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THE SPIRIT OF FEAR

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THE SPIRIT OF FEAR

I Will Not Fear!

I. The Acceptable Christian Attitude Toward Fear

- A. The following Scriptures emphatically declare “I will not fear”:
1. **Hebrews 13:6; Psalm 3:6, 118:6; and Isaiah 12:2**
 2. I will not fear!
- B. **II Timothy 1:7** – God did not give us a spirit of fear (timidity, cowardice); but He has given us a spirit of power, love, and a sound, calm, well-balanced mind, and discipline and self-control.
1. Fear will cause a person to lose control of their thoughts, emotions, and words.
 2. **Isaiah 53:7** – During His affliction, He was submissive; and He opened not His mouth.
 3. It requires self-control to remain submissive to God during trials when emotions are upset.
- C. We have a spirit of self-control toward ourselves, a spirit of love toward others, and a spirit of power against the enemy.
1. Some are confused – they try to have a spirit of control toward others, love toward themselves, and power against the enemy.
- D. **II Peter 3:14** – Be found by Him at His coming, free from fears and agitating passions.

1. What does it mean to be free from fear?
- E. **John 14:27** – Stop allowing yourselves to be fearful.
1. How can I do that?

II. Types Of Fear

- A. Things and places – Examples: dark, water, elevators, heights, dirt, and germs
- B. Animals
- C. People – Fear of man and fear of rejection
- D. Fear of confrontation
 1. Allows others to control and manipulate you.
- E. Fear of failure, success, or responsibility
 1. Causes fear of making decisions and being double-minded
- F. Authority
- G. New things
- H. Death or pain (facing painful things)
- I. Fear of the past and the future
- J. Fear of bad news
 1. **Proverbs 15:15** – Evil forebodings

III. What Does It Mean To Be Free From Fear?

- A. “Do It Afraid” story

1. A woman had been totally bound by fear most of her life. It prevented her from doing almost everything that normal people do. She was sharing her story with a friend, who answered her by saying, “Start doing it afraid.”

B. **Fear** – Flight; to run from

1. Fear produces feelings, shaking, dryness of mouth, and heart palpitations.
2. God never said, “feel not” or “shake not.” He said, “Fear not!” He wants us to confront the spirit – not run from it.
3. God wants us to do what He is leading us to do – not what the devil is leading us to do.

C. “Fear not” has been found 365 times in the Bible.

D. **Joshua 1:2-9** – God was not telling Joshua not to feel fear. He was basically warning him that fear would try to stop him, but Joshua was to “fear not.” He was not to run – not to take flight; but stand his ground and realize that God was with him.

1. First, He laid out the intended blessing and then told him not to bow to fear!

E. **Matthew 4:8-9** – Satan tried to get Jesus to bow.

1. Faith is God’s way to gain entrance into our lives.
2. Fear is Satan’s way to gain entrance into our lives.
3. When we “obey fear,” we bow. Notice I said, “**OBEY** fear.” I did NOT say “**FEEL** fear.”

F. Other “fear nots” in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation

1. **Genesis 26:24** – God told Isaac: *I am the God of Abraham your father.*

Fear not, for I am with you and will favor you with blessings and multiply your descendants for the sake of My servant Abraham.

- a. God was bringing Isaac to a new level – **NEW LEVEL, NEW DEVIL!** God had promotion in mind, but He also knew that Satan would try to stop Isaac.
 - b. It is important to know that you have heard from God before you step out – if you are unsure, it won't take much for the devil to stop you!
2. **I Kings 17:1-16** – Elijah knew what they needed to do to get out of trouble, but he warned the widow that she would feel fear as soon as he presented God's plan for their deliverance.
 3. **II Kings 6:15-17** – . . . *Fear not; for those with us are more than those with them.*

God does not want us to be frightened by what we see and what we don't see.

