetime of self-absorption.

**“No profit canst thou gain  
By self-consuming care;  
To Him commend thy cause, His ear  
Attends the softest prayer.**

**“Give to the winds thy fears;  
Hope, and he undismay’d;  
God hears thy sighs, and counts thy tears,  
God shall lift up thy head.**

**“Through waves, and clouds, and storms,  
He gently clears thy way:  
Wait thou His time—thy darkest night  
Shall end in brightest day.”**

Remember that this casting of our care on God is a present and a constant duty. It is in the form of the present tense that the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, addresses us:

**“CASTING all your care on Him.”**

Defer it not until the morrow, nor wait a better frame—do it now! A present care will find a present Receiver, a present Helper, and a present relief. The Lord your God neither accepts nor rejects, grants nor denies you, because of the high or the low frame with which you approach Him. To suppose that He did—that the spiritual tone of your mind influenced His decision—were to make the turning-point of His love to centre in you rather than in Himself, and to argue that God was moved by other motives than those found within His own heart. God’s dealings with us from first to last, in the greatest and in the least,—from the love that chose us from everlasting, to the smile that sheds its bright halo around our dying pillow,—proceed upon the principle of His most free grace. And since He finds the motive of love and the bestowment of blessing solely within Himself, He, the unchangeable One, will not revoke the love, nor withdraw the gift, influenced by any fickleness or

change He traces in you. Then, be your frame low, your heart dead, your faith weak—arise, and draw near to God, for the blood-tipped sceptre bids you approach, and the blessing, the richest God can bestow, or you desire, awaits your full acceptance.

Oh yes! the Lord cares for you. Little, obscure, despised, unworthy though you may be, or deem yourself to be, the Lord has an interest in you, the closest, the tenderest that ever dwelt in a heart of love. Bought with the Saviour's blood, a temple of the Holy Ghost, sealed with the earnest of the Spirit as a child of God and an heir of glory, oh, there is not a bright angel in heaven for whom God so cares as He cares for you! Will you not respond to this truth by transferring all your care to Him in the exercise of a humble, unquestioning faith? Others may have ceased to care for you. Change has congealed the warm current of love, distance intercepts its flow, or death has stilled its pulse, and you feel as if there existed in this wide world no heart, no spirit, no mind that responded to, or that chimed and blended with your own. Yes; there is One!—Jesus cares for you. The HEART of GOD, from which all other hearts kindle their affection, entwines you with its thoughts, its sympathies, its love; and the Eye that searches the universe with a glance, bends upon you its ceaseless look of love. "When my father and my mother forsake me,"—when human affection quits its last, its latest, its most sacred home on earth,— "then the Lord will take me up." The desolateness of widowhood shall claim His sympathy, the unbefriendedness of orphanage shall receive His protection, the suffering and languor of sickness shall be sustained by His grace, the grief of bereavement shall be soothed by His love, and the bed and valley of death shall be cheered and brightened with His radiant presence. Then, confide in and lean upon this divine, this human, this precious, this ever-present Saviour. He asks your boundless confidence and your warmest love. Most worthy of it is He. Will you withhold it? Take that anxious care which lies like lead upon your breast, which chases peace from your mind, joy from your heart, slumber from your pillow, shading all the landscape of life with wintry frost and storm, and lay it upon the heart pierced by the soldier's lance,—the heart that distilled its last drop of life-blood on the tree,—and peace shall enfold you beneath its balmy wing.

"BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING: BUT IN EVERYTHING BY PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION WITH THANKSGIVING LET YOUR REQUESTS BE MADE KNOWN UNTO GOD. AND THE PEACE OF GOD, WHICH PASSETH ALL UNDERSTANDING, SHALL KEEP YOUR HEARTS AND MINDS THROUGH CHRIST JESUS."

**"Shall I not trust my God,  
Who doth so well love me—  
Who, as a Father, cares so tenderly?  
Shall I not lay the load  
Which would my weakness break,  
On His strong hand, who never doth forsake?"**

**"He doth know all my grief,  
And all my heart's desire;  
He'll stand by me till death, through flood and fire.  
And He can send relief:  
My Father's love, so free,  
Till the new morning shall remain to me.**

**"Who doth the birds supply,  
Who grass, and trees, and flowers,  
Doth beautifully clothe, through ceaseless hours;  
Who hears us ere we cry;  
Can He my need forget?  
Nay, though He slay me, I will trust Him yet.**

**"When I His yoke do bear,  
And seek my chiefest joy  
But in His righteousness and sweet employ:  
He makes my soul His care;**

Early and late doth bless,  
And crowneth work and purpose with success.

“O blessed be His name!  
My Father cares for me!  
I can no longer unbelieving be;  
All praise to Him proclaim;  
I know He is my Friend—  
I know the Lord will love me to the end!”

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Excerpt from C H Spurgeon's sermon

**Mr. Fearing Comforted**

Mt 14:31 "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?":

"In temporal circumstances, God has not made for his people a smooth path to heaven. Before they are crowned they must fight; before they can enter the celestial city they must fulfill a weary pilgrimage. Religion helps us in trouble, but it does not suffer us to escape from it. It is through much tribulation that we inherit the kingdom. Now the Christian when he is full of faith passes through affliction with a song in his mouth; he would enter the fiery furnace itself, fearless of the devouring flame, or with Jonah he would descend into the great deeps, unalarmed at the hungry sea. **As long as faith maintains its hold, fear is a stranger;** but at times, during sundry great and sore troubles, the Christian begins to **fear** that surely at last he shall be overcome, and shall be left to himself to die and perish in despair... **Why did Simon Peter doubt?** He doubted for two reasons.

