

FEAR

Bible Study

By Debbie Chaney

Both the Bible and science reveal that fear is one of the most common issues humans deal with. Therefore, it is vital that each of us learn how to manage our fears.

Fear is defined by the dictionary as – unpleasant feeling triggered by the perception of danger, real or imagined.

In the Bible the word fear is used 404 times. There are several Hebrew words translated fear and several New Testament words translated fear. I have listed all of them with their definitions on attached files.

To summarize – The Old Testament meaning tends to be, “to fear; to revere, to be afraid, stand in awe.”

The New Testament meaning, “to be put in fear.”

** Please see the Greek and Hebrew word sheets for a full list & meanings.

The science behind fear:

Fear is designed to help protect you from danger or prepare you to take action.

Fear occurs when your brain is triggered by a stimulus and activates motor functions for fight or flight.

Neuroscience research shows us that fear and uncertainty registers in our brain much like an error does.

It needs to be corrected before we can feel comfortable again.

Fear in the Bible:

“**Do not fear**” or similar statements (do not be afraid, etc.) is the most frequent command in the Bible.

It is spoken more often than any other command. More than “love the Lord”, “do not murder”, “do not lie”, “do not steal”, “love one another”, or any other command.

Although scientists tell us we are **born with only two fears** – fear of falling and fear of loud noises; the

10 most common fears that people have are fear of:

heights, flying, enclosed spaces, insects, snakes, dogs, storms, needles, open spaces and social phobias

Yet, all these fears can be categorized into these **6 basic fears** - fear of:

1. poverty 2. criticism 3. Ill health 4. loss of love from someone 5. old age 6. Death

All of us deal with fear, no one is exempt from these.

In the bible we seem to see support for these fears as well. A thorough look through **Strong’s**

Concordance shows the following **categories for fear**:

Things we fear – circumstances Gen. 46:3, man Gen. 32:11, people Num. 14:9, death Jud. 6:23, letters/reports Neg. 6:19, what someone can do to us Ps. 56:4, that someone can kill us Mat. 10:28, speaking Phil. 1:4

The extent or effects of fear – discouragement Deut. 1:21, distress 1 Chron. 28:20, fearing everywhere Ps. 31:13, weakness 1 Cor. 2:3, setting traps for us Pro. 29:25, faint hearted/weak heart Isa. 7:4, fears on every side Jer. 6:25, tears Mat. 14:26, bondage Rom. 8:15, and torment 1 Jn. 4:18

Promise to those fear the Lord – turn to me Jud. 4:18, you'll lack nothing Ps. 34:9, I'll teach you Ps. 34:11, make you strong Pro. 14:26, men will leave you alone Pro. 16:6, riches Pro. 22:4, life Pro. 19:3, be well Ecc. 8:12, power 2 Tim. 1:7, love, sound mind, perfect love 1 Jn. 4:18

(NOTE- "to fear the Lord" is a bible term meaning to reverence, respect, honor and be in awe of. It does not mean to be afraid of.)

In the Bible, "do not be afraid" is often followed by what God will do.

Ex. 14:13 – you will see the deliverance of the Lord

Deut. 3:22 – the Lord will fight for you

So we are instructed to not fear, BECAUSE of what God will do.

10 times 'do not be afraid' is followed by "do not be discouraged". Deut. 1:21, 1 Chron. 28:20

"Do not be afraid" is a command, not a suggestion.

NEW TESTAMENT and Fear

From the very start of the New Testament, we see God's desire for us to live without fear.

Luke 1:74 – "to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear"

Zechariah's prophetic prayer, about his son John the Baptist and the ushering in of the Kingdom of God included God's will and power to enable and equip us to serve him without fear.

The Kingdom of God under Jesus Christ and His Lordship is to be one in which there is no fear. We are to be bold and courageous in our Lord.

Jesus even said, "Don't be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell." Matthew 10:28

Our only fear is to be that of respect, reverence, awe, regard, and careful honor for our God.

Trusting God is the antidote for fear and worry. Not relying on your own strength. But relying on His supernatural power through the Holy Spirit. Mat. 6:25-30

The reason we are commanded to not fear or be discouraged is because our courage comes from Him. He is in us and greater is he who is in us than he who is in the world. 1 Jn. 4:4

When we learn to trust in Him and not our own understanding, fears melt away. Pro. 3:5-6

There is science that supports this too. **The science tells us that whatever you focus on is what you are going to get.** Focus on fear of people and get fear of people. Focus on fear of failure get failure.

Focus on God helping you through that fearful event and get God helping you through that fearful event. Focus your trust on Him and the Holy Spirit's help and get Him and the help of the Holy Spirit.

The only way to be free of fear is to face it.

Identify it. Embrace it, don't deny it. Confess it.

Redirect it

Take action

Redirection is placing your trust in God rather than yourself. Focusing on God and the help of the Holy Spirit. Redirecting your focus from the fear to God.

Trusting in Him, you can act in the face of fear with courage and confidence and that fear will become smaller and smaller as your trust becomes bigger and deeper.

This is something that takes regular practice and active work. Over and over we learn to focus on God and put our trust in him. We learn to put fear in the back seat and God in the front seat.

This is the process of overcoming your fear:

Identify your fear

Redirect your focus to Jesus and trusting him

Take action

With lots of practice and taking positive action our trust in Jesus becomes bigger and our fear become smaller.

You will become fearless. With practice and action. Your fears will decrease as He increases within you. He will enable you to live without fear.

What fears need identifying?

Focus on Jesus – redirect off of the fear

Now go and take action



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