

COPING WITH FEAR

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I. INTRODUCTION

We often see preachers and other people as well who seem to have to have every right to succeed, but who miserably fail. I went to high school with a young man whose parents were well able to give him a college education. When he received his degree however, instead of entering into a productive life profession, he came home and employed himself in his father's filling station. His younger brother, who did not choose to go to college, launched himself out in a business career without an education and did what the family had hoped that the oldest son would do. Why did the younger son, without an education, succeed where the older son having much greater opportunity failed? We cannot judge a person by outward appearance or by apparent assets. The most important part of ourselves is hidden deep inside in the spiritual world of subconsciousness and mental attitudes. All of us are a product of our inward selves. The scripture tells us *"As we think in our hearts, so are we."* Many preachers who should succeed and don't are prisoners of negative thoughts and concepts. One of the most powerful of these captors is fear. Since success and effectiveness depend upon the kind of thoughts we think, it is absolutely impossible to achieve if enmeshed in fearful thinking. Marcus Aurelius is said to have been one of the wisest men who ever lived. He stated; *"A man's life is what his thoughts make of it."* If we put into our minds thoughts of fear, we will get thoughts of fear out of our minds. If we fill our mind with resentment thoughts, then resentment attitudes will emerge.

So, we must conclude that one of the greatest possible accomplishments of any human being is to overcome fear. This is a true statement because this question of overcoming fear is the pivot point upon which many a preacher's success or failure is decided. It should be a comforting thought to most of us that the greatest people of the world have at one time been fearful people. They have exercised their tremendous prerogative, however, of overcoming fear.

II. GOD DOES NOT WANT US TO FEAR

He has instructed us not to. God does not want our lives torn with fear. Many times in the Bible, we are instructed to not fear. Matthew chapter 14, Jesus asked the question to Peter, *"O, ye of little faith, why did you doubt?"* Also in Matthew 17:6, Jesus commanded his disciples at the time of transfiguration not to fear. We are not to fear when the future seems dim and uncertain. *"And the Lord appeared unto him that same night and said, Fear not for I am the God of Abraham and I will bless thee and I will keep thee whithersoever thou goest."* Genesis 26:24. The same assurance that Abraham had is ours also. Wherever God sends us, be assured that he will go with us. He is there to keep us and to supply whatever strength or other needs we may have.

In the year of 1963, I resigned the wonderful church I was pastoring in Port Arthur, Texas with the intention of going to Atlanta, Georgia. During the time, I was struggling with this decision of whether to go or to stay, God gave me a peculiar yet wonderful assurance. It was at 2 a.m. in the morning when I was returning from the prayer room at the church, I had not yet received clear directions of what to do. However, between the church and the parsonage which was about a block's distance, the Lord comforted my heart. Just before my feet touched the patio leading to the back door of the parsonage, I spoke aloud and said, *"God, what shall I do?"* Very clearly, the Word of the Lord rang back in my heart, *"I will be with you if you go, and I will be with you if you stay."* He seemed to further say to me, *"You will do a good work if you go. You will do a good work if you stay. You will give your all if you go and you will give your all if you stay. You are my partner. I trusted you with my Name, my Spirit, and my church. I trust your decision on this matter."* On several other occasions since then, the Lord has seemed to leave a particular decision to my discretion. This has been very awesome and arresting.

I read of a procedure which great corporations employ in order to get the very best out of their executives. It is called "corporate management." For example, one corporation placed in the hands of one man sixteen million dollars. They instructed this executive to exercise full prerogative and decision-making powers in developing a leisure department in their corporation. Obviously, if he succeeded he would be rich. On the other side of the coin, if he failed, he would be washed out. This particular man tremendously succeeded. The corporation took him as a partner and backed him all the way. This is our position in God. Did not our lovely Lord say, *"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world?"*

We are not to fear when financial problems arise, *"And Elijah said unto her, fear not but do as thou hast said, but first break me some bread."* I Kings 17:13. The Prophet was asking the widow woman to put the Lord's work absolutely first. She was without question to step out upon God's promises and perform the apparent duty at hand. She was to leave the rest to God. This she did.

We are not to fear in danger. *"Fear not for they that be with us are more than be with them."* II Kings 6:16. When the eyes of the servant were opened, he saw the mountains filled with chariots and with the army of the Lord. The Lord has told us that his angels are given charge over us, and that they would keep us wherever we went.

We are not to fear in weakness. *"Fear not, "For I am with thee, be not dismayed for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee: yea, I will help thee: yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."* Isaiah 41:10.

