

Casting Out Fear
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Introduction: The man who has the Lord in control of his heart is blessed.

- A. What did Jesus say is the first and greatest commandment? **(Mt 22:37-38)**
 - 1. How do you love God with “all your heart, all your soul and all your mind?”
 - 2. Is this just a point action decision or a lifetime of learning and growing?
- B. The battle for the mind is the ultimate battle for the Christian. **(Micah 6:8)**
 - 1. When we lose that battle then we can lie and cheat others for our own selfish interests.
 - 2. When we are out to seek our own interests, we do not care much about what is happening to another. It becomes all about us.
 - 3. When we lose that battle then we are miserable hypocrites that want the reputation of serving God but become just like those we hate.

I. Satan uses fear as a powerful weapon

- A. Satan has used the fear of death to bring many into bondage. **(Heb 2:14-15)**
 - 1. Why should fear of death bring someone into bondage?
 - 2. **φοβος, φόβος**: a state of severe distress, aroused by intense concern for impending pain, danger, evil, etc., or possibly by the illusion of such circumstances - 'fear.' Louw-Nida Lexicon
 - 3. The uncertainty of who holds the future can greatly influence the path of men. What if I am unsure about eternal life? Satan will take advantage.
 - 4. A living faith is the opposite of fear! **(2 Tim 1:12; 1 Jn 4:17-18)**
- B. Satan uses fear to keep men comfortable in darkness.
 - 1. “No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear.” - *Edmund Burke*
 - 2. It kept men from standing on the truth that Jesus was from God. **(Jn 9:20-23; 12:42-43)**
 - 3. Men may fear many things! One preacher would not answer a simple question because he would have to agree with those who had hurt him. Even worse he might one day have to receive these into fellowship! (Also fear of race or nationality) **(Lk 10:29; 15:30-32)**
 - 4. How many have not obeyed the gospel because they thought they would be “condemning my grandmother?”
 - 5. Satan uses the loss of relationships as one of his greatest weapons. Are you afraid to share the gospel? **(Gal 1:10)**
 - 6. It is very easy to create your own reality where facts and truth are not welcomed. **(2 Cor 4:3-4)**

II. God has often allowed His children to face their worst fears

A. What was behind the two great failures of Abraham?

(Gen 12:11-12; 20:10-11)

1. Both of these events leave us scratching our heads. We all have such fears!
2. I believe that Abraham learned from these failures and later in life was able to handle the sacrifice of his only son Isaac. **(Heb 11:17-19)**

B. Jacob had to face Esau later in life and dreaded it. **(Gen 32:9-11)**

1. Jacob over time had many carnal things burned out of him by God allowing him to face his greatest fear.
2. The greatest pain Jacob would face would be in the loss of his son Joseph. What did these things ultimately do for Jacob?

C. Peter had to face his fear of men on several occasions.

1. He denied the Lord because of a question from a servant girl!
(Mt 26:69-75)
2. Peter became a “pillar” in God’s church!

III. How to use your fears to build faith

A. Direct your thoughts to the promises and character of God. **(Heb 13:5-6)**

1. Use the example of Jesus in fearful times. **(Psa 22:3-5)**
2. You should be willing to *take the loss of that you fear* knowing God is with you! **(Phil 3:7-8; Heb 13:11-13)**
3. Forgiveness of others is feared because we might have to “write off” a hurt that our desire for vengeance wants a full payment!
4. What are you afraid of? Staying single? Rejection of friends? Hidden sin? **(Prov 28:1)**

B. Commit yourself to the wisdom of God.

1. When you are led by fear you often will get the very thing you fear!
2. Years ago when I received my first audit notice from the IRS my fear said to “RUN!” What would have been the result?
3. When you put away fear then you will allow your mind to pursue the wisdom of God. **(Mt 10:28-33)**
4. What happens when you have a “leadership of fear?” Pilate is a good example of such. He could admit the truth but would not stand for it.
5. When elders fear the anger of the members because of plain teaching on “unpopular” subjects then the church is headed for the very trouble they fear. (Ex. “Several members may leave!”)

C. Make your closest friends those who have a courageous faith.

1. Weak Christians need to be built up by men of faith. **(2 Cor 2:6-8, 11)**

2. It is good to have a Paul at your side who will challenge your illogical fears! (**Gal 2:11-13**)
3. Fear is so easily shared. Do you have a “circuit-breaker” to stop the panic buildup when fear is accepted as fact? (**Psa 46:1-3**)

Conclusion: Who will enter the kingdom of God? (**Rev 2:10; 21:8**)