First, because he looked too much to second causes and secondly, because he looked too little at the first cause. The answer will suit you also, my trembling brother. **This is the reason why you doubt, because you are looking too much to the things that are seen, and too little to your unseen Friend who is behind your troubles and who shall come forth for your deliverance.** See poor Peter in the ship—his Master bids him come; in a moment he casts himself into the sea, and to his own surprise he finds himself walking the billows. He looks down, and actually it is the fact; his foot is upon a crested wave, and yet he stands erect; he treads again, and yet his footing is secure. "Oh!" thinks Peter, "this is marvellous." He begins to wonder within his spirit what manner of man he must be who has enabled him thus to tread the treacherous deep; but just then, there comes howling across the sea a terrible blast of wind; it whistles in the ear of Peter, and he says within himself, "Ah! here comes an enormous billow driven forward by the blast now, surely, I must, I shall be overwhelmed." No sooner does the thought enter his heart than down he goes; and the waves begin to enclose him. So long as he shut his eye to the billow, and to the blast, and kept it only open to the Lord who stood there before him, he did not sink; but the moment he shut his eye on Christ, and looked at the stormy wind and treacherous deep, down he went. He might have traversed the leagues of the Atlantic, he might have crossed the broad Pacific, if he could but have kept his eye on Christ, and ne'er a billow would have yielded to his tread, but he might have been drowned in a very brook if he began to look at second causes, and to forget the Great Head and Master of the Universe who had bidden him walk the sea. I say, the very reason of Peter's doubt was, that he looked at second causes and not at the first cause. Now, that is the reason why you doubt. Let me just probe you now for a while. You are in despondency about temporal affairs: what is the reason why you are in trouble? "Because," say you, "I never was in such a condition before in my life. Wave upon wave of trouble comes upon me. I have lost one friend and then another. It seems as if business had altogether run away from me. Once I had a flood-tide, and now it is an ebb, and my poor ship grates upon the gravel, and I find she has not water enough to float her—what will become of me? And, oh! sir, my enemies have conspired against me in every way to cut me up and destroy me; opposition upon opposition threatens me. My shop must be closed; bankruptcy stares me in the face, and I know not what is to become of me." Or else your troubles take another shape, and you feel that you are called to some eminently arduous service for your Lord, and your strength is utterly insignificant compared with the labor before you. If you had great faith it would be as much as you could do to accomplish it; but with your poor little faith you are completely beaten. You cannot see how you can accomplish the matter at all. **Now, what is all this but simply looking at second causes? You are looking at your trouble, not at the God who sent your trouble; you are looking at yourselves, not at the God who dwells within you, and who has promised to sustain you.** O soul! it were enough to make the mightiest heart doubt, if it should look only at things that are seen. He that is nearest to the kingdom of heaven would have cause to droop and die if he had nothing to look at but that which eye can see and ear can hear. What wonder then if thou art disconsolate, when thou hast begun to look at the things which always must be enemies to faith?

But I would remind you that you have forgotten to look to Christ since you have been in this trouble. Let me ask you, have you not thought less of Christ than you ever did? I will not suppose that you have neglected prayer, or have left your Bible unread; but still, have you had any of those sweet thoughts of Christ which once you had? Have you been able to take all your troubles to him and say—"Lord, thou knowest all things; I trust all in thy hands?" Let me ask you, have you considered that Christ is **omnipotent**, and

therefore able to deliver you; that he is **faithful**, and must deliver you, because he has promised to do so? Have you not kept your eye on his rod, and not on his hand? Have you not looked rather to the crook that smote you, than to the heart that moved that crook? **Oh, recollect, that you can never find joy and peace while you are looking at the things that are seen, the second causes of your trouble; your only hope, your only refuge and joy must be to look to Him who dwells within the veil.** Peter sunk when he looked to outward providences, so must you. He would never have ceased to walk the wave, never would he have begun to sink, if he had looked alone to Christ, nor will you if you will look alone to him.

And here let me now begin to argue with such of you as are the people of God, who are in sore trouble lest Christ should leave you to sink. Let me forbid your fears by a few words of consolation. You are now in Peter's condition; you are like Peter; you are Christ's servant. Christ is a good master. You have never heard that he suffered one of his servants to be drowned when going on his errands. Will he not take care of his own? Shall it be said at last that one of Christ's disciples perished while he was in obedience to Christ. I say he were a bad master if he should send you on an errand that would involve your destruction. Peter, when he was in the water, was where his master had called him to be, and you in your trouble now, are not only Christ's servant, but you are where Christ has chosen to put you. **Your afflictions, remember, come neither from the east nor from the west, neither doth your trouble grow out of the ground. All your suffering is sent upon you by your God. The medicine which you now drink is compounded in heaven.** Every grain of this bitterness which now fills your mouth was measured by the heavenly physician. There is not an ounce more trouble in your cup, than God chose to put there. Your burden was weighed by God before you were called to bear it. The Lord who gave you the mercy has taken it away; the same God who has blessed you with joy is he that hath now ploughed you with grief. You are where God put you. Ask yourself this question then:—Can it be possible that Christ would put his own servant into a perilous condition and then leave him there? I have heard of fiends, in fables, tempting men into the sea to drown them; but is Christ a syren (a "Tempter")? Will he entice his people on to the rocks? Will he tempt them into a place where he shall destroy them? God forbid. If Christ calls thee into the fire, he will bring thee out of it; and if he bids thee walk the sea, he will enable thee to tread it in safety. **Doubt not, soul; if thou hadst come there of thyself, then thou mightest fear, but since Christ put thee there, he will bring thee out again.** Let this be the pillar of thy confidence—thou art his servant, he wilt not leave thee; thou art where he put thee, he cannot suffer thee to perish. Look away, then, from the trouble that surrounds thee, to thy Master, and to his hand that hath planned all these things.

Remember too, who it is that hath thee where thou art. It is no harsh tyrant who has led thee into trouble. It is no austere unloving heart who hath bidden thee pass through this difficulty to gratify a capricious whim. Ah, no, he who troubles thee is Christ. Remember his bleeding hand; and canst thou think that the hand which dropped with gore can ever hang down when it should be stretched for thy deliverance? Think of the eye that wept over thee on the cross; and can the eye that wept for thee be blind when thou art in grief? Think of the heart that was opened for thee; and shall the heart that did bleed its life away to rescue thee from death, be hard and stolid when thou art overwhelmed in sorrow? It is Christ, that stands on yonder billow in the midst of the tempest with thee. He is suffering as well as thou art. Peter is not the only one walking on the sea; his master is there with him too. And so is Jesus with thee to-day, with thee in thy troubles, suffering with thee as he suffered for thee. Shall he leave thee, he that bought thee, he who is married to thee, he that hath led thee thus far, hath succoured thee hitherto he who loves thee better than he loves himself, shall he forsake thee? O turn thine eyes from the rough billow, listen no longer to the howling tempest, turn thine eyes to him thy loving Lord, thy faithful friend, and fix thy trust on him, who even now in the midst of the tempest, cries, "It is I, be not afraid."

One other reflection will I offer to such of you as are now in sore trouble on account of temporal matters, and it is this—Christ has helped you hitherto. Should not this console you? Ah, Peter, why couldest thou fear that thou shouldest sink? It was miracle enough that thou didst not sink at first. What power is it that hath held thee up till now? Certainly not thine own. Thou hadst fallen at once to the bottom of the sea, O man, if God had not been thy helper; if Jesus had not made thee buoyant, Peter, thou wouldest soon have been a floating carcass. He who helped thee then to walk so long as thou couldest walk, surely he is able to help thee all the way until he shall grasp thy hand in Paradise to glorify thee with himself. Let any Christian look back to his past life, and he will be astonished that he is what he is and where he is. The whole Christian life is a series of miracles, wonders linked into wonders, in one perpetual chain. Marvel, believer, that thou hast been upheld till now; and cannot he that hath kept thee to this day preserve thee to the end? What is yon roaring wave that threatens to overwhelm thee—what is it? why thou hast endured greater waves than these in the past. What is yon howling blast? Why, he has saved thee when the wind was howling worse than that. He that helped thee in six troubles will not forsake thee in this. He who hath delivered thee out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear, he will not, he cannot forsake thee now.

In all this, I have labored to turn your eyes from what you are seeing to that which you cannot see, but in which you must believe. Oh! if I might but be successful, though feeble my words, yet mighty should be the consolation which should flow therefrom.

A minister of Christ, who was always in the habit of visiting those whom he knew to be eminent for piety, in order that he might learn from them, called upon an aged Christian who had been distinguished for his holiness. To his great surprise, however, when he sat down by his bedside, the erred man said, "Ah! I have lost my way. I did think at one time that I was a child of God, now I find that I have been a stumbling-block to others; for these forty years I have deceived the church and deceived myself, and now I discover

that I am a lost soul." The minister very wisely said to him, "Ah! then I suppose you like the song of the drunkard and you are very fond of the amusements of the world and delight in profanity and sin?" "Ah! no," said he, "I cannot bear them, I could not endure to sin against God." "O then," said the minister, "then it is not at all likely that God will lock you up in hell with men that you cannot bear here. If now you hate sin, depend on it God will not shut you up for ever with sinners. But, my brother," said the minister "tell me what has brought you into such a distressed state of mind?" "O sir," said he, "it was looking away from the God of providence, to myself I had managed to save about one hundred pounds, and I have been lying here ill now this last six months, and I was thinking that my one hundred pounds would soon be spent, and then what should I do. I think I shall have to go to the workhouse, I have no friend to take care of me, and I have been thinking about that one hundred pounds of mine. I knew it would soon be gone, and then, then, how could the Lord provide for me. I never had either doubt or fear till I began to think about temporal matters. The time was when I could leave all that with God. If I had not had one hundred pounds, I should have felt quite sure he would provide for me; but I begin to think now that I cannot provide for myself. The moment I think of that, my heart is darkened." The minister then led him away from all trust in an arm of flesh, and told him his dependence for bread and water was not on his one hundred pounds, but on the God who is the possessor of heaven and earth—that as for his bread being given him and his water being sure God would take care of that, for in so doing he would only be fulfilling his promise. The poor man was enabled in the matter of providence to cast himself entirely upon God, and then his doubts and fears subsided, and once more he began to walk the sea of trouble, and did not sink. O believer, if thou takest thy business into thine own hands, thou wilt soon be in trouble. The old Puritan said, "He that carves for himself will soon cut his fingers," and I believe it. There never was a man who began to take his own matters out of God's hand that was not glad enough to take them back again. He that runs before the cloud runs a fool's errand. If we leave all our matters, temporal as well as spiritual, in the hand of God, we shall lack no good thing, and what is better still, we shall have no care, no trouble, no thought; we shall cast all our burden upon him for he careth for us. There is no need for two to care, for God to care and the creature too. If the Creator cares for us, then the creature may sing all day long with joy and gladness" ([Click here](#) to read entire sermon)

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#### Proverbs 29:25 Fear of Man Destroyed by Trust in God Sermon Notes of C H Spurgeon

The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe. — Proverbs 29:25

WE have here a double proverb: each half is true by itself; and, put together, the whole is forcible and full of teaching. He who fears man is in great danger from that very fact; he who trusts in the Lord is in no danger of any sort; trusting in the Lord is the great antidote against the fear of man.

#### **I. HERE IS A VERY COMMON EVIL.** "The fear of man bringeth a snare:"

1. It is thought by some to be a good; but it is in the best instance doubtful. Even virtue followed through dread of a fellow creature loses half its beauty, if not more.
2. It leads men into great sins at times-, snaring them, and holding them like birds taken by a fowler. Aaron yielded to popular clamor and made the calf. Saul cared more to be honored among the people than to please the Lord. Pilate feared that a charge would reach Caesar, and so he violated his conscience. Peter denied his Master for fear of a silly maid.
3. It keeps many from conversion: their companions would ridicule, their friends would be annoyed, they might be persecuted, and so they are numbered with the "fearful, and unbelieving."
4. It prevents others avowing their faith. They try to go to heaven through a back door. Remember, "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10).
5. It lowers the dignity of good men. David was a poor creature before Achish, and even Father Abraham made but a poor figure when he denied his wife.
6. It holds some believers in equivocal positions. Illustrations are far too abundant. Men fail to carry out their principles for fear of men.
7. It hampers the usefulness of very many: they dare not speak, or lead the way, though their efforts are greatly needed.
8. It hinders many in duties which require courage. Jonah will not go to Nineveh because he may be thought a false prophet if God forgives that city. Galatian preachers went aside to false doctrine to be considered wise, etc.
9. It is the cause of weakness in the Church. It is cowardly, shameful, dishonorable to Jesus, idolatrous, selfish, foolish. It should not be allowed by any man in his own case.

## II. HERE IS A VERY PRECIOUS SAFEGUARD. "Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe."

Not slavish fear of man, but childlike trust in the Lord will be the protection of the believer.

### 1. The truster is safe from fear of man.

God is with us, therefore we are strong, and need not fear.

We are determined, and will not fear.

We pray, and lose our fear.

