

Overcoming Fear – Finding courage and hope

Text: David and Goliath 1 Samuel 17: 1-34

Key verses

⁴ Goliath was over nine feet tall.

¹¹ On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

²⁴ When the Israelites saw the man, they all ran from him in great fear.

³⁴ But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, ³⁵ I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. ³⁶ Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this ***uncircumcised*** Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. ³⁷ The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

- David was a boy who stepped up when grown men were too frightened
- David was no doubt afraid however his fear gave way to his outrage
- Perfect love drives out (conquers fear)
- It was all about his God

People who know their God

Meditation:

Psalm 34:4.

"I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears"

What is fear?

Ps 111:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ...

Fear is a healthy thing, in the right context, however today we are looking at the negative side of fear.

- The enemy that lurks within

- If our goal is to overcome fear then we need to understand what fear is.

President Franklin D Roosevelt identified fear as a powerful enemy lurking within – an enemy that can strip away a person's vitality and vision and replace them with the chill of self-doubt that leads to withdrawal and demoralising defeat.

Vitality

Power

Proverbs 12:25

"An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up"

Fear will sap our strength and leave us feeling weak.

And vision

Wisdom

Ephesians 1:17

We have all heard the expression *blind fear*.

Paul was a man who enjoyed the benefits of knowing God, and he longed for his converts to share those same blessings. He often prayed to that end, and in those prayers we learn more about the advantages of knowing God. For the Ephesians he prayed, ***“that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him”***

- Fear is something that takes hold of us both physically and mentally.

Fear is

Demonic - has a spiritual element to it, which can cause us to feel paralysed .

Debilitating - Many people struggle with debilitating fears.

Anxiety disorders – from generalised anxiety to panic attacks and full blown phobias.

Demoralizing

Dreadful

Disgrace

Dismay

Peace – *we find our peace in the face of fear.*

(2 Peter 1:2)

Peter tells us something about people who know God. He says, “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord”. His statement reveals that both grace and peace are increased in the believer’s life by the full or thorough knowledge of God.

Today’s situation

Many things would cause us to fear.

Dangers

Car bombs, terrorism, suicide bombers,

Troubles

Climate change, hurricanes, droughts, disease pandemics,

Uncertainties

Financial collapse, unemployment

Pressure from day to day expectations

Making bill payments, are we going to remain healthy?

We have more to lose

- job
- money
- possessions
- reputation
- loved ones
- health physical/mental

What is the cause of fear and anxiety and what you can do about it?

SIN IN YOUR LIFE - Sometimes fear and anxiety are the result of one’s own sin and guilt. If you have committed a sin or done anything evil, your fear and anxiety is probably God and your own

conscience trying to get your attention. You need to repent, confess your sin, seek God's forgiveness, and set it right. ***It is the Lord who will take away all your fears***

Practical help

SLEEP - Humans generally need 8 or 9 hours of sleep per day. Sleep deprivation can increase anxiety. Get enough rest. If you cannot sleep, you may need to seek God's help and perhaps that of a physician.

BE MORE REALISTIC - Many people are worried and anxious about events that will never actually will happen to them. Relax. Focus on today. Take life one day at a time.

LISTEN to relaxing, soothing music. There is some great Christian music available that can help you focus on God and leave your fears and worries behind. It may also help to listen to good Christian speakers and teachers.

FUN - If at all possible, do something that you enjoy. It is good to get some recreation on a regular basis. Take a break. Get your mind off your fears and worries, and have some fun.

TALK to someone. Don't hold all the anxiety inside. It can be a big relief to share your fears and worries with someone else—a friend, relative, pastor or counselor. If fear and anxiety is an ongoing problem in your life, schedule a regular time each week to talk with someone.

TAKE ACTION - If there is something practical and wise that you can do to alleviate the problem or avoid needless danger, take action. Don't put it off. Procrastination will generally raise your anxiety level.

EXERCISE - Medical studies show that exercise can help lower anxiety. If you are healthy enough to exercise, try it. Regular brisk walks, running, swimming or other exercises can be a real stress reducer.

PROFESSIONAL HELP - There are various organizations which provide help for people with anxiety attacks, including the Midwest Center for Stress and Anxiety (stresscenter.com) which provides self-help. You can search for information and assistance on the Web using keywords such as: anxiety, panic attacks, agoraphobia. You should be able to find local help by consulting you pastor or physician.

If the Son sets you free you will be free indeed.

Psalm 34:4.

"I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears"