

26. What satan doesn't want you to know -Part 2

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What is your worst fear? Or do you have so much fear in your life that they keep you awake at night or give you anxiety and ulcers? Of course, that anxiety will lead you to depression. Then that depression will generate more fear for that unknown future.

I used to have a couple of fears. The first one is not being able to provide for my wife – in case she outlives me a couple of decades and runs out of her savings. With that thought, why don't we take an offering for her right now? Just kidding . I don't fear that anymore since I became a Christian in 1987. I don't have that fear because the Lord Jesus promises that He will provide all of her needs through His riches in His glory.

My second fear was living in a persistent vegetative state like my father was for three years after his stroke. I don't want to be a burden to my family. I don't have a bit of problem with death. I will be in the far better place called heaven, have you heard about that place? Without mortgage, without politicians, and without lame media. I am one of those hopeless idiots according to one of my Air Force friends, because I'd love to jump out of a perfectly good airplane or rappel down a cliff .

A. THE FOURTH WEAPON OF SATAN – FEAR

Ephesians 6:10-12 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

One of the most powerful weapons that satan uses is fear. Psychological warfare is extremely important in any war. Once you grab your enemy's heart with fear, they might as well throw down their weapons and give up. Because when a soldier loses his heart, he thinks that he doesn't have chance to win the battle. Even if he puts up a fight, it would be more likely a pathetic one.

Satan knows that putting fear in our hearts is very effective. He has been in this business for a long time, so he knows that how well it works in people's hearts. So does God. That is why the most frequent commands in the Bible are "Do not be afraid" which appears 58 times, and "Fear not" 129 times. My computer counted them for me.

B. PRUDENCE vs. PARANOIA

Most fear are illogical ones, self-produced, and the majority of our fears never come true. But we still can have a deep dreaded silent anxiety . The fangs and talons of our fear can grab our heart deeply. I am not talking about day to day concerns.

When a concern turns to fear, it makes the healthy state of prudence to the dangerous state of paranoia. The path from prudence to paranoia is a downhill slide. Do you know the difference between prudence and paranoia? Prudence washes hands; but paranoia avoids all human contacts. Prudence wears a seat belt; but paranoia refuses to get into a car. Prudence prays for the pilot (in my case, I go to sleep

because I am not concerned about a possible crash); but paranoia says, "I am never getting into a plane." Prudence prepares for the future; but paranoia makes a person a miser and hoards everything and becomes selfish. Prudence is a healthy preparation; but paranoia is a panic and steals our joy in the Lord. Are you prudent or paranoid?

Have I ever told you that I have a grandson who is a wild and playful two years old boy? Micah just learned to jump into his grandpa's arms. He doesn't have fear of heights, nor does he know whether I am ready to catch him or not. He says, "Papa," and he is airborne. He has utmost trust in me and my love for him. But another two years old boy in our church nursery may not have the same trust and confidence in me even though I am the pastor of his parents. He doesn't know me. Though I have the same arms to catch Micah as well as that boy, he may not jump into my arms because he is fearful.

It is the same for us. The Omni-presence of our God allows us to take that leap of faith in Him. We can trust the strength of our God the Father's arms to catch us, the faithfulness of our God the Father's heart to keep the promises.

C. HOW FEAR WORKS IN OUR HEART

In 1 Samuel 26, we find David who had been a fugitive from king Saul for over ten long years had the second opportunity to take out Saul once and for all. But David showed his courage, humility, and self-control against his enemy and spared Saul's life again. Yes, David was on the top of his game spiritually.

Throughout this ten year period, David was in constant communion with his God through his prayers and meditations upon God's Word. God protected him and kept him from doing anything wrong. But we now find David is listening to himself over God at the beginning of chapter 27.

1 Sam 27:1 And David (1) said in his heart, "Now (2) I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul. (3) There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines; and Saul will despair of me, to seek me anymore in any part of Israel. So I shall escape out of his hand."

Problem 1) David's problem starts at "said in his heart."

As we notice that we find him talking to himself. Does it mean that we cannot talk to ourselves? Is it unbiblical? No, I mean that instead of asking for guidance from God, he was acting upon his own decision. We can all relate with his behavior.