We prepare for the worst, and fear vanishes.

### 2. The truster is safe from the result of men's anger.

It often never comes. God restrains the persecutor.

The loss which it inflicts if it does come is less than that which would be caused by cowardice.

When we trust in God any such loss is joyfully borne.

After all, what is there to fear? What can man do unto us? God being with us, our safety is perfect, continuous, eternal, even though the whole human race should besiege us.

## III. HERE IS A VERY GLORIOUS DOCTRINE. We may take in the widest sense the doctrine of the second sentence,— "Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe"—

From the damning and conquering power of sin.

From the overcoming force of temptation.

From the deadening effect of sorrow.

From the destroying force of Satan.

From death, and hell, and every evil

From all injury which men can inflict.

Will you fear a worm, or trust your God?

Break the snare in which fear has entangled you.

Enter the palace of safety by the door of trust.

## Warnings

The soul that cannot entirely trust God, whether man be pleased or displeased, can never long be true to him; for while you are eyeing man you are losing God, and stabbing religion at the very heart. — Manton

"Fear of man." Grim idol — bloody-mouthed — many souls he has devoured and trampled down into hell! His eyes are full of hatred to Christ's disciples. Scoffs and jeers lurk in his face. The laugh of the scorner growls in his throat. Cast down this idol. This keeps some of you from secret prayer, from worshipping God in your family, from going to lay your case before ministers, from openly confessing Christ. You that have felt God's love and Spirit, dash this idol to pieces. Who art thou, that thou should'st be afraid of a man that shall die? "Fear not, thou worm, Jacob." "What have I to do any more with idols?" — M'Cheyne

The difficulties attending an open confession of Christ are the occasion of multitudes making shipwreck of their souls. In many hopeful characters, that Scripture, "the fear of man bringeth a snare," is verified. Cato and the philosophers of Rome honored the gods of their country though unbelievers in the superstitions of their country. Plato was convinced of the unity of God, but durst not own his convictions, but said, "It was a truth, neither easy to find, nor safe to own." Even Seneca, the renowned moralist, was forced by temptation to dissemble his convictions, of whom Augustus said, "He worshipped what himself reprehended, and did what himself reproved." At the interruption which was given to the progress of the Reformation by the return of the Papists to power, some, as they went to mass, would exclaim, "Let us go to the common error." Thus, conviction is not conversion where there is no confession of Christ. — Salter

One fire puts out another. Nothing so effectually kills the fear of man as abundance of the fear of God. Faith is an armor to the soul,

and, clothed with it, men enter the thick of the battle without fear of wounds. Fear of man deadens conscience, distracts meditation, hinders holy activity, stops the mouth of testimony, and paralyzes the Christian's power. It is a cunning snare which some do not perceive, though they are already taken in

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## Handling Your Fears by Brian Bill

Summary: Go down into the valley and employ these seven tactics in order to slay your giants.

I read this week that at least 322 unique phobias have been identified. Phobia comes from the Greek word for fear, and refers to a panic that is completely out of proportion to the perceived threat behind it. Extreme cases of a phobia can result in escalated anxiety and full-fledged panic attacks. Here are some of the top fear factors.

- #9: Brontophobia is not the fear of brontosaurus; it's the terror of thunderstorms. We've certainly had our share of those this spring.
- #5: Claustrophobia is the fear of being trapped in a small confined space.
- #1: Arachnophobia, or the fear of spiders, is the number #1 fear of people; affecting half of all women (it's actually 5 out of 5 in my household).

Here are two other phobias. Can you guess their definitions?

- Ecclesiophobia Fear of church
- Homilophobia Fear of sermons

If you have these two horrors today, you're in trouble. We've all experienced fear at one time or another. One person writes that fear is "the oldest and strongest emotion of mankind." I know that I have aquaphobia, an intense fear of water, as a result of watching one of my friends drown when I was 18-years-old. Jonathon Falwell writes: "So many Christians never achieve the maximum potential in their lives because they never conquer the thing they fear the most."

The nation of Israel had an intense fear that we could call phee-phy-phobia, or the fear of giants (I made that phobia up). I'd like to borrow a phrase from Max Lucado's outstanding book "Facing Your Giants" right at the beginning of the message. If you get this, you'll get the sermon today: Focus on giants – you stumble; Focus on God – your giants tumble.

Today we're going to take a look at what is perhaps the best-known Bible story of all time. The downside of doing this is that some of you will be tempted to say, "I already know that story" and then check out. Please don't do that. Let's learn together from God's Word. Please turn in your Bible to 1 Samuel 17 where we read the account of David and Goliath. The Philistines were the arch enemies of Israel and had gathered for war against God's people. Notice 1 Sa 17:3: "The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them." Neither side wanted to come down into the valley where they would be vulnerable.

As we walk through this encounter, I want to draw out seven strategies to help us go down into the valley and meet our fears head-on.

### 1. Describe your problem.

In 1 Sa 17:4-7, we read about a Philistine champion named Goliath who was more than two feet taller than Shaquille O'Neal. Most commentators estimate that he was 9 feet 9 inches tall. He was decked out in body armor that weighed 125 pounds and was armed with a javelin, and a spear. He also had a shield bearer out in front. This mammoth of a man challenged the Israelites to a smackdown fight as he belched out blasphemies against God. Have you ever noticed that the enemy is always well-armed?

In verses 8-10, Goliath lays out a challenge. Look at 1 Sa 17:10: "This day I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other." The word "defy" is used six different times in this passage and means "to treat with contempt or scorn; to taunt, ridicule and humiliate." What Goliath is proposing was quite common back then. It's like a one-on-one contest, with the winner taking all. Each side would send a representative to the valley and the two would fight. If the Philistine won, then the Israelites would have to surrender; if the Israelite won, the Philistines would surrender. The problem was that no one wanted to engage the enraged giant. In fact, according to 1 Sa 17:11, they were "dismayed and terrified." These are powerful words which mean broken and filled with fear.

This giant of a problem wasn't going away either. Verse 16 tells us that Goliath had come out and challenged them 80 times – every morning and every night for 40 days. In the Bible, 40 days is often associated with periods of testing and trial. The question before them was this: Would they flee or would they put their faith in God? According to 1 Sa 17:24, "...they all ran away in great fear." Chuck Swindoll adds, "Intimidation is our major battle when we face giants." I was on the wrestling team when I was in high school, losing more matches than I won. Of those I lost, most were decided before I even stepped out onto the mat. When I would watch my

opposing gladiator step up on the scale before the meet and see rippling muscles and a snarl on his face, I was pinned before the whistle blew.