4. **Isaiah 41:10, 15** – Fear not, I have a plan that is working for your ultimate good.
5. **Isaiah 43:1-3** – Don't fear upcoming things that you know you must go through to get to where God wants you to be.
6. **Matthew 10:26-31** – If our hairs have all been numbered, surely He will take care of everything else.
7. **Revelation 1:17-18** (KJV) – . . . *when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*

**THIS DELIVERS US FROM
THE FEAR OF DEATH AND THE GRAVE.**

IV. Delivered By The Power Of The Holy Spirit

- A. **Romans 8:15** – We have not received the Holy Spirit to put us in bondage to fear.
1. Therefore, we have received the Holy Spirit to set us free from fear!!!
- B. **Acts 1:8** – After the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you shall receive POWER!
- C. **Luke 22:31** – Satan asked to sift Peter.
1. Satan never attacks without fear being involved.
 2. Jesus prayed for him that his faith would not fail him.
 - a. Peter failed; but even in his human failure and humiliation, he still hung on to his faith. After Jesus’ death, He was still waiting around with the other disciples to see what would happen.
 - b. Satan would have us fear that if we make a mistake, there is no hope left for us.
 3. Peter displayed fear when people began to recognize him as being one of Jesus’ disciples.

He became emotional and did not use self-control with his words. He needed power, love, and a sound mind.
- D. Everything looked very bleak at this point.
- FEAR IS A DEAD END, BUT
FAITH ALWAYS HAS A FUTURE!**
- E. **John 20:19-22** – Jesus breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Ghost.”

- F. **Acts 1:4, 8; 2:1-4** – They are told to wait for the Holy Spirit; and on the day of Pentecost, He arrives and fills them all.
- G. **Acts 2:12-24** – The new Peter (filled with the Holy Spirit) preached his first sermon, and he did not allow fear to stop him.
1. Peter had previously declared that he would not be afraid, but he learned that mere declaration was not enough.

**He needed the power of the Holy Spirit,
and so do we!!**

A Courageous Spirit

I. Cowards

A. **II Timothy 1:7** – God did not give us a spirit of excessive timidity or cowardice.

1. **Coward** (Webster) – One who shows fear in the face of danger or pain; lack of courage or resoluteness (determination).

a. Synonyms: chicken, faint-hearted, gutless, lilly-livered, and yellow-bellied

b. Antonyms: brave and courageous

2. **Timid** (Webster) – Shrinking from difficult or dangerous circumstances: fearful. Shrinking from public attention: shy.

NOTE: Some personalities are naturally shyer than others – it is the excessive areas we must watch for and overcome.

B. **Hebrews 10:35-38** – Courage carries a glorious reward, but God is not pleased with those who draw back and shrink in fear.

1. **Hebrews: Chapter 11** follows, and it is entirely about FAITH. **Faith is the antidote for fear.**

C. **Revelation 21:8** – A warning to cowards and the cowardly submissive

1. The cowardly submissive are those who let others control them due to fear of man.

2. This does not mean that people who experience fear will not go to heaven, but it does mean that we should be serious about confronting fear and realize it is a serious problem.

D. **Numbers 13:23-33** – Approximately eighty percent were cowards, and twenty percent were courageous.

1. God must have men and women with courageous spirits to work through.
- E. **Judges 7:1-3** – God was building an army for Gideon that could win the war. The first to be eliminated were all those fearful and trembling. It was two-thirds of all the men.
- F. Joshua and Caleb
1. **Numbers 14:1-11** – The attitude of the fearful and the attitude of the faithful
 2. **Numbers 14:21-24** – The fearful will not inherit, but the faithful will.

Verse 24 – *But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall possess it.*
 3. **Joshua 14:1-12** – At eighty-five years old, Caleb was asking for a mountain that had giants occupying it; and he had no fear of conquering the mountain or the giants.

II. Courage And Confrontation

- A. Courage confronts – it does not run or make excuses. Courage does not hide!
1. **Numbers 13:30** – Let us go up at once; we are well able.
 2. **I Samuel 17:48** – David ran quickly toward the battle line (although he was not receiving any great amount of encouragement from those around him).
- B. Far too many people are hiding from everything (their problems, sins, truth that will make them free, personalities that are hard for them to deal with, jobs that need to be done, apologies that need to be given, wrongs that need to be righted, decisions that need to be made, etc.).
1. Their problems – marriage:

- a. People often limp along in a mediocre marriage that always borders on divorce because they don't want the mess and pain of confronting the real issues.
 - b. Example: Perhaps a woman was abused; and as a result, she is not interested in sex. This causes problems in her marriage, but she chooses to make excuses rather than confront the issue and go through the pain of getting free.
 - c. Example: A man is controlling and dominates the family. God deals with him, and he knows he needs to face this issue and let God change him. But instead of confronting the issue, facing it, and his family – he continues in bondage.
2. Sin is hard to face – Adam and Eve **HID** from God. Truth is hard to face; it is painful to face and deal with the things God shows us.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS CONFRONTATIONAL!!

