CHAPTER 2

The Problem Of Fear

"Fear Not" — Matt. 10:26, 28, 31

Matt. 10:28
1 Pet. 2:17

"Fear Him"

Multiphobias

People fear many things. We can easily become fearful and afraid. Some of these fears have been classified into various kinds of "phobias." ("Phobia" comes from a Greek word meaning "fear"). For example, consider the following:

1. Acrophobia -- a fear of high places
2. Claustrophobia -- a fear of enclosed places
3. Cynophobia -- a fear of dogs
4. Hydrophobia -- a fear of water
5. Necrophobia -- a fear of death
6. Noctiphobia -- a fear of night

Fear is not always wrong or sinful (even as worry is not always wrong). God has equipped man with the capacity to fear for man’s own protection and benefit. Though we often think of fear as a dreaded foe, it can also be man's best friend. Fear is that friend which keeps our hands away from the tigers’ cage at the zoo. Fear is that friend that helps us to drive safely in the midst of heavy traffic. Fear is that friend that helps us to respect and obey the police officer, lest we should get into trouble. Fear is that friend that encourages us to study for our final exams. Can you think of other ways that fear serves as a friend?

Consider again the "phobias" listed above. Show how, under certain circumstances these fears can be helpful. (For example, "acrophobia" might help someone on top of a high ladder to proceed with much care and caution.) Show how these same fears can be harmful. (Consider for example "noctiphobia" when a child imagines that he sees a monster in the dark of his room at night.)

Friend or Foe?

Fear can be healthy or harmful. Fear can protect us or fear can destroy us. As we shall see, the right kind of fear will eliminate every wrong kind of fear. Please complete the following MATCHING exercise as you study verses which relate to fear or being afraid:
The Problem of Fear

1. _______ Matthew 14:26
2. _______ Matthew 14:30
3. _______ Matthew 2:22
4. _______ Genesis 22:12
5. _______ Acts 27:17
6. _______ Proverbs 28:1 (The word “fear” is not used here, but the idea is certainly present.)
7. _______ 1 Peter 2:17
8. _______ Isaiah 8:12
9. _______ Isaiah 8:13
10. _______ Psalm 112:1
11. _______ Psalm 112:7
12. _______ Mark 5:36

The Origin of Fear

Find the first place in the Bible where FEAR is mentioned (HINT: Begin reading in Genesis chapter 3): Genesis 3, Verse _______ Was this a healthy, right kind of fear? _______ As you think about Adam’s fear, put the letter "F" before each of the following phrases which properly describe this wrong kind of FEAR:

1. _______ A direct result of man’s sin and guilt
2. _______ Running from God
3. _______ Running towards God (“cometh to God”–Heb. 11:6)
4. _______ Facing and fixing my problems
5. _______ Hiding and covering up my problems
6. _______ Avoiding the Lord
7. _______ Approaching the Lord
8. _______ Open and honest before God
9. _______ Ashamed before God, “having an evil conscience” (Heb. 10:22)
10. _______ Ever conscious of wrongdoing and of one’s own failure to fulfill his God-given responsibilities.

Does the believer who is hidden IN CHRIST ever need to be afraid of approaching a HOLY GOD (Hebrews 4:16; 10:19,22)? _______
Fear Not! Why Not?

What is the constant plea of God to those who belong to Him (see Lamentations 3:57; Isaiah 41:14; Joshua 8:1; Luke 12:32; Matthew 10:31; Acts 27:24; etc.)? The Lord gives us many REASONS why we need not fear. Search the Scriptures and see if you can discover some of these reasons:

1. Gen. 26:24; Psalm 23:4; Isaiah 41:10; 43:5; Jer. 46:28; Deut. 20:1
   I will not fear because

2. Exodus 14:13-14; Deut. 3:22; 20:3-4; 2 Chron. 20:15 (compare v.17)
   I will not fear because

3. Deut. 31:6,8; 1 Chron. 28:20
   I will not fear because

4. Psalm 118:6
   I will not fear because

5. Isaiah 41:13-14
   I will not fear because

6. Isaiah 43:1
   I will not fear because

7. Deuteronomy 7:18 (compare 20:1)
   I will not fear because

8. Psalm 56:3,4,11; Psalm 112:7 (cf. Mark 5:36)
   I will not fear because

9. Matthew 10:29-31
   I will not fear because

10. John 6:20
    I will not fear because

**UNDERSTANDING WHO GOD IS HELPS US NOT TO FEAR.**

1) **Isaiah 41:10**
   I will not fear because HE IS MY

2) **Genesis 15:1**
   I will not fear because HE IS MY

3) **Proverbs 3:25-26**
   I will not fear because HE IS MY

4) **Psalm 27:1**
   I will not fear because HE IS MY
5) **Psalm 46:1-2**  
I will not fear because HE IS MY [Blank]

6) **Hebrews 13:6**  
I will not fear because HE IS MY [Blank]

7) **Psalm 91:2,5**  
I will not fear because HE IS MY [Blank]