Friend, what kind of giant are you facing right now? In what area do you feel most intimidated and overwhelmed? What problem is paralyzing you? What is the first thing you think about in the morning and the last thing that fills your mind before you go to bed at night? Max Lucado writes: "Your Goliath doesn't carry sword or shield; he brandishes blades of unemployment, abandonment, sexual abuse, or depression. Your giant doesn't parade up and down the hills of Elah; he prances through your office, your bedroom, your classroom. He brings bills you can't pay, grades you can't make, people you can't please, whiskey you can't resist, pornography you can't refuse, a career you can't escape, a past you can't shake, and a future you can't face."

Describe your problem but don't stay there. Give it a name but don't live with shame. David framed it this way: "who is this uncircumcised Philistine?" Alcoholics Anonymous has been so successful because members have to put words to the giant they are facing: "Hi, my name is Sam and I'm an alcoholic." This is just the first step. Let's move quickly to the next principle because we'll see that when we focus on our giants, we'll stumble; but when we focus on God, our giants will tumble.

## **2. Make sure you're prepared.**

It's at this point in the story that we're introduced to David. He was the youngest of eight boys and had been out taking care of sheep. He was asked to run an errand by his dad because his three oldest brothers were at the battlefield. David's dad wants a report on how they're doing and he also wants to send them some supplies. David delivers five pounds of roasted grain, ten loaves of bread, and ten chunks of cheese 18 miles from Bethlehem to the Elah Valley...and he runs all the way. David was faithful in his tasks. He did common things uncommonly well. According to verse 20, he left the sheep in the care of another shepherd. We also know from 1 Sa 16:13, that he was prepared spiritually because he had been anointed by God to be the next king: "...the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power."

We're jumping ahead a bit, but it's also important to note that David's past experiences prepared him for this present challenge. When speaking to King Saul, he told him that he had killed a lion and a bear in 1 Sa 17:37: "The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." Incidentally, we know that David was from Wisconsin because he brought cheese to the front lines. We also know he played for the Packers because the Bible says that he killed Bears and Lions...and he's about to defeat the Giants!

Friend, draw on God's past faithfulness and don't discount what God is doing in your life right now. One commentator puts it this way: "This is often God's pattern for preparation. He calls us to be faithful right where we're at, and then uses our faithfulness to accomplish greater things for Him." He's preparing you today for battles tomorrow. Be faithful to what he's called you to do and be filled with God's Spirit. Everything that David accomplishes is through the Spirit of God. Make sure you are totally sold out. One way you can publicly express your commitment to Christ is through baptism. Our next service is this coming Sunday.

One other thought. Adults, let's make sure we don't look down on young people today. Paul wrote these words to his young understudy in 1 Timothy 4:12: "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." David was a teenager and he tangled with a giant. Did you know that 29 of our students went up to Chicago a couple weeks ago to learn how to share their faith and that many of them are sharing Jesus on a regular basis? You might also be interested to know that Kyle Sullan, who is in Junior High, designed the artwork for this series. Another Junior Higher, David Grimes, played in our worship band this morning. Several teens were involved in the Living Lord's Supper and in our Easter service, including Michael Fry, who wore a sandwich board here at church to direct cars to the high school in case people showed up here. I heard this week that one of our teens is sharing Christ with her Muslim boss and another was approached out of the blue in Kmart by someone wanting to talk about religion.

David was chosen for his character, not his credentials; for his faith, not his physique. He knew this to be true:

**Focus on giants – you stumble;**

**Focus on God – your giants tumble.**

## **3. Overcome pressure from others.**

David arrives on Day 40 and hears the giant boasting and cursing. In 1 Sa 17:25, he finds out that the king will give great wealth, his daughter to be the victor's wife, and would grant tax amnesty (that sounds good on April 15th, doesn't it?) to whoever kills the giant. David can't take the giant's defiance any longer and in verse 26 he declares, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

David's older brother became enraged and basically told David to go back to his cheese curds and little lambs. Look at verse 28: "Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert? I know how conceited you are and

how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle.” Can you hear how belittling this is to little David? Eliab is a warrior while David just takes care of a few sheep. He trivialized David’s tasks in order to knock him down to size. He wasn’t getting any support from his siblings. Let me warn you. You will be criticized by those closest to you when you decide to defeat some giants in your life. Expect it and then overcome it.

Some of you are experiencing incredible pressure from your family right now. Instead of helping, you feel like they are hurting you. If you want to face your giants you’re going to face opposition. Don’t allow negative comments to nullify what God wants to do in your life. I love how David responds to his brother in 1 Sa 17:29: “Now what have I done?” Doesn’t that sound like something a younger sibling would say? But then he comes back to truth in the last part of the verse, as recorded in the King James Version: “Is there not a cause?” Here’s the point: allow the cause to overcome any criticism you are facing. Related to this, stop blaming others and start believing what God can do. Instead of finding fault with your family, your friends or your foes put your faith in a faithful God. David was distressed by what his brother said but he was not deterred by him.

After being bullied by his brother, Saul, the King of Israel, heard about David’s courageous candor and sent for him. In 1 Sa 17:32, David said to Saul, “Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him.” Saul tries to dismiss David’s bravado but David reminds Saul how he had killed a lion and a bear. He had been up against the wall before and had seen God go to battle for him. Saul then told David to go for it and tried to give him his armor, but since it didn’t fit, David discarded it. Don’t try to fight your giants with someone else’s solution.

Eliab dissed his brother and Saul dismissed him. Charles Spurgeon suggests that “the word-battle, in which he had to engage with his brothers and with King Saul, was a more trying ordeal to him than going forth in the strength of the Lord to smite the uncircumcised boaster. Many a man meets with more trouble from his friends than from his enemies; and when he has learned to overcome the depressing influence of prudent friends, he makes short work of the opposition of avowed adversaries.” Remember this:

**Focus on giants – you stumble;**

**Focus on God – your giants tumble.**

#### **4. Change your perspective.**

Haddon Robinson once said:

“In any situation, what you ARE determines what you see;  
what you SEE determines what you DO.”

