

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

Phil O. Waldo
Lead Pastor



1224 Hancock Drive
Boone, Iowa 50036

Phone: 515 432-3329

Website: www.booneopenbible.com
E-mail: office@booneopenbible.com
pastor@booneopenbible.com

SERMON TITLE

Facing Fear

SERIES

DATE

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KEY SCRIPTURE

Psalm 27

SYNOPSIS

Fear looms all around, but the believer can overcome fear with God.

HIGHLIGHTS



☛Facing Fear

One summer night during a severe thunderstorm a mother was tucking her small son into bed. She was about to turn the light off when he asked in a trembling voice, "Mommy, will you stay with me all night?" Smiling, the mother gave him a warm, reassuring hug and said tenderly, "I can't dear. I have to sleep in Daddy's room." A long silence followed. At last it was broken by a shaky voice saying, "The big sissy!"

Familiar Phobias...

Claustrophobia = fear of confined spaces.

Agoraphobia = fear of crowded public places.

Acrophobia = fear of heights.

Unusual/funny...

Melissophobia = fear of bees.

Pentheraphobia = fear of Mother-in-Law.

Ephophobia = fear of teenagers.

Homilophobia = fear of sermons.

Real for many...

Glossophobia = fear of public speaking.

Trophobia = fear of changes.

Atychiphobia = fear of failure.

Allodoxophobia = fear of opinions.

There is fear all around... COVID-19, Monkey Pox, potential world war, school shootings, inflation, potential economic collapse, etc. If you follow the main stream news, you will be inundated with things to be fearful about. Following fear leads to more troubles:

- Genesis 3:10 (Adam) I was afraid... so I hid.
- Genesis 18:15 Sarah was afraid, so she lied
- Exodus 2:14-15 Then Moses was afraid... Moses fled
- 1 Samuel 15:24 Saul said... I was afraid of the people and so I gave in to them.

Fear: The root meaning is "to shake," or "tremble". (Theological Wordbook)

---Charles Lowery... When you are afraid, you tend to not do well. The pressure is so great that it causes you to mess up. It's like the guy who was out of money. He decided to rob the bank because he couldn't think of any other way to get the money. He didn't know anything about robbing banks so he practiced what he would say over and over. He got a revolver and a sack for the money. Then he practiced sticking the sack over the counter and pointing the gun in someone's face saying, "Don't mess with me, this is a stick up." When it came time for the real thing, he was really nervous but he was confident he had it down pat. However, when he got in the bank, fear took over and he handed the lady the revolver, pointed the sack at her, and said, "Don't stick with me, this is a mess up."



When we are consumed by fear it takes away our enthusiasm for life and keeps our thoughts unfocused. It can even keep us from interacting with other people. Sometimes we can't get anything done because the fear overwhelms. Fear can lead to ungodly behavior since we look for ways to cope that aren't really right. And fear can chip away at our relationship with God because we begin to blame him for it. Fear is the opposite of faith. The bible frequently says, "do not fear."

☞ Psalm 27

v. 1 Lord is my light and my salvation; my stronghold... Does he have a strong hold on you? Or is something else creating a stronghold in you? A stronghold can be a safe place or a prison, depending on what it is. God is our stronghold; he is a safe place. But sin and fear are another kind of stronghold; a prison. Psalms 46:1 says, "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble."

One tribe of Native Americans had a unique practice for training young braves. On the night of a boy's thirteenth birthday, he was placed in a dense forest to spend the entire night alone. Until then he had never been away from the security of his family and tribe. But on this night, he was blindfolded and taken miles away. When he took off the blindfold, he was in the middle of thick woods. By himself. All night long.

Every time a twig snapped, he probably visualized a wild animal ready to pounce. Every time an animal howled, he imagined a wolf leaping out of the darkness. Every time the wind blew, he wondered what more sinister sound it masked. No doubt it was a terrifying night for many.

After what seemed like an eternity, the first rays of sunlight entered the interior of the forest. Looking around, the boy saw flowers, trees, and the outline of the path. Then, to his utter astonishment, he beheld the figure of a man standing just a few feet away, armed with a bow and arrow. It was the boy's father. He had been there all night long.

God is our stronghold; he's our protection; **he's always there!**

v. 2 when evil men... when my enemies advance against me... v. 3 even an army

Not if, but when... troubles will come. Fear will come. No matter how big the problem, we can still be confident, because God is our light, our salvation and our stronghold. So, how can we be so confident?

☞ Keep Focus on God

v. 4 One thing I seek... that I may dwell in the house of the Lord All the days of my life...

☞ **Seek him** – go after him, like hide-and-seek. Keep on pursuing.

☞ **One thing = We need a singular focus.** Peter walked on water when he was focused. The impossible becomes possible when God is our focus.