### The Problem of Fear

**The King of Fears**

What is man’s greatest fear (Heb. 2:14-15)? [Blank] Is this a legitimate fear for the UNSAVED (Heb. 9:27)? [Blank] What is even more fearful than physical death (Matt. 10:28; Rev. 21:8)? [Blank] God describes DEATH as a *killer-bee* (think of a giant bumblebee!) who has a powerful and deadly sting for all its victims. What is the terrible STINGER on this *killer-bee* (1 Cor. 15:56; cf. Rom. 6:23; James 1:15; Ezekiel 18:4)? [Blank] What gives this STINGER its strength and power (1 Cor. 15:56; cf. Rom. 3:20; 7:7-13)? [Blank] The Lord Jesus, through His death and resurrection REMOVED THE STINGER and [Blank] death (2 Timothy 1:10). Therefore, does the believer need to fear the KING OF FEARS, or may he bravely and joyfully face his hour of death (see 2 Tim. 4:6-8; 2 Pet. 1:13-14; Philippians 1:20-23, 2 Cor. 5:8; Luke 23:43)? [Blank]

### Fear and Love

And the greater of these is love!

FEAR and LOVE cannot dwell together, because the Bible says, "There is no [Blank] in [Blank]; but perfect [Blank] casteth out [Blank], because [Blank] hath torment (punishment). He that [Blank] is not made perfect in [Blank]" (1 John 4:18). A mother might be terribly afraid of a mouse, but she would gladly risk her life against the most savage beast (such as a lion or bear) if necessary for the protection of her child whom she loves. A soldier might fear actual warfare, but he would willingly fight on the hottest battlefield if he loves his country and the cause for which he is fighting. Can you think of other examples of how love casts out fear?

As you examine the following, decide whether each phrase is describing FEAR or whether it is describing LOVE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEAR</th>
<th>LOVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What can I do for him?</td>
<td>&quot;Believes all things&quot; (1 Cor. 13:7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What will he do to me?</td>
<td>Very suspicious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can I help him?</td>
<td>Thinks of everything that might go wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can he harm me?</td>
<td>&quot;Thinketh no evil&quot; (1 Cor. 13:5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What can man do unto me?</td>
<td>Concerned about self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What can I do for man?</td>
<td>Concerned about God and others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Fear that Conquers All Fears

What is man’s supreme duty towards God (1 Pet. 2:17; Ecclesiastes 12:13; Prov. 1:7; Deut. 10:12; etc.)? _________ How long are we to do this (Prov. 23:17)?

How long (Deut. 14:23)? _________ How long (Josh. 4:24)?

When can I begin to do this (1 Kings 18:12)? _________ Who should do this (Psalm 34:9)?

Who (Psalm 33:8)? _________ How should we serve the Lord (Psalm 2:11)? _________ How should we worship the Lord (Psalm 5:7)? _________ How should we spend our time on earth (1 Pet. 1:17)?

The fear of the Lord casts out all other fears. The fear of the Lord is healthy and clean and right (Psalm 19:9). Complete this MATCHING problem:

1. _____ Matthew 10:28
2. _____ Matthew 10:31
3. _____ Psalm 112:1
4. _____ Psalm 112:7
   A. FEAR THE LORD!
   B. DON'T FEAR ANYTHING ELSE!
5. _____ Isaiah 8:12
6. _____ Isaiah 8:13
7. _____ Psalm 34:4
8. _____ Psalm 34:9

The Fear of Men

Often, instead of fearing GOD we fear MEN! We begin thinking like this:

"What will they think of me?" "What will they say?" "Will they get angry?" "Will they be pleased?" "Maybe they will see me!" "I’m afraid of what they might do to me!" "Will they be upset or offended?" "Will they still be friendly towards me?" "What will they want me to say?" "What will they want me to do?" "Where will they want me to go?" "I’m afraid they will not be happy with me!" "I don’t think they will approve of this!" "They might frown on my actions!" "I hope they will really appreciate what I’m about to do!"
This then is the FEAR OF MEN. What is the FEAR OF GOD? To answer this question, simply read the above sentences again and substitute the word "GOD" for the word "they." This is the FEAR OF GOD.

Read Genesis 12:10-20; 20:1-11. Note especially Genesis 20:11. Was there any fear of God IN ABRAHAM? Did Abraham fear men? Was God able to protect Abraham, even without his lies and deception? Can you think of times when the fear of men kept you from doing what you knew was right? Did Abraham learn to fear the Lord (Gen. 22:12)?

How To Recognize a God-Fearer

If a person really FEARS THE LORD, then the following will be true:

   He will

   He will

   He will

   He will

   He will

Who should our close friends and companions be (Psalm 119:63)? How can we learn to fear the Lord (Deut. 4:10; 17:19; 31:11-13)?

Let Us Hear The Conclusion Of The Whole Matter
(See Ecclesiastes 12:13)

Personal Questions to Ponder:

1. Are you afraid of displeasing the Lord?
2. Are you afraid of not being right with the Lord?
3. Are you afraid of sinning against a Holy God?
4. Are you afraid of having less than God’s very best?
5. Are you afraid of not hearing God’s "WELL DONE"?

CHOOSE THE FEAR OF THE LORD
(Compare Proverbs 1:29)