This is similar to the report that the ten spies brought back in Numbers 13:33: “We saw the Nephilim there...We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.” Everyone else thought Goliath, who was a descendant of the Nephilim, was too big to hit; David saw him as too big to miss. Friend, if you see yourself as a victim, that’s how you’ll react; if you see yourself as a victor, that’s how you’ll respond.

In 1952, a young woman named Florence Chadwick attempted to swim from Catalina Island to the California coast. When she entered the water a heavy fog rolled in and blinded her as she was swimming. Becoming discouraged and disoriented, she gave up and her escorts in a boat pulled her out of the water but hesitated to tell her the truth – she was less than 300 yards from the goal. When she found out how close she was, she exclaimed: “All I could see was hopeless.” Her clouded vision kept her from victory. Some of you would say, “All I can see is hopeless.”

**(EDITORIAL NOTE: HERE IS THE END OF THE STORY WITH FLORENCE CHADWICK** - In 1950 Florence Chadwick crossed the English Channel in record time and the next year crossed in the other direction. In 1952 she attempted to swim the 26 miles from Catalina Island to California, but after 15 hours a thick fog set in causing her to begin to doubt her ability to complete her course. After telling her mother she didn’t think she could make it, she swam for an hour and still unable to see the coastline due to the fog, stopped swimming. It wasn’t until she got into the boat that she learned that the shore was less than half a mile away. At the news conference she said: ‘All I could see was the fog. I think if I could have seen the shore I would have made it’. **Two months later, she tried again, but this time when the thick fog set in, she continued to swim, because she focused on her goal, the shore.** Beloved, we all experience “dense fog” from time to time for a variety of reasons, and it becomes difficult to fix our eyes on our goal ([Php 3:14+](#)), Christ Jesus, the Author and Finisher of the race of faith [Heb 12:2+](#)).

Almost 40 years ago, Ray and Berniece Tuley and a handful of others saw through the fog and believed that God wanted a new Bible-believing and Bible-preaching church in Livingston County. In particular, they wanted a church that was committed to evangelism and world missions. I am always encouraged when I talk to Ray because he often reminds me of Proverbs 29:18:

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.” About six weeks ago, Ray showed up at church early one morning with a couple red yard signs that said, “Easter at the Auditorium.” He told me that we needed to get the word out about Easter and then reminded me that we should have a big banner out front before Super Wal-Mart opens. When he left I smiled because while he’s in his 80s, he has not lost his vision. His perspective is right on. This past week Ray gave me a call to express his thoughts about our Easter service. I’d like to read what he said: “I’m walking on ‘Cloud-Nine.’ I’ve been waiting almost 40 years for a service like that! I expected a good crowd but I never expected a crowd that big...when the Lord fills it up, He runs it over...the only thing lacking now is a new auditorium for us that is filled every Sunday!”

If you’re paralyzed by fear or feel hopeless about the future, it’s time to change your perspective.

**Focus on giants – you stumble;**

**Focus on God – your giants tumble.**

## **5. Proclaim God’s Name.**

When Goliath came closer to David and saw that he was just a boy, he despised him and boomed out boldly in 1 Sa 17:43: “Am I a dog that you come at me with sticks?” The veritable wordsmith Max Lucado captures the contrast: “The toothpick versus the tornado; the mini-bike attacking the eighteen-wheeler; the toy poodle taking on the Rottweiler.” After taunting him, he called out a curse on David and declared that he would feed him to the birds and the beasts. David now does something that no one else had even thought of – he took God off the shelf and introduced the Almighty into the equation. He alone was concerned about God’s honor and the people’s reputation. Friend, have you introduced God into the equation? Or, is He still up on your shelf?

I love David’s response in verse 45. Listen carefully for the name Jehovah Sabaoth, which means “the God of power,” or the Commander of the Hosts of Heaven. His teenage voice was probably cracking: “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, [Jehovah Sabaoth] the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.” David then describes in great detail what he will do to Goliath and declares in 1 Sa 17:47: “All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD’s, and he will give all of you into our hands.” The wrestling match is over right here. Goliath the gladiator is as good as dead.

Amos 4:13 describes this name of God in greater detail: “He who forms the mountains, creates the wind, and reveals his thoughts to man, he who turns dawn to darkness, and treads the high places of the earth--the LORD God Almighty [Jehovah Sabaoth] is his name.” When we truly understand this name for God we will never view Him the same again. He has unlimited power, unbridled might and untarnished glory. He is impossible to describe and incredible to imagine. In contrast to Goliath, God is the Creator of the world. The tallest man in the world makes the rest of us seem small but when viewed from the top of the Sears Tower, he’s barely visible. If you want to minimize your Goliaths, then you must magnify your God.

I turn again to Lucado: “No one else discusses God. David discusses no one else but God...David sees what others don’t and refuses to see what others do...David majors in God. He sees the giant, mind you; he just sees God more so.” If you were to count the number of times David makes a statement about Goliath, you would find only two. Now listen to the number of times he refers to God:

“The armies of the living God” (1 Sa 17:26).

“The armies of the living God” (1 Sa 17:36).

“The Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel” (1 Sa 17:45).

“The Lord will deliver you into my hand...that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel” (1 Sa 17:46).

“The Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s and He will give you into our hands” (1 Sa 17:47).

David refers to God nine times in this passage, compared to only two times for Goliath. We would experience much more victory if our God-thoughts would outnumber our Goliath-thoughts four-to-one. This week try to think about God four times as much as you think about your problems. Focus on His faithfulness instead of your fears. In the movie “Facing the Giants,” the football coach, after spending some time in the Word and prayer, has an epiphany and concludes: “Our goal is not to win games; it’s to honor God.”

Friend, if you want to file your fears, remember that it is God who fights for you. The only way to face your giants is through faith in God. You are not fighting alone. David stated very clearly in verse 26 that God is the “living God.” As that song says, “The Battle belongs to the Lord.” Verbalize your confidence in God. Say His name out loud. It will help the words become real for you. Measure the giants you face against the greatness of God, not yourself. To David, the giant was an opportunity to know God better, not an obstacle to his faith.