3. Jobs that need to be done – we must have a courageous, bold, confrontational spirit concerning our work. Don't put off hard tasks – do them and get it over with.
 4. Decisions that need to be made – some procrastinate all their lives out of fear of making a wrong decision. Confront life and start finding out what is right and wrong for you. Don't spend all your life wondering.
 5. Apologies that need to be given, wrongs that need to be righted – **IT IS TIME TO OBEY GOD!**
- C. **Matthew 11:12** - The kingdom of God has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.
1. The violent are the energetic, those with ardent zeal who put out intense exertion.
 2. The courageous, the bold, and the fearless

III. Men With Courage

- A. **Nehemiah 6:1-16** – Nehemiah was rebuilding the wall (doing what God had told him to do), and the enemy continually tried to stop him.
1. **Verse 3** – He did not stop his work to go and put out the enemies' fires.
 2. **Verse 4** – Four times the enemies tried the same thing, and four times Nehemiah stood his ground.
 3. **Verse 11** – Why should such a man as I flee? He obviously knew who he was, and Who was with him.
 4. Their enemies ended up being afraid of them.
- B. **Daniel 3:16-17** – Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not bow in fear. They confronted the situation – and in the end got promoted.
- C. **Daniel 6:10** – Daniel refused to bow in fear concerning the decree given that no person could bow to any God except the king.
1. Daniel kept right on doing what God told him to do, and the devil's plan fizzled out.
- D. Example: When people have come against me publicly – in magazine articles, on radio shows, or television shows – trying to discredit me and make me look like a wicked person who is leading people astray
1. I learned early to just keep doing what God told me to do, and they always fizzle out.
 2. Arguing with people like that is like throwing more fuel on the fire.
 3. **It is not my job to defend myself. Jesus never did, and we should follow His example.**

The Thing I Fear Comes Upon Me

I. Fear Is Believing For The Negative.

A. **Job 3:25** (KJV) – *For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.*

1. **Job 1:4-5** – He had fears concerning his children.
2. He obviously (according to his own statement) had other fears.
3. There are many people very fearful in their hearts. Some that you would never think would be the type to have fear.
4. Sometimes people that are very bold in some areas are extremely fearful in other areas.
5. In the pulpit, I am under God's supernatural Anointing; and I will do and say anything He puts in my spirit. I'll stand before thousands of people and boldly preach against sin or confront issues that many others will leave alone – but I don't want to ask for free water at a McDonald's Restaurant.

B. Just as faith is a force that draws the will of God into our lives, fear is also a force that draws the will of Satan into our lives.

1. Without faith, we cannot receive from God.
2. Without fear, we cannot receive from Satan.

C. We are never afraid that something good or positive is going to happen – fear is always connected with negative or bad things.

1. **Proverbs 15:15** – Evil forebodings

D. **Isaiah 30:18** – God is waiting to be good to those who are expecting Him to be good to them.

1. Likewise, Satan is waiting to bring bad things to those who are expecting bad things to happen.
 2. **Fear is expecting – just like faith is expecting!**
- E. I will fear no evil.
1. **Psalm 23:4**
 2. **Psalm 27:13-14** – It requires courage to stay positive while you are waiting on God for your manifestation.
 3. **Proverbs 1:33** – . . . *whoso hearkens to me [Wisdom] shall dwell securely and in confident trust and shall be quiet, without fear or dread of evil.*

II. I'm Afraid People Won't Like Or Accept Me!

- A. When people are fearful, they cannot be relaxed and natural.
1. They talk too much or not enough.
 2. They say stupid things – trying to be funny and charming – and usually end up offending people.
 3. Fear of rejection actually causes people to put off vibes that say, “Don’t accept me.”
- B. The fear of rejection (fear of man) causes tremendous problems in people’s lives.
1. **I Corinthians 4:2-4** – Paul was not the least bit concerned about what the people thought. He knew he had been faithful (done his best), and he knew that was all he could do.
 2. **Do your best – then enter God’s rest!**
 3. **I John 4:18** – Fear hath torment. Multitudes are tormented by the fear of man. (KJV)