You see, David has been in this wilderness being chased by Saul for quite sometime. He is tired and weary. That is the precise time when Satan comes after us. It is important for us to be refreshed through the Word of God daily and close fellowship with godly people in regular basis so that we can encourage one another.

Problem 2) Forgetting God's promises and faithfulness

If relying on his own strayed mind was not bad enough, David completely ignored the promise of God for him in 1 Samuel 16 that he would be a king of Israel after Saul someday.

Seeing his situation from his own limited and human point of view, David completely missed God's perspective and lost his trust in Him. All of sudden, Saul loomed larger than Goliath and twice as menacing.

That is how satan operates. He wants us to ignore God's promises and faithfulness for us:

God promises us that He will never leave us, nor forsake us.

God promises us that He will provide all of our needs according to His riches in the glory.

God promises us that no one can snatch us out of His strong mighty hands.

God promises us that He would give us life more abundantly.

And God's promises go on and on.

But satan wants us to forget all of those wonderful promises of God, but turn our eyes upon the circumstances and our own strength. It doesn't take a whole lot for us to become fearful, depressed, and suicidal, if we listen to satan.

Problem 3) Moving in with the enemy of God

David was not only following his own strayed mind and ignoring the promises of God, but also he decided that it would be safer for him to go into the enemy territory than staying with God. You talk about jumping out of the frying pan and into the fire.

Can we come up with the same kind of dumb logic? Yes, we can and we've done it before.

Let me give you an example: Almost thirty years ago, there was a born-again Christian woman whom I used to work with at a big company where I was a graphic designer, she was a single mom with little children. Instead of depending on God for her provisions. She thought it would be better for her to get involved with an unbelieving man with money to take care of them. What happened to her? Eventually they got married – which is rare in many cases, because most often they just live together – but she had a terrible marriage and went through a nasty divorce.

Did you notice the progression?

- 1) It begins, subtly and almost innocently, with a simple thought of consulting your own strayed mind that takes you away from God.
- 2) It goes to the stage of willfully ignoring God's promises and faithfulness.
- 3) Then, your mind makes a decision to move into the enemy's territory to be with them.

This happened to disciple Peter at the high priest's courtyard while Jesus was going through their kangaroo court, and it happened to Abraham's nephew Lot in front of the city of Sodom and it can happen to any of us. Let's be aware!

D. HOW TO FIGHT BACK AGAINST FEAR

Do you know what the definition of fear is? According to dictionary.com, it says, "a distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, evil, pain, etc., whether the threat is real or imagined". Let me put it in this way for the simple people like us: fear is the feeling that is afraid of losing your control over people or things.

Some people who are fearful of losing control over their lives do many abnormal things, such as, they hoard everything they can think of, because they think that they may not have enough; they don't have conversations with others, because they are fearful of saying something wrong; they don't go out and they avoid people, because they think that the other people may not like them.

Somehow they think that doing these kinds of things give them the control and feel secure. But in truth, they forget one very important truth – we never have a complete control over our lives and situations.

If you are a person who are fearful often or who'd like to worry about something all the time, ask yourself this question: Does my worry make my situation any better? The answer is that it never does. Actually it makes the situation far worse.

The solution for fear is NOT trying to control your life or the situations around you, rather TURNING to the One who has the absolute control over everything for eternity. That is Jesus Christ.

Let's see what the Lord Jesus says about worrying and being fearful:

Matthew 6:25-34 "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 28 So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

As you lean hard to our all-capable God in prayer and reading of His Word, the Bible DAILY, soon you will find that the vast majority of your worries and fear are unfounded. There might be some bumps on the road, but with the Lord, you can go through.

Our worst case of fear is a great opportunity to become the best case of trust in our God. Let your fear fall and become a victim of your courage and faith in the Lord.

2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

E. APPLICATIONS

1) We need to remember that the vast majority of our worries and fear are unfounded, because they are self-made by us. There might be a few bumps on the road, but with the Lord, we can go through.

2) The omni-presence of our God allows us to take that leap of faith in Him. We can trust the strength of our God the Father's arms to catch us, the faithfulness of our God the Father's heart to keep the promises.

3) Whenever you are fearful for unknown future, start to pray to the Lord who knows all things and trust Him.