**Focus on giants – you stumble;  
Focus on God – your giants tumble.**

## **6. Be proactive; don't procrastinate.**

As we learned last week, to decide to delay is to decide to deny. David decided that he had to do something about the problem right then and there and so he picked up what he was familiar with – his staff and his slingshot, and then found five smooth stones and went off in search of the giant. The stones were smooth because they'd fly through the air better. Some have wondered why he chose five stones. Perhaps it was because he had four brothers. I think it was because he wanted some in reserve just in case he missed. When I was younger I used to go deer hunting with my dad. He used to always say that he only needed one slug to take down his deer. As I got older I realized that while this was often the case, he always filled his clip with four or five more. The principle here is to use what you have. Augustine once said, "Without God, we cannot; without us, He will not."

By the way, just yesterday I watched a special on the History Channel that proved the accuracy of this account. After demonstrating that a stone from a sling can travel up to 100 miles an hour and kill a man, the narrator added these words: "We find yet another part of the biblical story is true."

In David's eyes, God was the giant and Goliath was Bambi. He was so confident in Jehovah Sabaoth as the commander of the armies of heaven that the Bible says that "he ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him." Friend, if you want to be victorious, you must take the fight to the enemy. In our jargon, we might say, "Game on!" You can't sit back and just hope it will get better on its own. And with one stone from his sling, he slayed the giant. Do you know that this is the first time that anything like that had entered his head? That reminds me of Isaiah 54:17: "No weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you."

Lucado writes:

"How long since you ran toward your challenge? We tend to retreat, duck behind a desk or crawl into a nightclub of distraction or a bed of forbidden love. For a moment, a day, or a year, we feel safe, insulated, anesthetized, but then the work runs out, the liquor wears off, or the lover leaves and we feel Goliath again. Booming. Bombastic. Try a different tack. Rush your giant with a God-saturated soul – 'Giant of divorce, you aren't entering my home! Giant of depression? It may take a lifetime, but you won't conquer me. Giant of alcohol, bigotry...you're going down.' How long since you loaded your sling and took a swing at your giant?"

Ray Pritchard asks the question:

At what point did Goliath die? Was it when David cut off his head? No, not really. It must have been when the stone hit him. No, not even then. Was it when he picked up the five smooth stones? No. Was it when he told Goliath what he was going to do? Nope, but you're close. Goliath was a dead man when we read in verse 40 that he "approached the Philistine." Friends, faith is not talking about the giant or even praying about the giant. Faith is taking the first step. The other day I was talking to someone and she wondered what she should do about a complicated situation. My answer was this: "Just take the next step. You might not know what the third step is but you know the next step. Take it."

Friend, it's time to face your fears! Look your enemy in the eye and flee no more. Take the next step.

**Focus on giants – you stumble;  
Focus on God – your giants tumble.**

## **7. Profess faith in God's Champion.**

Goliath is called a "**champion**" in 1 Sa 17:4. This Hebrew word actually means "a man-between" or "middle-man" or "mediator." Just as he was a representative for the Philistines, God's ultimate champion is Jesus, the Son of David, who is our mediator. 1 Timothy 2:5: "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." When Jesus won the battle against Satan at the Cross, those who he represents join in that victory. There are actually some pretty cool comparisons between David's victory and Jesus' victory.

- > Both were born in Bethlehem.
- > Both fought when their enemy was able to dominate through fear.
- > Both were sent to the battlefield by their father.
- > Both were rejected and scorned by their own brethren.
- > Both fought a battle where the victory was assured before it started.

- > Both disarmed the enemy and rendered him powerless.

Listen to these words from "A Mighty Fortress is our God."

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing;

Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing:

Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He;

Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age the same,

And He must win the battle.

If you are a Christian, then Jesus is your champion. That means you are fighting battles that have already been won. Because Jesus triumphed over Satan, so have you! 1 Peter 5:8 says that Satan is still prowling around like a roaring lion, trying to strike fear in you but we must remember that "the right man is on our side...and He has won the battle."

Lift your eyes, giant-slayer. Go down into the valley and employ these seven tactics:

- > Describe your problem
- > Make sure you're prepared
- > Overcome pressure from others
- > Change your perspective
- > Proclaim God's name
- > Be proactive
- > Profess faith in God's champion

Friend, who are you listening to? You can listen to the voice of your giants or you can listen to the voice of truth. Be faithful, not fearful. ([Handling Your Fears](#))

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Excerpt from Spurgeon's Sermon "Fear Not"

"Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel;  
I will help thee, saith the Lord and thy redeemer the Holy one of Israel."  
—Isaiah 41:14.

And now comes the last point, upon which I shall be brief. We must, then, LABOR TO GET RID, AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, OF FEAR. The prophet says, "Fear not;" thou art a worm, but do not fear; God will help thee; why shouldst thou fear? Let us labor to get rid of fear, when we are not certain we are serving our Master. And let these be our reasons:

**Get rid of fear, because fear is painful.**

How it torments the spirit! When the Christian trusts, he is happy; when he doubts, he is miserable. When the believer looks to his Master and relies upon him, he can sing; when he doubts his Master, he can only groan. What miserable wretches the most faithful Christians are when they once begin doubting and fearing! It is a trade I never like to meddle with, because it never pays the expenses, and never brings in any profit—the trade of doubting. Why, the soul is broken in pieces, lanced, pricked with knives, dissolved, racked, pained. It knoweth not how to exist when it gives way to fear. Up, Christian! thou art of a sorrowful countenance; up, and chase thy fears. Why wouldst thou be for ever groaning in thy dungeon? Why should the Giant Despair for ever beat thee with his crabtree cudgel? Up! drive him away! touch the key of the promises; be of good cheer! Fear never helped thee yet, and it never will.

**Fear, too, is weakening.**

Make a man afraid—he will run at his own shadow; make a man brave, and he will stand before an army and overcome them. He will never do much good in the world who is afraid of men. The fear of God bringeth blessings, but the fear of men bringeth a snare, and such a snare that many feet have been tripped by it. No man shall be faithful to God, if he is fearful of man; no man shall find his arm sufficient for him, and his might equal to his emergencies unless he can confidently believe, and quietly wait. We must not fear; for fear is weakening.