4. **Galatians 1:10** – Fear of man can cause people not to fulfill their destiny. **They live all their lives never feeling fulfilled!**
 5. **John 12:42-43** – Many never step out into new things (never follow their hearts) for fear of being rejected by those who want to remain stagnate.
- C. These people are “fearing negatives,” such as:
1. Fear of losing friends
 2. Fear of losing reputation

III. Fear That Things Will Never Change

- A. **Hebrews 13:5** – Be satisfied (content) with present circumstances because God will not leave you in them forever.
- B. **Philippians 4:11-13** – Paul was able to be content in every situation because he knew that “situations” are ever changing.
- C. THIS, TOO, SHALL PASS!
1. A girl who was pregnant came to me so upset. I told her, “This, too, will pass” and immediately she calmed down.
 2. Satan wants us to fear that nothing will ever change; and that when we have something uncomfortable in our lives, it will either get worse or never change.
- D. The **NEVER** lie!
1. Your family members will NEVER change!
 2. You will NEVER change!
 3. You will NEVER have any money!

4. You will NEVER own your own home or have a new car!
NEVER! NEVER! NEVER!
- E. Satan wants us hopeless, negative, and fearing evil.
 1. **Some things never change because we fear they will never change – remember:**
WHAT WE FEAR COMES UPON US!

IV. Fear That You Will Not Get What You Desire

- A. **Luke 12:29-32** – Fear causes us to seek the wrong thing, and seeking the wrong thing causes us to never have the desires of our heart.
- B. **Psalm 37:4** – Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.
- C. **I Peter 5:7** (KJV) – *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*
 1. The promise of His care is not enacted as long as we are taking the care.
- D. **James 4:1-2** – Strife in our lives comes from trying to get things ourselves instead of trusting God for them.
- E. **Genesis: Chapter 16** – Abram and Sarai took matters into their own hands and made a huge mess.
 1. They probably delayed their miracle many years because of “fear that they would not get what they wanted unless they did something.”
- F. Fear that God is not faithful can prevent us from ever seeing the breakthrough. LET US SAY:

GOD IS FAITHFUL!
I am believing for GOOD things to happen in my life!
What I BELIEVE comes upon me!
I am believing for some AWESOME things!

The Fear Of Being Taken Advantage Of

I. I Am Afraid To Be Humble.

A. Humble (Greek) primarily signifies “low-lying,” to stay under, lowliness of mind, humbleness of mind; courteous.

1. Courteous – Lowly minded, humble minded, thoughtful, kind, and friendly.
2. To stay under – A person cannot submit to authority (stay under authority) without humility.

They cannot lay low and wait for God to bring them forward or promote them.

B. Humility is the cardinal virtue – of all Christian virtues to be sought, this should be the chief one.

C. People fear staying in the humble position – they fear that they will be taken advantage of.

1. Someone will hurt me.
2. Nobody will consider me.
3. Everyone will forget me.
4. People will walk all over me.

II. The Agony Of Trying To Maintain The Number One Position

A. The attitude to watch for: I’m afraid if I trust, I will get hurt. If I don’t take care of myself, then I will be taken advantage of. Therefore, I must stay in the number one position – the lead, on top, ahead, first, in charge, giving the orders, competing with everyone, and comparing myself and my position with everyone else.

1. This fearful attitude causes endless problems in relationships, and terrible pressure for the person with the fear.

I John 4:18 says fear hath torment. It is the opposite attitude required by God that will cause Him to promote us. (KJV)

- B. **James 4:10** (KJV) – *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*
- C. **Micah 6:8** – *He hath showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, and to love kindness and mercy, and to humble yourself and walk humbly with your God?*
 1. A proud man cannot treat people justly nor show mercy.
- D. **Matthew 18:4** (KJV) – *Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*
- E. **Luke 22:26** (KJV) – *. . . but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.*
 1. In other words, let him stay under – not pushing himself forward, not trying to take care of himself, and not trying to promote himself.
- F. **Luke 14:10** (KJV) – *But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.*
 1. If you try to promote yourself, you will end up looking foolish; but if you take a humble position, you will eventually be respected because God will promote you.

III. How This Works In Practical Situations

- A. Example: Dave and I are playing golf, and he gets grouchy with me because he is playing badly.

1. I want to (and usually do) lash back at him. I think, “You are not going to treat me that way and get by with it.” My “old nature” thinks: If I don’t say or do something, this treatment may continue; and I’m going to make sure it doesn’t.
2. I forget at that moment how often I have been grouchy with Dave when I am under pressure and how I want him to just give me mercy and let it go.
3. I should keep my mouth shut and pray about it (unless God directs me to confront it). I should trust God to deal with him and use the incident as a “seed-sowing opportunity” believing that God will make our relationship better than ever if I will trust Him.

