

☞ No Need to Fear

Last week: In the Middle of the Storm... The Lord is not disturbed by your storm. He has a solution planned even before you know you have a problem. Everything is under his control. So, turn to him with faith, not fear. 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.
- 1 Samuel 18:29 Saul became still more afraid of him (David), and he remained his enemy the rest of his days.

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."

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.

Tropophobia = fear of changes.
Atychiphobia = fear of failure.
Allodoxaphobia = fear of opinions.

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. As I said last week, fear is the opposite of faith. The bible frequently says, "do not fear."

☞ Psalm 27

v. 1 Lord is my light and my salvation

Darkness is associated with fear, but God is light. When light shows up, darkness is gone! God, not someone else, not myself, but God is my deliverer. God will save me!

☞ **v. 1 Lord is 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 is another kind of stronghold; a prison.

Psalms 46:1

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... 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? By keeping our focus on God.

☞ **Focus on God rather than your fear!**

v. 4 One thing... I seek... that I may dwell in the house of the Lord... All the days of my life... to gaze upon your beauty.

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

☞ **Seek = We need a scrupulous focus.** This is diligent, thorough, extremely attentive; like hide-and-seek... keep on looking; go wholeheartedly after God. We need a desire for God's presence; not just an occasional encounter with God.

☞ **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!

☞ **To gaze upon your beauty = We need a sanguine focus.** This is optimistic and positive. God is good... Focus on his goodness; his grace; his favor... God is always good! We need to keep this in focus!

☞ **v. 8 says seek his face (not his hand) = We need a spiritual focus.** Too often, we go to the Lord to ask him for something; to remove a problem; to get... 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 problems. 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.

☞ **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! According to **Psalm 22:3 God inhabits our praise.** And **Psalm 50:23** says that our **thanks prepares the way for God.** Church, when we sing and praise the Lord each Sunday, we are actually inviting God's presence and engaging in spiritual warfare.

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. **Psalm 8:2** says that ☞ **praise**, even from children, **silences the enemy**. We often underestimate the power of praise and worship. You need to participate in the music each Sunday. It can help you overcome the trials and fears you are facing.

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! We need God.

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

Deuteronomy 32:4 — ...all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice...

Hosea 14:9 — ...the ways of the Lord are right; The righteous walk in them...

God's way is justice and righteousness. When we walk in God's ways there is no need to fear. Righteousness sets us up for his protection...

Proverbs 11:6

The righteousness of the upright delivers them,

Proverbs 13:6

Righteousness guards the man of integrity, but wickedness overthrows the sinner.

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

Sometimes our fear is triggered by other people. But we need to remember that Satan is our real enemy, not people. Ephesians 6:12 says, "our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

False witnesses – integrity protects us. The only power the enemy has over us is the power ☞ we allow him to have. **By living an upright life, following Christ, the enemy has no power over us**. When we are walking right with the Lord, there is no need to fear.

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

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

☞ **v. 14 wait for the Lord**

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

Take heart (with faith) – 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!

☞ **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 **follow the Lord!** When you do, there is no need to fear.

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. God is your light and salvation and stronghold! Keep your ☞ **focus on God** instead of the thing you fear and **follow the Lord! Fear not.**

Song: I will follow