Since the Lord has always blessed me with an abundant amount of health and strength, there was one time in my life that I seriously doubted that I could cope with pain. Since I had not known much pain in my life, I was not sure that I could handle it, God graciously allowed me, however, to come into a situation of terrible, tremendous pain. This lasted for three days and nights. There was absolutely no rest for me at all. In the midst of it, I was forced to continue my activity, On the third day I collapsed in the pulpit. I did not regain consciousness until about an hour later. How grateful I was to be without pain when I came to. How grateful I have been since then for that particular experience. It has assured me that I, with the help of God, could cope with pain.

Thus, God is able to take our weaknesses and turn them into strong points for us. Doctors tell us that it is almost unknown the amount of stress and suffering a given person can endure. You are able to face the future and to cope with it. Don't be afraid.

We are not to fear loneliness. *"Fear not for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name. Thou art mine. When thou passest through the water, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; for I am the Lord thy God."* Isaiah 43:1-3.

The further assurance of the Lord is, *"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."*

"In the latter part of the year of 1963 during a period of fasting and prayer, the Lord gave to me a vision. I shared this vision with a few of my close friends. The meaning of the vision was that in the future, the Lord would lead me down a lonely road. Several times since then in breaking out in bold ventures such as the "Endtime Revival", etc., I have been reminded of what the Lord showed me in the year of 1963. Yet, I can truthfully say that in loneliness I have never been lonely. God's grace is sufficient for every situation. Our Lord does not want us to fear. The fear of loneliness often paralyzes men of God so that they cannot make forthright, unselfish decisions. God help us to rise above fear.

III. MANY OF THE THINGS WE FEAR NEVER MATERIALIZE. THEY ARE IN THEMSELVES UNREAL.

If our subconscious minds and thought patterns are conditioned by fear, we are prone to think fear thoughts. Our imagination is thus able to construct unreal fantasies. Ironically, however, our system cannot tell the difference between the real and actual world and the world and the world of our imagination. Thus, it reacts the same way whether the situation be an actual one or a horrible creation from our fear-inspired thought patterns.

Let me give this example. As all fathers, I was very protective relative to my daughter when she was a teenager. I feared for her safety, etc. This, on several occasions, gave birth to imaginations which seemed quite real to me. On more than one occasion I found myself apologizing to her after falsely accusing her of particular activities. Some of my accusations were groundless and very disappointing to her. Why did I make them? They had a fear base.

More than one pastor can remember over-reacting to a certain situation in the church. Later, he found to his sorrow that his imagination had added much to it. The thing he feared seemed to take on the shape of actuality. Moved by fear, he struck out boldly and perhaps blindly at a problem which may not have really existed at all. This is the equivalent of a person fleeing blindly from a supposed bear he met on a path leading through some dark woods. Later on upon a closer examination, he made the discovery that it was only a bush which he saw. But his fears made the bush seem very real. The rest of his physical and spiritual makeup responded to the judgment of his conscious mind. Unfortunately, his mind was so perverted by fear it was not able to render clear judgment.

IV. FEAR HAS MANY FACES.

A. False courage

A boy with three other teenagers in the car with him may push the automobile to a high rate of speed. The conditions of driving may constitute a very dangerous situation. Does this mean that the boy at the wheel is fearless? Most of the time, absolutely no. Perhaps he is more frightened than anyone else in the car. Then why would he jeopardize their lives? The truth of the matter is that the boy at that moment has two strong fears. (1) He is actually afraid of the dangerous situation he is in. (2) He is more afraid of the image of fear that may be hung on him by his failure to prove to his companions that he is not afraid. He is more afraid of seeming to be afraid than he is of the actual danger. He does not dare acknowledge his fear of a possible wreck. Thus, he clothes himself with false courage. He has sought to disguise his fear.

B. Snobbery

People who seem to be cool to their associates, aloof and withdrawn, are often afraid. They are only confident in those areas that they can dominate. They either must be completely over their fellowman or completely under him. They could not dare to be under another unless the one they had subjected themselves to was a person of tremendous esteem. They lack the confidence to meet their fellow man on an even keel. Thus, they disguise their fear by the "cold shoulder" act.

C. Humility

Some people who seem to be very humble are not humble at all. If and when they are allowed into a situation they can dominate, they become absolutely incorrigible. They put up a front of humility in situations where they are afraid. They cover their fear with a moral virtue.