The person who is afraid of being taken advantage of cannot do this – they get emotional and begin functioning out of old wounds and fears rather than humbling themselves and waiting on God.

- B. Example: People work for a boss that does not treat them properly – the boss has unfair expectations toward them, does not pay them what they are worth, promotes others who deserve it less, is often unkind and unappreciative, and corrects them for the same things that others do and get by with.

I Peter 2:18-23 – Submit – even to a boss who is unkind. This kind of behavior is acceptable in God’s sight. When we do this, we are acting like Jesus.

1. Almost everyone at sometime in life will end up working for a boss that does not treat them the way they want to be treated.
2. A humble person will wait on God and stay if God says “stay,” be quiet if He says “be quiet,” not resent others who are promoted and treated better, not gossip about the boss, or spread strife.
3. A proud person (one who fears being taken advantage of) will either leave, or he will get under all kinds of pressure trying to fix it himself.

- C. Pride demands that it be treated properly, although proud people almost always mistreat others.
- D. Pride is impatient and will not wait on God – **it is afraid that God won't come through!**

IV. Fear Tries To Vindicate And Recompense Itself.

- A. **Psalm 37:1-11** – Don't fret because of evildoers. Trust in the Lord and keep doing what is right. Eventually, God will lift you up; and the wicked will fall.
 - 1. We must learn to wait on God's justice instead of inventing our own brand.
- B. **Hebrews 10:30-31** – Vengeance belongs to God; He will recompense us. He is the judge.
- C. **Isaiah 61:7-8** – God gives a double reward for our former hurts. He loves justice and is faithful to give us our recompense.
- D. What happens to those who try to vindicate themselves?
 - 1. **Matthew 18:34** – In trying to vindicate and recompense himself, he ends up being tormented and tortured emotionally.

V. Jesus Had No Fear Of Humility!

- A. **Philippians 2:3-10** – Let Christ be your example in humility. He humbled Himself, and God has highly exalted Him.
 - 1. The same thing will happen to us.
 - 2. I believe it greatly honors God when we trust Him enough to chance being taken advantage of rather than moving in the strength of our own flesh.

B. **Matthew 11:29** (KJV) – *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

1. Rest for our souls is the major thing we need, and we cannot have it without humility – and we will never be humble if we are afraid of being taken advantage of.

C. He was free from all worldly pride.

1. Of appearance:

- a. **Isaiah 53:2** (KJV) – He hath no form nor comeliness.

2. Of worldly success:

- a. **Isaiah 53:3** (KJV) – *He is despised and rejected of men . . .*

3. Of reputation:

- a. **Philippians 2:7** (KJV) – *He made himself of no reputation . . .*

- b. **Matthew 2:23** – . . . *He shall be called a Nazarene.*

“Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?”

4. Of riches and position:

- a. **Matthew 8:20** – He has no place to lay His head.

- b. Remember He was born in a stable – entered Jerusalem (called His triumphal entry) on a donkey.

5. Of rank:

Matthew 13:55a – *Is not this the carpenter’s Son?*

6. Of kingship or leadership (being in charge or being the boss)

John 13:5 – He washed the disciples’ feet.

D. The rewards of Christ’s humility

1. God promoted and exalted Him.
2. He was free! free! free!
3. He had rest for His soul (mind, will, and emotions).
4. People could not control Him.
5. The devil could not control Him.
6. He was free from the torment of fear.

VI. Trusting God

- A. Fearful people cannot trust – they live in the agony of trying to take care of themselves and trying to make everyone treat them right.
- B. **I Peter 2:23** (KJV) – *Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously . . .*
 1. God is a righteous judge – we either believe that or live in fear.
- C. Non-resistance is a mark of meekness and humility.
 1. **Luke 6:29** (KJV) – *And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also.*
- D. **Isaiah 26:3** (KJV) – *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*
 1. When we are trusting God (instead of trying to figure out how to take care of ourselves), then and only then can our minds be at peace.

WHAT IS IT WORTH TO YOU TO HAVE PEACE OF MIND?

2. Start confronting the “fear of being taken advantage of,” and you will enjoy a new freedom!!

