

OVERCOMING FEAR (Part 1)

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Negative fear

Fear is an unpleasant emotion caused by the threat of danger, pain, or harm. Fear is a feeling of anxiety concerning the outcome of something or the safety of someone. Fear is the likelihood of something unwelcome happening. Fear is a mixed feeling of dread and reverence.

Fear is a painful emotion or passion excited by an expectation of evil, or the apprehension of impending danger. Fear expresses less apprehension than dread, and dread less than terror and fright. The force of this passion, beginning with the most moderate degree, may be thus expressed, fear, dread, terror, fright. Fear is accompanied with a desire to avoid or ward off the expected evil. Fear is an uneasiness of mind, upon the thought of future evil likely to befall us.

Fear is the passion of our nature which excites us to provide for our security, on the approach of evil.

Fear is anxiety; solicitude (expressed concern).

Holy fear

In scripture, fear is used to express a filial or a slavish passion. In good men, the fear of God is a holy awe or reverence of God and his laws, which springs from a just view and real love of the divine character, leading the subjects of it to hate and shun everything that can offend such a holy being, and inclining them to aim at perfect obedience. This is filial fear - relating or appropriate to a child's relationship with, or feelings toward, his or her parents. This kind fear is good and encouraged.

Jer 32:40

40 And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

KJV

Slavish fear

Slavish fear is showing total unquestioning obedience or devotion; showing a complete lack of originality or independence of thought. One becomes mindless in fear of someone

Fear and guilt

Fear is the effect or consequence of guilt; it is the painful apprehension of merited punishment.

Rom 8:1-4

8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, 4 in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

NIV

Perfect love drives out fear in relationship. Fear in a relationship is a sign of imperfect love.

1 John 4:18

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

KJV

Relationship with God drives out fear

Fear is to feel a painful apprehension of some impending evil; to be afraid of; to consider or expect with emotions of alarm or solicitude. We fear the approach of an enemy or of a storm. We have reason to fear the punishment of our sins.

Ps 23:1-6

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, 3 he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of

my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

NIV

To cause fear

To cause fear is to affright (to overwhelm somebody with sudden fear); to terrify (to make somebody feel very frightened or alarmed); to drive away or prevent approach by fear, or by a scarecrow. [This seems to be the primary meaning, but now obsolete.]

To fear is to be in apprehension of evil; to be afraid; to feel anxiety on account of some expected evil.

2 Cor 11:3

3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

KJV

DIFFERENT KINDS OF FEAR

- (a)** Fear of poverty.
- (b)** Fear of criticism.
- (c)** Fear of disappointment.
- (d)** Fear of ill health.
- (e)** Fear of loss of love.
- (f)** Fear of old age.
- (g)** Fear of death.
- (h)** Fear of failure.
- (i)** Fear of evil forces and persons

FEAR OF POVERTY

The fear of poverty paralyzes the faculty of reason, destroys the faculty of imagination, kills self-reliance, undermines enthusiasm, discourages initiative, leads to uncertainty of purpose, encourages procrastination, wipes out enthusiasm, and makes self-control an impossibility. It takes the charm from one's personality, destroys the possibility of accurate thinking, diverts concentration of effort; it masters persistence, turns the will power into

nothingness, destroys ambition, beclouds the memory and invites failure in every conceivable form; it kills love and destroys friendship and invites disasters in many forms, leads to sleeplessness, misery and unhappiness. And all these are experienced despite the obvious truth that we live in a world of abundance of everything the heart could desire, with nothing standing between us and our desires, excepting lack of definite purpose.

The fear of poverty is without doubt the most destructive of all fears.

The symptoms of the fear of poverty are:

1. Indifference of the fear of poverty (lack of ambition)
2. Indecision
3. Doubt
4. Worry
5. Over caution
6. Procrastination

Fear of criticism

The basic fear of criticism comes from the part of man's inherited nature which prompts him not only to take away his fellow man's goods and wares, but to justify his action by criticism of his fellow man's character. It is a well known fact that a thief will criticize the man from whom he steals; that politicians seek office, not displaying their own virtues and qualifications, but by attempting to damage the reputation of their opponents.

The fear of criticism robs man of his initiative, destroys his power of imagination, limits his individuality, takes away his self-reliance, and does him damage in a hundred other ways. Parents often do their children irreparable damage by criticizing them too much. The mother of one boy used to punish him with a cane almost daily, always completing the job with the statement, "You'll land in the Psychiatric Hospital before you are twenty". He was sent to the reformatory at the age of seventeen.