D. Loyalty

Blind loyalty is not always what it seems to be. The person who subscribes unreservedly to the person and actions of a superior does so many times through the incentive of self-preservation. They are afraid of striking out on their own. Their future, security, etc., seems to them to depend upon the goodwill of their superior. They are afraid to jeopardize these possibilities in any way. They cover this fear with a disguise of loyalty, however, deep down inside of such a person real loyalty may not be found at all.

E. Popularity

People who seem compelled to always be out front are not always the self-assured, confident people they appeared to be. The thing which causes them to sacrifice, drive themselves, and strive to always be cast in the best light possible may be nothing more than fear. These people feel strongly compelled to have the goodwill and acclaim of their fellow man. They would be extremely frightened indeed to find themselves in the shadows. They must constantly have the assurance of the crowd.

F. Prejudice

Quick and strong reaction during the rising of a controversial point is often a product of fear. The defender feels strongly identified with the subject he is defending. The more sure he is of himself and of his subject, the less defensive he will be. Insecurity and fear lying deep beneath the base of the given proposition, however, will spark a volcanic reaction. He feels to lose an argument is also to lose face. He is too fearful and insecure to allow this.

G. Illness

Strange as it may seem, there are many people today who prefer the security of a bed and being waited on rather than the insecurity of life's busy arena. Consequently, they remain ill. There must have been a strong reason why Jesus asked the man at the pool, "*Wilt thou be made whole?*" before he healed him. Healing would mean a change of life for him. Healing would mean responsibilities which he presently was not forced to shoulder. Jesus wanted to be sure that he was willing to face up an actual, real busy life. It is said that 50% of the people today who claim sickness are not sick at all. They are afraid.

V. WHY IS IT HARD TO COPE WITH FEAR?

A. Since we do not recognize fear inasmuch as it comes to us in disguise, our response to given situations is often destructive. The people involved are sometimes surprised that we would so react. They cannot always know that deep within us is a dark fear which has sparked this adverse reaction. When an attempt is made to rectify the situation, only the symptoms are dealt with. The deep underlying cause of fear goes undetected. The person who has reacted even under the most tactful reconciliations is still made to look foolish.

B. Proper response to certain situations would break the fear cycle. It would open the door for a further friendly compatible response from the other party. Thus, a firm base of friendship and compatibility would be built. A climate would be created that would dispel fear and cause the person thus formerly affected by it to bloom out into a personality very lovely and pleasing.

C. But fear prompts us to actions directly opposite from that which would break us out of the fear syndrome.

1. Hidden fear moves us to self-defense when self-defense is not needed and is altogether improper.
2. Fear causes us to withdraw when for the sake of a cause which we may be representing we need to be very bold and aggressive.
3. Fear causes us to treat as enemies those who would be our friends.

Obviously, we get reactions from all three of these situations we have mentioned here. Thus, our fears are further confirmed. All of us preachers have counseled people who have been in the process of seeking divorce. We have found neither party involved had the courage to risk the loss of face. Each of the parties involved often expressed their desire that their home be put back together. They often say that they are willing to meet the other halfway, but almost in the same breath they declare that the other party must make the first move. They are small and afraid. They cannot risk the loss of face. Thus, they turn into a "hider." They are not confident or hold enough to aggressively go out and seek to put the matter back together again. So, they wait. They hope that someone else will come and find them. Finally, when the divorce is granted, they later discover that they have gained their freedom still a slave of fear.

Jesus Christ was not a hider, He taught that his people were not to be hiders. He rather taught that we were to be vulnerable. Jesus Christ himself practiced vulnerability. He was entirely open. Though God of Heaven, He was aggressive in the making the first approach toward reconciliation. He laid himself open for refusal, insult, and affront. And He was insulted and rejected.

But He was never a hider; He was a seeker. *"The Son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."* Why was He a seeker? Because He was not afraid.

Fear, on the other hand, keeps us back from being completely honest. We are afraid to submit ourselves. We are afraid to confess our weaknesses and ask for help. We become a hider, a game player, and perhaps a hypocrite. We find ourselves saying things which we do not exactly believe. We only say them because we think we are expected to say them. Then we are filled with guilt and despise ourselves. Of all the emotional forces that pattern our individual lives, fear has the most insidious power to make us do what we shouldn't do and leave undone the things we should do. Fear is as lust itself. The only reward of lust is more lust. Lust is never satisfied neither is fear. It tends to become stronger and stronger the longer a person lives.

VI. WE CAN BECOME SO CONDITIONED TO FEAR THAT WE DO NOT WISH TO ESCAPE IT.

The pattern of action and response of our life has been one conditioned entirely by fear. All of our lives, we have been moved to actions that confirmed our fears rather than relieved them. A person who has had one bad marriage experience and become divorced tends to be more cautious in their next marriage venture. They tend to evolve into a hider. A hopeless situation is created in a church or any organization when more hidiers are involved than seekers.

It is a sad thing that some people will never be rescued from this terrible syndrome. When a man is first introduced to a jail cell, he revolts against it. It takes days for him to condition himself to his small world, but in time he can arrive at the place where he prefers the security the cold, dismal confines offer than the risk and challenge of a busy world outside. He has shrunk himself to fit it, he has become a double prisoner, a prisoner of his surroundings and also a prisoner of himself.

Why is it that we sometimes circulate rumors and talk about other people? Is it because that we wish to prove that other people are untrustworthy? Thus, we are justified in not trusting them, We are justified in hiding and not making an open approach.

It is said that when a child is born into this world, it possesses only two fears. One is a fear of loud noise and the other is a fear of falling. All other fears we may have are learned from other sources. It is a wonderful thing to know that what we have learned, we can unlearn. We should not allow ourselves to be brainwashed by impositions of negative nature that come to us from the world about, Let us consider some of the sources of fear.

VII. WE GET OUR FEARS FROM OUR FAMILIES.

I once pastored a family who was plagued tremendously by insecurity. The mother of the family continually cautioned her children to beware of other people. She did not want them getting too close in fellowship to others. She cautioned them that even their best friends were intending to hurt them. Obviously, this same fear which the mother possessed was passed on to her children.

For the sake of an example, let us fabricate a story here. It will be one which you can identify with. You have known families such as the one I am about to imagine here.

First, we start with the father. He is a strong man, absolutely physically fit. He has not known much sickness, etc., in his lifetime and hence does not have much compassion for weakness of any kind. He is full of pride. He wishes the son to recommend some things perhaps that he does not have in his own life. He declares that his son is not going to be a sissy. He states that any child bearing his name is going to be capable of making his own way in the world.

Perhaps some of these blustering exhibitions of a parent's strength are nothing more than a cover up for fear and weakness, but at any rate they are projected into the life of his son. There is much rough-housing with his boy. They engage in one-sided wrestling bouts. On the surface it seems good natured, but the boy knows at any moment his father's temper can flare up. He also knows that his Dad can be rude and brutal. He has experienced physical hurt from his father. His father not only exercises his muscles upon his boy but also his will to completely dominate him. The boy is always the loser in every situation. He most always loses in a humiliating way. He struggles against impossible odds. He tries to keep the tears back. Finally, his father shoves him away and expertly trip him in the process. He laughs loudly as his son goes tumbling in extreme embarrassment and humiliation to the floor. This pattern is carried on in the father's general behavior toward his son. There is constant teasing. This constitutes a form of pressure which the son is never completely freed from. Also, there are words of scorn that burn deep within the boy. The boy would like the good pleasure of his father and thus seeks to please him. Then there are moments of sudden rage when the son cowers in abject fear; but on the other hand, there are times of tolerant affection that comes from the father. It is not outright affection. There is no honest admission that he loves the boy or cares for him. Sometimes it is expressed in whimsical indulgences which he engages in toward his boy.

What is the resulting response from this little boy? First of all, we must know that he cannot respond as an animal, but as a human being. An animal only has his physical body to preserve but the little boy has two things to preserve, his body and also his ego. The law of self-preservation for both of these is equally strong. To protect his ego, he must build a self-image that he can tolerate and be happy with. He must believe that he is a capable, willful person.

This particular working assumption of the kind of person he is takes a while to gather together. In the process he decides how important or unimportant he actually is. He also discovers what he can do, and what he cannot do.

In putting together this image, he is extremely limited. He has never lived before thus the only material he has to work with is that which is supplied by others. So he must estimate himself by the way that his parents treat him. He has no grounds for feeling important if they treat him as being unimportant. He must conclude that they are the true example of what human beings are supposed to be. He has no other measurement to measure other lives by.

He can protect neither his body nor his pride. He is a victim of his environment. He is captive of his parents. To make matters worse, his situation is so very permanent. If he were exposed to embarrassment and dominance for one day, he may survive; but this continues day after day--day after day, month after month, year after year.

It would be impossible for him to survive at all if he did not take some source of relief. Where shall he find his relief? Most of the time he gets it from daydreaming. He fashions in his imagination a strong companion which he gives an identity and a name to. He talks with this imagined companion; they confide in one another. This companion may be strong enough to stand up to his Dad in his moments of fantasy. Also, he daydreams about running away. He thinks about where he would go and lays plans of what he would do when he got there.

Then there are times when he thinks about dying. If he thought that his dying would be grief to his father, this particular fantasy becomes more attractive. These fantasies are actually more satisfying than actual lying. The more he engages in them, the more real they become. Perhaps one day his father catches him shouting and encouraging his imagined companion to beat his father up. His father overhears him say, "Hit him again, kick him; knock him down:" When the boy looks up and sees his father standing there, he is terror-stricken. At last his father has caught up with him. But his dad, not knowing what it is all about, is pleased. He feels that after all his son is going to be the tough, strong individual that he wishes him to be.

The boy in time grows guilty. His conscience begins to assert itself. He feels like that he should not be a coward. He is condemned because he hates his father. He knows that he should love him. So, the source of relief which he had for awhile becomes a trap of torture. When he engages in it, his better self reminds him that what he is doing; the thoughts he is thinking; the imaginings of his heart are wrong. Thus, he becomes afraid of his own thoughts. He sees his thoughts as being dangerous. He may be found out. His true self may be revealed. He sees also his thought as being wrong. They are contrary to the image of his father, and what he has been taught.

He sinks lower in his personal estimation of himself. He comes to believe that he deserves to be rejected. His self-image becomes fixed, and that self-image is of an unworthy person that deserves punishment. The source of all of this is fear of his father.

VIII. WE GET FEARS FROM OTHER PEOPLE.

In a given locality, at a given time, a group of people may act and react upon one another so as to produce a fear structure that imprisons them. Entire districts can become negative. The first reaction to any given point in question can be negative. Men of leadership can be set and patterned by fear. Their influence and statements tend to confirm the latent fear which already exists in many of their constituents hearts. Thus, a dark, gray shroud of fear envelopes all of their activities. All of them become hidiers. They play a game of hiding from one another. Because of fear they cannot tolerate any descent or probing question. Yet, on the other hand, deep down they are guilt ridden because they are not absolutely true to themselves. They are captives of one another. Each is saying the thing he feels he is expected to say.

IX. WE GET FEAR FROM EXPERIENCE.

Let's construct here a supposition which may illustrate better our point. Suppose you were looking out your kitchen window. You saw a beautiful deer grazing in a field behind your house. All at once the deer lifted its head and fled from the field. It gracefully jumped over the fence and disappeared into the woods. You stood at the window and constructed in your mind the place, etc. which you felt like the deer would go. It may be deep in the woods near a patch of briars. You feature the deer quietly laying down, and in time tucking its head in its flank and going to sleep. We know that this particular supposition could actually happen. Now let us look at some of the things the deer would not have done.

1. He did not reproach himself for running away. He did that which was natural. He was only attempting to preserve himself.
2. The deer did not lay in anguish and think of what he should have done. He simply made a decision and carried it through. The matter was over.
3. He did not snub the smaller deer who came around. An inferior complex was not created because of his running away. He did not need to take this out on his fellow animals.
4. He did not seek to break down the bushes nor destroy anything else about him as if they were an enemy to him. He did not project his frustration out on his surroundings.

5. He did not convert his humiliation into sickness. Sleeplessness did not go from his eyes. He did not form a stomach ulcer. The matter was carried through, over with, and forgotten.

But we are not an animal. We have more than a body. We also have an ego which we feel needs protected just as much as our physical bodies. We do not want to be embarrassed. We wish to feel like we are admired, accepted, and trusted. Thus we not only fear for the well being of our physical bodies, but we also fear for the well being of our image. What caused the great depression? It is said that there was plenty of money. It is said that there was a great need for a marketed product. It is said that we had the capability to market, sell, and buy. Under such circumstance it seems there should have been no depression.

And indeed this is exactly so. The depression started because people began to grow afraid. It was like the clattering fall of dominoes. All of it was precipitated through fear. Finally a president came to the United States who stated, "We have nothing to fear but fear itself". Only then did we begin to climb up out of the dreadful depression. For years since however there have been people who have remembered the depression. All of their business dealings, decisions, and protections are based upon their memory of the depression. The imagined deer which we have talked about does not have this type of fear to confront. It does not have an ego to protect.

Very often the fearful person becomes desperate for several reasons.

1. He fears to see himself as he really is. His ego will not allow it. So the alcoholic goes on for years refusing to admit that he is an alcoholic. On the other hand in the church there are many dear people who simply cannot submit themselves to another. Their ego will not allow it.

2. There are people who fear situations which they do not believe they can handle. It may be that they are very capable of handling the situation. Their fears have however, immobilized them.

Fear often imitates good qualities but produces different results than would come from the real quality. For instance, people sometimes readily agree with others. They, on the surface, are taken for a pleasant, very agreeable person. However, they may be using what is known as, "passive aggression". They will agree with you to your face but in time they will carry their point and have their way in a subtle arrangement behind your back. Such procedures however do not bring about real agreement.

Another good quality which fear imitates is love. Fearing to lose the love of another party the fear captive may simulate tremendous devotion. However, it is unreal and hollow. The simulator himself is a very miserable person. The scripture tells us, "*The perfect love casteth out fear*".

X. WE MUST FACE UP TO OUR FEARS.

A. We must first of all understand ourselves. We must know why we act the way that we do. A minister who is quite well known in Pentecostal ranks related to me that for years he lived in quandary. And then somehow he began to discover why he reacted the way he did on a given circumstance. He began to see the part that his past has played in his life. This brought to him a higher form of self-respect. He no longer was so completely deceived by the varied spaces his fear appropriated. He began to recognize reality for what it was.

B. In case of tragedies or problems it is good to realistically list all of the possible things that could happen in this situation. Every negative and bad thing that could arise of this particular given situation should be listed. Once all of these tragic possibilities are down on paper we can take a good look at them. On another sheet of paper we should list all of our assets that we would have left even if the worst thing happened which we have listed. After we have listed the tragic possibilities and also the assets we would have left in the event the possibilities became reality, we will come to see that we shall survive after all. After we have done with our writing we realistically will observe that most of the bad things we have listed will never happen anyway. But pulling the cover off of it and facing it out takes away the mystery and the fear.

There is a great merit in standing up to our fears. I read the account of a fighter pilot who flew from the deck of an aircraft carrier in World War II. Obviously his work was very dangerous. Sometimes the fog came in and they could not find the carrier. Sometimes heavy seas arose which made it very difficult to land the plane. Then there was also the danger of combat. There were mornings, and times which he was very fearful of climbing into his plane. He discovered however, by going down into the hold of the ship and standing where the hydraulic piston retracted after flinging the planes into the air he gained courage. Indeed, it took courage to stand close to the discharge of this gigantic, powerful catapult. But facing danger down in the hold of the ship gave him courage to face danger on the deck.

It is said that "a brave man is not one who is never afraid. Such a person is only a fool. A brave man is one who though being afraid goes ahead and does what is practical". I once heard of a woman who was extremely afraid of lightning. She one day sternly told herself that she could not live the rest of her life like that. So when the next thunder storm came along she put on her appropriate clothes, got an umbrella, and went straight out into the lightning and the storm. At first she was horrified. But bit by bit she found her fear ebbing away. Never again in her life was she so tremendously effected again by fear. The wise man Emerson once said, "Do the thing that you fear and the death of fear is certain".

XI. INVOLVE YOURSELF IN A CAUSE GREATER THAN YOURSELF.

The heart of fear is self. It is nothing more than self-preservation. Sometimes the preservation of our physical selves but more often the preservation of our ego.

If we come to love and believe in a great cause and give ourselves wholly and completely to it, it is obvious that our minds will be removed from ourselves. This is why all of us need to commit ourselves a new and a fresh unstinted dedication to God ever and always. As long as self sits on the throne of our hearts we will know fear.

XII. BUILD HABIT PATTERNS OF OPTIMISM AND FAITH.

Fear starts as a little trickle across our minds. When we were a child our mind was without the heavy pattern grooves of fear. But bit by bit as we practice fear thoughts a pattern track is worn. Faith is the opposite of fear. We must fill our lives with it. We should not listen to negative situations. We should not read negative things in the newspaper which we can do nothing about. Why should we? We should be filled with faith, optimism, and drive.

None of us worry about how to get rid of the darkness that may be in our bedroom. We simply turn the light on. This is how we get rid of fear. Fear has related cousins. One of them is hate. A person who hates is drawn to fear.

We are enabled better to get rid of fear by loving. By being positive in all of our relationships in life. God does not want his children to be imprisoned by fear.

Psalms 34:3 "I sought the Lord and he heard me and delivered me out of all my fears".

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