**Again; we must not fear; for fear dishonors God.**

Doubt the Eternal, distrust the Omnipotent? O, traitorous fear! thickest thou that the arm which piled the heavens, and sustains the pillars of the earth shall ever be palsied? Shall the brow which eternal ages have rolled over without scathing it, at last be furrowed by old age? What! shall the Eternal fail thee? Shall the faithful Promiser break his oath? Thou dishonorest God, O unbelief! Get thee hence! God is too wise to err, too good to be unkind; leave off doubting him, and begin to trust him, for in so doing, thou wilt put a crown on his head, but in doubting him thou dost trample his crown beneath thy feet.

**And lastly, doubt not the Lord, O Christian; for in so doing thou dost lower thyself.**

The more thou believest, the greater thou art; but the more thou doubttest, the less thou becomest. It was said of the worlds conqueror, that when he was sick, he puled like a child. "Give me some drink," cried one, like a sick girl, it was said to his dishonor. And is it not to the dishonor of a Christian, who lives in secret on his God, and professes to trust alone in him, that he can not trust him; that a little child will overcome his faith? O, poor cockle-shell boat, that is upset by a rain-drop! O poor puny Christian that is overcome by every straw, that stumbles at every stone! Then, Christian men, behave like men! It is childish to doubt; it is manhood glory to trust. Plant your foot upon the immoveable Rock of Ages; lift your eye to heaven; scorn the world; never play craven; bend your fist in the world's face, and bid defiance to it and hell, and you are a man, and noble. But crouch, and cringe, and dread, and doubt, and you have lost your Christian dignity and are no longer what you should be. You do not honor God. "Fear not, thou worm Jacob; I will help thee, saith the Lord." Then why shouldst thou fear?

I feel that my voice fails me, and with it my very powers of thought too, and therefore I can only turn to my comrades in arms, in the good war of Christ, and I say to them, brethren, you and I can do nothing of ourselves; we are poor puny things; but let us attempt great things, for God is with us; let us dare great things, for God will not leave us. Remember what he has done aforetime; and remember what he has done of old he will do again. Remember David the shepherd-boy. Think ye well of Shamgar, with his ox-goad. Forget ye not the jawbone of the ass, and the stone from the sling. If these worked wonders, why should not we? If little things have done great things, let us try to do great things also. You know not, ye atoms, but that your destiny is sublime. Try and make it so by faith; and the least of you may be mighty through the strength of God. O for grace to trust God, and there is no telling what ye can do. Worms, ye are nothing, but ye have eaten princes; worms ye are nothing, but ye have devoured the roots of cedars, and laid them level with the earth; worms, ye are nothing, but ye have piled rocks in the deep, deep sea, and wrecked mighty navies; worms, ye have eaten through the keel of the proudest ship that ever sailed the ocean. If ye have done this yourselves, what can not we do? your strength lies in your mouths; our strength lies in ours too. We will use our mouths in prayer, and in constant adoration, and we shall conquer yet, for God is with us, and victory is sure.

Ye trembling souls! dismiss your fears;

Be mercy all your theme:

Mercy, which, like a river, flows

In one continued stream.

Fear not the powers of earth and hell;

God will these powers restrain;

His mighty arm their rage repel,

And make their efforts vain.

Fear not the want of outward good;

He will for his provide,

Grant them supplies of daily food,

And all they need beside.

Fear not that he will e'er forsake,

Or leave his work undone;

He's faithful to his promises—

And faithful to his Son.

Fear not the terrors of the grave,

Or death's tremendous sting;

He will from endless wrath preserve—

To endless glory bring.

## Biblical Resources

### How To Handle Fear

1. How To Handle Fear Part 1
2. How To Handle Fear Part 2
3. How To Handle Fear Part 3
4. How To Handle Fear Part 4
5. [The Fear of the Lord](#)

#### Related Resources:

- Anxiety (merimna) - Word Study
- Anxious, be anxious (merimnao) - Word Study
- [Anxiety-Worry-Quotes, Devotionals & Illustrations](#)
- Jesus' solution "Do not be worried" Mt 6:25ff
- Paul's Solution - Philippians 4:6; Philippians 4:7
- Peter's Solution - Cast your cares on God - 1 Peter 5:7
- [Numbers 14:22-23 Unbelief the Thief - from Pastor Chuck Smith](#)
- Worry - What is it?
- [Overcoming Fear and Insecurity - Bible Study - In Touch Ministries](#)
- [Faith vs. fear - what does the Bible say?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about fear?](#)
- [Is it true that fear is a liar?](#)
- [How can a Christian overcome the fear of witnessing?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about having a phobia?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about panic attacks?](#)
- [How can I overcome my fear of the end of days?](#)
- [What does "perfect love casts out fear" mean?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about worry?](#)
- [How is the fear of man a snare \(Proverbs 29:25\)?](#)
- [How is the fear of the Lord the beginning of wisdom?](#)
- [What does it mean to have the fear of God?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about anxiety?](#)
- [How can I overcome the fear of death? How can I stop being scared of dying?](#)
- [What Can I Do With My Worry?](#) Booklets From Discovery House
- [When Fear Seems Overwhelming](#) Booklets From Discovery House
- [Overcoming Worry](#) Booklets From Discovery House
- [John Piper's Studies on Fear & Anxiety](#)
  - [Anxieties: To Be Cast Not Carried - 1 Peter 5:1-11](#) - John Piper
  - [Battling the Unbelief of Anxiety - Matthew 6:25-34](#) - John Piper
  - [Fear Not, I Am with You, I Am Your God Isaiah 41:1-13](#) - John Piper
  - [Fear Not, You Worm Jacob! Isaiah 41:14](#) - John Piper
  - [Perfect Love Casts Out Fear 1 John 4:17-19](#) - John Piper
- [Fear of Death by Henry Law \(1797-1884\)](#)
- [Spiritual Fears by Henry Law](#)
- [Fear And Its Remedy](#)
- [Facing Fears - Charles Stanley](#)
- Devotionals on How to Handle Fear

- [Five Fears](#) by C H Spurgeon
- [Faith Overcoming Fear](#) -- Biblical sermon by David Curtis
- [Freedom From Fear](#) by Steve Zeisler
- [Life Dispels Fear](#) by Ron Ritchie
- [Faith Conquering Fear](#) by Ray Stedman
- [Why are you Afraid?](#) by Ray Stedman
- [Handling Your Fears](#) by Brian Bill
- [A Worried Christian?](#) by John MacArthur
- [God's Way of Peace - A Book for the Anxious](#) by Horatio Bonar