

## GOD'S ANTIDOTE FOR FEAR

Have recent events made you afraid? Do you find yourself waking up in the middle of the night thinking "What is going to happen?" Do you find yourself saying, "I have enough problems in my own life that strike me with fear. Now I have to worry about the weather. I have to worry about the economy. I have to worry about terrorists. I have to worry about world events. I see it on the news everywhere." Fear is all around us. There is a spirit of fear. God has not given us a spirit of fear but He has given us the antidote for fear and how to deal with it. Fear is a very real thing. It can paralyze you. It can affect your speech. It can affect how you think and how you deal with issues. Sometimes you can be so afraid that you cannot even move. It is just like you are paralyzed.

What is God's antidote for fear? Faith is. Faith is something you cannot see. Faith is a substance, it is just in the unseen world. Electricity is real but you cannot see it. Does it have a lot of effect when it works? Yes, it does. Think about the fact that maybe you are watching this on your computer and I am in Texas and you are in another country, and you are watching this. Yet, how does it get to you? You cannot see what happens to get it to you, but it happens because it is real. Faith is real. It says in the Bible that faith is a substance. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." It is an actual substance. Maybe we cannot see it in earthly substances to compare it them, but if God says it is a substance, then it is a substance. It is a living, moving, alive thing, and we can use this substance to solve problems. What if I came to you and said, "I have come up with this new thing. It is a substance. You take it and put it on things like problems and worries and they are taken care of." You would ask, "Where do I buy it?" "It is special and it will cost you a lot of money." You would say, "That's all right. I need it. How much is it? I don't how much it is." I tell you it is a lot and when I tell you how much, you say "That's okay. I need it. I will sell everything to get it."

God says life with Him is like the man who sold everything he had to get this valuable pearl. Faith is a substance that is like that valuable pearl. Faith can conquer mountains. It can move mountains. It can conquer enemies and the weather. It can conquer great and mighty things that we can see. Yet, God says, "If you have faith, as little as a little grain of a mustard seed, you can move mountains." What a substance. Think about how big we think a substance would have to be. "If it is this big, maybe it can solve my problems." God says, "No, if you have something just this big, you can do it." We are going to talk a lot about faith and we are going to talk a lot about fear. Fear is such a common human emotion. The Bible speaks about fear a lot. In fact, you tend to think that greater leaders and great warriors do not feel fear. A definition of courage is going forward in spite of fear. Great leaders struggle with it just like anyone else. How do I know that? Do you think Moses was a great leader? Do you think Joshua was a great leader? They had to lead millions of people. Think about that. It was not 100; it was 4 million, men, women, children, cattle, possessions. They are all afraid, too, and you are the leader. Sometimes they think you are a great leader and sometimes they think you are a lousy leader, and then fear can hit you.

Joshua was a young man. He was Moses' helper. He learned how to do what he needed to do by helping Moses. I think it is really good to help leaders do mundane tasks. It is a good thing because you get to know them like they really are in real life. Another reason is it is a time for great conversation and a time to observe how they do things. Joshua did that. At the same time, Moses was not allowed to take them into the Promised Land because he made a big mistake. He struck the rock when God said, "Speak to the rock." What was that all about? In his fear, anger and being upset, he took matters into his own hands. He did it the way he thought it should be done. God said, "Just speak and it will happen." He wanted people to see His power, where no one could take any credit for it. That kept Moses out of the Promised Land. Joshua was chosen to go in. The Bible says, "Joshua, Moses' servant, was chosen." Here is a man who has an opportunity for a big mission and he is afraid. So much of the book of Joshua is about not being afraid. You know he had to be dealing with fear, or why would God be saying not to be afraid. God said, "Fear not for I am with you." He said, "Anyone who rebels against your word and does not obey your every command will be put to death. So be strong and be courageous." Joshua had to constantly remind himself of what God said in order to stay in faith. You have to stay in faith. Faith is a substance and you have to stay in it. Think of Silly Putty or mud, or something that has form that you do not quite understand but you have to stay in it. Joshua did it.

Who is someone else in the Bible that had a real problem with fear? Timothy did. Why did he have a problem with fear? Think about this. If you were a young man in your late twenties, and the largest church in the known Christian world at that time needed a pastor, and you were chosen to be the pastor, would you have fear? Sure you would. You might think "Am I right for the job? What if I make mistakes? I am

you have fear? Sure you do. You might think, "Am I right for the job? What if I make mistakes? I am young and I don't know things. I don't know how to deal with things." Paul, who was Timothy's mentor and who believed in him, said to him, "Don't be afraid and don't let people put you down because you are younger than they are. God has called you and He wants to use you." When you grow in your walk with God and He is using your life, most of the time it is gradual. Every so often circumstances occur and you are put into a much higher place quickly, and you have fear instead of faith. God has to come to you and say, "Don't be afraid, you can do this job." God has not given you that spirit of fear. When you are feeling that fear, ask yourself, "Is this faith? No, this is a spirit attacking me."