☞ **Dwell... all the days of my life! = We need a steadfast focus.** This is an unwavering, lifelong commitment to follow Christ. Keep on keeping on!

v. 8 says seek his face (not his hand) = Too often, we go to the Lord to ask him for something; to remove a problem... What we really need is to simply connect with God. Matthew 6:33 says when we seek his kingdom and righteousness first, then he takes care of the rest.

v. 5 in the day of trouble (not from)... safe in his dwelling... hide in his tabernacle

God doesn't promise to remove us from fearful events. But he does promise to be with us. This is all about being in God's presence. There is safety and security there!

Security is not the absence of trouble, but confidence and courage in the midst of trouble that comes from faith.

To face fear, keep your focus on God and seek him.

☞ **Sing to him ...v. 6 I will shout... sing... make music**

David just talked about being safe in God's presence. Now he shifts and I believe he is giving hints about how to enter into the safety of God's presence... By singing; shouting; and making music!

☞ **Praise makes a way.** According to **Psalm 22:3 God inhabits our praise.** And **Psalm 68:4** says that our **praise prepares the way for God.** King Jehoshaphat put the singers first, at the head of the army, and when they praised and gave thanks to God, God himself went to battle against the enemy.

☞ **Praise muzzles the enemy.** **Psalm 8:2** says that **praise**, even from children, **silences the enemy.** We often underestimate the power of praise and worship. Church, when we sing and praise the Lord each Sunday, we are actually inviting God's presence and engaging in spiritual warfare. Spiritual warfare isn't just for prayer warriors who rebuke the enemy. Spiritual battle happens when you sing praises to God. You need to participate in the music each Sunday. It can help you overcome the trials and fears you are facing.

Talk about singing at home; and not singing when I'm down.

You've heard the quote, "Music can soothe the savage beast." That's actually a misquote from the poem, "The Mourning Bride" by William Congreve. The actual quote is "Music has charms to soothe the savage breast," meaning, it can calm the emotions of the heart. When you are facing fear, sing to God.



v. 7-12 are all about our need for God. He hears our prayers; he shows mercy; he helps us in our times of trouble; **he is with us even when everyone else abandons us.** Let's put our trust in him! **To face your fear, keep your focus on God, seeking him and singing to him.**

v. 11 **teach me your way, O Lord... lead me in a straight path**

☞ **Keep Fear of God. Benefits of the Fear of the Lord:**

☞ Psalms 25:14... The LORD **confides** in those who fear him

☞ Psalms 34:7... angel of the LORD **encamps** around those who fear him...

Psalms 34:9... those who fear him lack nothing.

☞ Psalms 103:13... the LORD has **compassion** on those who fear him;

Psalms 111:10... The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom

Psalms 115:13... he will bless those who fear the LORD

Proverbs 10:27... The fear of the LORD adds length to life

Proverbs 16:6... through the fear of the LORD a man avoids evil.

☞ Proverbs 19:23... The fear of the LORD leads to life: Then one rests **content**...

Proverbs 22:4... Humility & the fear of the LORD bring wealth & honor & life.

v. 12 **false witnesses rise up against me**

Sometimes our fear is triggered by other people. But we need to fear God more than we fear people. False witnesses – integrity protects us. **By living an upright life, fearing God and following Christ, the enemy has no power over us.** When we are walking right with the Lord, there is no need to fear. To face fear all around you, keep your fear of God.

☞ **Keep Faith in God.**

v. 13 **I am still confident... I will see the goodness of God**

This goes back to our focus... Even when troubles come, we can still trust God! God is good...

v. 14 **wait for the Lord**

☞ **Be strong (with confidence)** – be firm; get a hold of God and hang in there!

☞ **Take heart (with courage)** – be encouraged; think about what God can do; what God has done; trust him!



Wait – eagerly expect; put your hope in God; he does what he says he'll do!

--Harry Emerson Fosdick ...Fear imprisons, faith liberates; fear paralyzes, faith empowers; fear disheartens, faith encourages; fear sickens, faith heals; fear makes useless, faith makes serviceable - and, most of all, fear puts hopelessness at the heart of life, while faith rejoices in its God.

Fear and faith cannot keep house together; when one enters, the other departs.

Table Talk: Talk about a time when God came through for you. Encourage each other.

☞ **Start timer**

Deuteronomy 31:8

The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.

God goes before you, not vice versa. So here we are again... let God lead and you just simply ☞ **Keep on following the Lord!** When you do, there is no need to fear. Too often when troubles and fears arise, people give up on following God. They give in to their fears at just the moment that they need to reinforce their faith in the Lord. Don't give up, don't give in, keep on keeping on!

What fear are you wrestling with? Remember who is really in charge! Keep your focus on God; praise him and thank him. This will silence the enemy and God will fight for you. God is with you even when you feel all alone. Wait for the Lord to lead and follow his ways, living an upright life. Keep your **focus on God, fear him, keep the faith, and follow the Lord! Fear not.**