Employers who understand human nature get the best there is in men, not by criticism, but by constructive suggestion. Parents may accomplish the same results with their children.

Criticism will plant fear in the human heart, or resentment, but it will not build love or affection.

The symptoms of the fear of criticism are:

1. Self-consciousness-expressed through nervousness, timidity in conversation and in meeting strangers, awkward movement of the hands and limbs, shifting of the eyes.
2. Lack of poise
3. Weak personality
4. Inferiority complex
5. Extravagant
6. Lack of initiative
7. Lack of ambition

Fear of disappointment

Sometimes what we know about a person can hinder us from relating at a close range or asking a favour. It will constitute the basis or foundation upon which our fear is built. We fear, if we try we will be disappointed or turned down. We will say, "Oh, I know him, he will not agree". The truth is that as we walk in faith, anything can happen; people we think will not help always helps. So don't let what you know hinder you. Walk by faith. Some of our so called accurate information are incorrect. Eliminate fear, and hope for the best and not the worst. God changes people. May be God has changed that person and you didn't know. So try him out.

Prov 21:1

The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.

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Fear of disappointment hinders one from meeting the right persons that can help us. It hinders financial support. It can hinder one from getting employment etc.

The symptoms of the fear of disappointment are:

1. Lack of ambition.
2. Lack of initiative.
3. Faithlessness.

4. Resentment.

FEAR OF ILL HEALTH

This fear may be traced to both physical and social heredity. It is closely associated, as to its origin, with the causes of old age and the fear of death because it leads one closely to the border of the world beyond.

Man fears ill health because of terrible pictures which have been planted in his mind of what may happen if death should overtake him. He also fears because of the economic toll which it may claim, and the fact that it will hinder him from doing the things he loves doing.

A reputable physician in the U.S.A estimated that 75% of all people who visit physicians for professional service are suffering with hypochondria (imaginary illness). It has been shown most convincingly that the fear of disease, even where there is not the slightest cause of fear, often produces the physical symptoms of the disease feared.

Powerful and mighty is the human mind! It builds or it destroys. Through a series of experiments conducted some years ago in the U.S.A., it was proven that people may be made ill by suggestion - by asking questions like this three times one can begin to feel ill:

“What ails you? You look terribly ill”.

There is overwhelming evidence that disease sometimes begin in the form of negative thought impulse. Such an impulse may be passed from one mind to another by suggestion, or created by an individual in his own mind.

The seed of fear of ill health lies in every human mind. But you may refuse to yield to it. Worry, fear, discouragement, disappointment in love and business affairs causes this seed to germinate and grow. Disappointment in business, in love and education stand at the head of the list of causes of ill health.

The symptoms of fear of ill health are:

1. **Autosuggestion:** The habit of negative use of self-suggestion by looking for, and expecting to find, the symptoms of all kinds of disease, “enjoying” imaginary illness and speaking it as being real.

2. **Hypochondria:** The habit of talking of illness, concentrating the mind upon disease, and expecting its appearance until a nervous break occurs. Nothing that comes in bottles can cure this condition. It is brought on by negative thinking, and nothing but positive thinking can effect a cure.

Hypochondria (a medical term for imaginary disease) is said to do as much damage on occasion as the disease one fears might do. Most so-called cases of “nerves” – anxiety, worry, tension, stress, mental strain, and nervous tension, come from imaginary illness.

3. **Indolence:** Laziness or inactivity.
4. **Susceptibility:** Sensitivity, easily influenced by feelings. Fear of ill health breaks down nature’s body resistance and creates a favorable condition for any form of disease one may contact.
5. **Self-coddling:** The habit of making a bid for sympathy, using imaginary illness as the cure (people often resort to this trick to avoid work). It is the habit of feigning illness to cover plain laziness, or to serve as an alibi or excuse for lack of ambition.
6. **Intemperance:** The habit of using alcohol, or narcotics to destroy pains such as headaches, neuralgia (nerve pain: intermittent and often severe pain in a part of the body that a particular nerve runs through, especially when there is no physical change in the nerve itself) etc, instead of eliminating the cause.
7. **Worry:** The habit of reading about illness and worrying over the possibility of being stricken by it, also the habit of reading patent medicine advertisements.

Don’t be illness conscious. Take your mind completely off illness. Believe that Jesus has taken your illness and diseases away and nailed them on Calvary Cross, and you need not be sick or have any disease.

Isa 53:4-5

4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

NIV

1 Peter 2:24

24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

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There is no need for fear.