Remember, you cannot cast out the flesh and you cannot crucify a demon; but you can cast out a demon and you can crucify the flesh. What do I mean by that? When you are in situations that there is a lot of fear, take stock of it and say, "I believe this is a spirit. I believe this has been sent to stop me. I believe this has been sent to fill me full of fear and hesitation and trepidation, and I believe it is a spirit." What does it say in Mark 16:17? "In my name, you will cast out demons." Are demons real today? Absolutely! Are they doing work today? Everywhere! Just because you cannot see them does not mean they are not there. Remember, I talked about electricity or anything to do with something that you cannot see and yet it is still powerful? Yes, they are there but you have authority over them. It does not matter if you are a new Christian, or if you are the weakest Christian, you operate in the authority of Jesus. It is not your authority, it is His authority. You operate in that authority. You take authority over the spirit of fear. You feel like you are speaking to the air, but you are not. They hear it and they have to obey the name of Jesus. They have to. You say, "You spirit of fear, in the name of Jesus Christ, get out of me. Leave me alone. I rebuke you in the name of the Lord. Now leave." You just do it until they do. That is God's antidote for fear. It is a form of faith, more of that substance, taking authority over your enemies.

Do you ever just feel fear as a human condition? Sure you do. What do you do about that? You cannot cast that out. You cannot say, "You spirit of fear that is just Betty's make up, quit, get out of here." You have your flesh. What is your flesh? When people of the Christian world say you are dealing with the flesh, are they talking about this that you can pinch? No, they are not. It is just their word for your earthly body and your earthly life, how you just live normal everyday life. It is a normal human condition to have fear. Some of it is good. You tell your children, "Don't go out in the street because a car could hit you and you could really get hurt." They are going to listen to you and they will feel fear. You tell them, "Don't go over there because that is a bad place and you might get hurt." Then they will listen to you. There is a healthy fear. I am not talking about being wise and having a healthy fear. I am talking about this fear that grips you in the middle of the night or paralyzes you when you go to talk to people. I am talking about that. How does God have it set up for you to solve that in your life?

Where are some more examples of it in the Bible? I have a good one. Think about being a shepherd. You have been out there a long time. You are getting old and ready to turn it over to the young boys. Maybe you are young and really do not know what you are doing. You are trying to act like you know what you are doing. It is night time, quiet, finally the sheep have settled down and you are ready to go to sleep because it has been a long day. Suddenly the heavens come alive and there are angels everywhere. They are gigantic and there are thousands of them. The light is so bright it hurts your eyes. What in the world is going on? They are saying "Glory to God in the highest, Glory to God in the highest. Praise the name of Jesus, praise the name of God. Hallelujah to the one that we worship." That is what happened the night Jesus was born. Isn't that beautiful. They saw it and they finally got hold of their fear with faith. They knew the Bible stories. They knew the truth of what God had promised and here it was. What did they do? They went to see what it was all about. Part of conquering fear is doing the thing you fear the most, making yourself do something. There is another part to it. That is knowing God's Word for your problem.

Have you ever looked at the Bible and said, "I know it's in there, I just don't know where it is. I wish I knew this thing. Everyone talks about reading it. When I read it I don't really get that much out of it. I don't know how you read it. I know it is here. It has all the answers, but I don't know what to do with it. I have five different copies of the Bible at my house. I never open them, but I have them." You can get what is called a Nave's Topical Bible. You can go online and there are different web sites that you can go to that will help you see translations of the Bible, and that have a Nave's Topical on their website. You can type in something that you are interested in. Let's take fear. What does God say about fear? What does it say in the Bible and where do you read those verses? You go and look those up for yourself. Let your own eye see them and your own ear hear yourself reading the Bible, especially if you have fear and you are trying to conquer the fear of going into a situation and you are hoping to do it right and act right. You pick up the Bible and turn to the verse.

Psalm 91 is a great Bible verse about fear for people who are getting ready to go fight in a war. You can read it out loud. There is something about your ear hearing the Word of God come out of your mouth that has an even greater impact on you than just reading it silently. "Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. This I will say of the Lord, 'He alone is my refuge and my

fortress. He is my God and I am trusting Him.” That is an antidote for fear because when you hear yourself say the Word of God like you really mean it and believe it, it produces faith and it produces peace. It produces comfort. If you look at a Nave’s Topical under fear you will find a lot of verses that will help you.

What is another one? Have you ever been in the middle of trouble? You might feel, “If you could see my life right now, look this way and see trouble, look that way and see trouble. Here comes trouble. I am in the middle of trouble everywhere I look, and I am scared.” Listen to Psalm 138:7. The writer was being chased by his enemies, and he said, “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me. You stretch forth Your hand against the wrath of my enemies and Your right hand shall save me.” He is talking about God. You can speak that before you go into a business meeting, see a marriage counselor or take an exam. You can speak it when you think there is no hope and no answer. You think there is no answer and there is trouble everywhere you look. God watches over his Word to perform it.

Have you ever heard anyone say, “I don’t believe in any of that name it and claim stuff.” I always think, “Why don’t you tell me how much you have studied all of that or are you just parroting what you have heard other people say? Are you just picking up on some negative thing that happened and throwing the baby out with the bathwater?” The faith preachers that I have studied under and learned about taught me the Word of God. They taught me how to stand and believe the Word of God when life was so difficult. There was a time when everything was really crashing down financially for everyone in our state and it was scary. We did not know what was going to happen and it began to affect us. I said, “Lord, I don’t know how long this is going to last but I am asking if I could go through it trusting You the whole time. When I come out of, I want to say that I trusted you. Help me God, I want to be able to do it.” Things got worse. Do you ever pray and things get worse? It does happen. It happens because it is real life. It is real life and we have to learn how to live real life real ways. I felt the pressure.

I have a Bible that I never take out of my house. My daddy gave it to me in 1977. He is dead now, so I am not about to let anything happen to that Bible. The water heater broke and that Bible got wet and swelled up. Then this summer I was reading it outside in my backyard and I forgot to bring it in and it rained, so it got big again and I had to set books on it to mash it down. It is big and it is heavy. I picked that Bible up and hugged it to my chest and said, “Devil, I guess I just need to tell you something that you can’t seem to figure out. I am going to go through this trusting God. I don’t care what you do and I don’t care how long it takes. I am not going to quit, because God is for me.” What if I had not known the Word of God about fear? What if I had not looked up verses on fear, that if God is for me who can be against me? In Psalm 118:6 it says, “The Lord is on my side, I will not fear. What can man do unto me?” How can a person say, “The Lord is on my side”. What if He is on someone else’s side? How do you know the Lord is on your side? Because He says He is.

When you go through hard things, you purify yourself. If it is bad enough, you start asking, “Am I doing this wrong? What else am I doing wrong? What do I need to quit doing?” You get where you know God is on your side because you are pure before Him and walking before Him and trusting Him. “What can man do to me?” What does that mean? Does man do bad things to you? Yes. Unfair things? Yes. Take away everything? Yes, unfortunately. Some of you live in countries where every night you go to bed afraid because you do not even know if you will have your house the next day. You do not know what will happen the next day. How do you live then? You can live in fear or you can use God’s antidote for fear and live in faith. If you could say a book is magical, and it is not magical, this book is like that. You live by what is in here, live and not die. It is amazing.

Turn to Hebrews 2:14-15. This is talking about the devil, and it says, “That through death (talking about Jesus) He might destroy him who had the power of death (that is the devil) and deliver them (still talking about Jesus and what he was doing) who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”

Think about that. All their lifetime subject to bondage through the fear of death. Think how many times you hear people use the word fear or scared. “That just scared me to death. I am afraid something is going to happen. I am afraid of this, I am scared of that.” If that things happens, whatever it is, big or little, you feel like you will die if it happens. No, you will not. You can face the thing you are the most afraid of right now. What is the thing you are the most afraid of? If it happens, you will just die. No you will not, because “Jesus, through His death, destroyed him who had the power of death and delivered them who through the fear of death all their lifetime were subject to bondage.” What am I talking about? I am talking about whatever it is that you fear the most. Sit down and pray, “God, I want your faith. I want the Jesus kind of faith in this situation.”

Another thing you can do is to figure out the worst thing that could happen in that situation and then figure out why it is not that bad. That might take some thinking but you can figure it out. What is the worst thing that can happen here and why would that not be so bad? It might get down to, “I would still have Jesus, and if I died I would go to heaven.”

There is only one thing God wants you to fear. God says, "Fear me." Psalm 34:11 says, "I will teach you the fear of the Lord." Does that mean you are scared of God? No it does not. It is respect. That kind of fear means respect. "I will teach you the respect of the Lord."

Do you know Jesus? Have you ever asked Him into your life and your heart, to forgive you of your sins? Ask Him today. He wants to save you; He wants to deliver you from fear.

#### QUIET TIME QUESTIONS

1. What is God's anecdote to fear?
2. What does scripture say moves mountains?
3. If you sense being in a fearful situation what should you do?
4. What are the two parts to conquering fear?
5. What is the only thing God wants us to fear?

To watch the video on GOD'S ANTIDOTE FOR FEAR, Pillar Six, Leadership Skills, go to [www.bettyswann.com](http://www.bettyswann.com).

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