



NO FEAR

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PREVIEW

Fear has a way of making time stand still, and it multiplies itself in a nasty way. But faith in God's plan brings peace that abolishes immobilizing fear.

PRAISE

Read Psalm 56. In the context of this passage, David was a hostage of the Philistines. Although he expressed his fears to God, he had faith that God would deliver him.

Share experiences when you had a choice between fear and faith (e.g., recovering from an illness).

Lord, thank You for extending Your mighty hand and winning many victories for me. When I am fearful, You listen to my irrational thoughts and give me peace. I pray that when I am afraid I will learn to place my confidence in You.

PARABLE

Have you ever showed up to class positive that you were going to have a great day and suddenly the teacher announced she would be collecting the assignment you completely forgot about? In less than a minute, you jump from happily sipping your Starbucks to contemplating hiding in the bathroom to finish the assignment. Thoughts fly through your mind: Am I the only one who forgot? What if the teacher gives me no chance to re-do the assignment? What if I fail the class? What will my friends think? Your fears take you captive. Anxiety rears up its ugly head. Your palms break out in a sweat, and your heart beats like a jackhammer.

The teacher begins collecting assignments, and when she comes to you, you make the snap decision to be honest: "Sorry, I just forgot." You sit there with bated breath until she responds, "OK, turn it in tomorrow." You can't believe it! You feel like the most blessed person to walk the planet and think to yourself, That wasn't so bad.

PRESENT

We encounter irrational fears such as the fear of clowns. But we also have realistic fears like the death of a loved one. In your school, you may discover many students who deal with troubling situations surrounding their family or home environment. But they lack the ability to safely cope with their emotions and may resort to actions such as self-harm.

The reality of fear is that it places us in a position either to sin or to trust God. The connection between fear and sin is that it does not come from God. For example, we can find ourselves trying to please a crowd of people because we fear their disapproval.

So how do we navigate the fears we encounter?

First, the Holy Ghost can be the Comforter and restorer in everyone's life. In order to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, people must see that Jesus is God and realize that their sin separates them from Him. By turning away from their sin and toward God, they are able to receive the Holy Ghost.

Proverbs 3:7 instructs us not to be wise in our own eyes but to fear the Lord and depart from evil.

Those who fear God will turn away from sin. In turn, God fills their lives with perfect peace. Living a repentant life means continually turning away from one's own wisdom and placing everything in God's hands.

Instead of facing a problem and taking on the "I got this" attitude, consider taking the problem to God. Psalm 55:22 (NKJV) says, "Cast your burden on the LORD, and he shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved." By fearing God and allowing Him complete access, you are expressing a deeper level of faith than trying to do it on your own. But when you are restricting God's access to your problems, you are showing Him that you doubt His ability to be the solution.

Now, to be clear, fearing God does not mean being afraid of Him. Rather, it demonstrates that you understand God's character to be so righteous and mighty that you regard Him with the highest respect. In other words, He is the superhero who always saves the day. You know that when you call His name, He will come to your rescue—even if He waits until the very last second.

You can also activate faith by being bold. Sometimes God intentionally puts you in certain situations for a reason, so it is ridiculous to ask Him to get you out of them. In these moments, you can learn to grow your character and do the task at hand with excellence.

Let's say you feel God asking you to pray for another student, which makes you feel uncomfortable. You have two options: (a) be fearful and take so long to decide that the opportunity passes, or (b) take a bold step of faith. By taking that step of faith, you have the peace of knowing that you tried your best to please God, even if the outcome doesn't happen right away. Understand that when faith is involved, God is in charge of the outcomes. Your fears may not instantly melt away, but by faithfully giving them to God, you will recognize peace coming into your life.

Trusting God with your solution does not mean you can idly continue your life. To live a life of faith is to give God access every day through repentance, which cannot happen without a devoted prayer and fasting life. In Psalm 56, we see that David prayed and vented to God about his situation. Although he was scared, David praised and trusted God to fulfill His promises. When faced with fear, you should take David's example and seek God's face, place your burdens on Him, and praise Him.

PRACTICE

Isaiah 41:13 (NKJV) states, "For I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand, saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you'."

- 1 Identify common fears or concerns in your life.
- 2 Take those fears to God, and in your own words, express how you will give Him complete access to overcome those fears.
- 3 Listen. By completely surrendering, God now has an opportunity to give you direction.
- 4 Praise God for taking on your burden.

PRAY

Lord, I understand it is not Your plan for me to fear. I give You every worry that troubles my life and trust that You alone have the wisdom and power to overcome. Thank You for the situations you place me in to grow my character. I pray that I will not react in fear, but will learn to place everything in Your hands.

PLUS

Listen to the song "Perfect Peace" by Indiana Bible College

*(See **Philippians 4:4-7**.)*