

Introduction:

- *"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."* (Psalm 23:4, ESV) *"I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears."* (Psalm 34:4, ESV)
- Review
 - **Fear** is an emotion induced by a perceived threat which causes people to quickly pull away from the thing feared and usually hide.
 - Fear greatly affects the quality of our lives. avoidance, escapes It erects walls and keeps us divided.
 - Fear affects how you live and how you enjoy life. It steals joy and enjoyment.
 - Fear is the root of other 'fear words' such as worry, anxiety, insecurity and unbelief.
 - Fear attacks the very foundation of our relationship with God...our faith! Fear is faith in the devil. We call that unbelief.
 - Fear opens the door to other demonic expression in our lives.
 - God is bringing us into a place of confidence in who He is. That is called faith. This is where our victory over fear is found. Faith in God is where our victory over fear is found.
- Fear is good when it functions according to its intended purpose. Fear is designed to keep us away from dangerous things. When fear moves us to avoid things that are truly dangerous, we experience just how merciful a gift it can be. We use fear to protect us from all manner of real harm and pain.
 - But fear has been distorted by sin, and by the brokenness of our fallen bodies and minds. So, it frequently does not function the way as that way.
 - Due to our fleshly pride and unbelief in what God promises us, we fear things that aren't truly dangerous at all. Our fears are disordered and disproportionate and being such they put us in bondage, destroy our quality of life, and separate us from one another.
- Let's look at how we can win over fear. Stand your ground, work the word, dismantle fear.

I. Stand Your Ground Against Fear

- A. To win over fear you have to stand your ground. Fear is a bully that will push you around. Standing is a posture you take to win over fear.
 1. To stand - $\sigma\tau\eta\kappa\omega$. "The main use of the word is in Paul, mostly in the imperative. Believers are to stand firm in 1 Cor. 16:13; they do so in faith on the basis of God's promises." Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). TDNT (p. 1082). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.
 - a) Imperative - the command to stand is not a suggestion but a command. IE. It is a "hold your ground at all costs command." Imperative!
 - b) In faith - Faith in God, Faith in His Word. You have to have both to have confidence. This is the place, I said last week, that God is taking us. Confidence in Him. Void of fear.
 - c) On the basis of God's promises. His Word! His word is a weapon of our warfare.
 2. Paul commands believers to stand. It is not a suggestion. It is something we must do!
 - a) *"Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong."* (1 Corinthians 16:13, ESV)

- b) Face your fear! IE. Clint Eastwood in the street.
- B. Further use by Paul 4 times in 11, 13, 14: *“Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,”* (Ephesians 6:13-14, ESV)
1. Able to withstand - to oppose - Jesus is put on the pinnacle of the temple and withstands the temptation of the devil. He was anchored. He could not be moved. We are called to oppose our fear. IE. Have you ever wondered how boxers withstand so many punches”
 - a) Relax - believe it or not that is one of the first ways to absorb a punch. It allows you to move easier.
 - b) Strengthen your neck muscles they are stabilizers. They prevent whiplash. Neck, shoulders back. Strengthen yourself in the word.
 - c) Take the hit on the strongest part of the head, your skull. The skull is stronger than the jaw or the nose. Tucking your chin into your shoulder gives your chin some cover, and makes the tougher part of the head the bigger target. Forehead of flint.
 - d) Rolling with Punches Taking some of the force off a hit by giving in, "fading" or bob and weaving to reduce the force. This takes a lot of drills and sparring for folks get skilled in. Really good boxers can pull this off enough that someone keeps thinking they're -just- about to connect and all they get is a glancing shot at best. *“I have made your forehead as hard as the hardest rock! So don't be afraid of them or fear their angry looks, even though they are rebels.”* (Ezekiel 3:9, NLT)
 - e) You can train to withstand the onslaught of the adversary.
 2. To stand is to be place in power. Jn 20:19 After the resurrection Jesus is found standing in the midst of the disciples. Acts 7:55 Stephen sees Jesus standing at the right hand of God. *“But God's truth stands firm like a foundation stone...”* (2 Tim 2:19 NLT).
 - a) God intends us to face our fear with power, with His power.
 - b) To stand against our fears.
 3. Stand with the armor of God on! Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, helmet, and word.
 - a) You have to grow in truth, righteousness, peace, faith, helmet, and word.
 - b) You will not overcome fear by doing nothing, or just a little bit. You have to be intentional about it.

II. Work the Word

- A. You have to work the Word of God to overcome fear. The Word is one of your weapons of your warfare. It is how you fight against your adversary.
1. It is a sword in your hand. Eph 6:17
 2. It is life (zoe John 6:63). Not sort of alive or just surviving.
 3. It is authority in your mouth. What can I say that God has already said!
 4. It is seed in your heart and life. Mark 4. It has a 100 fold future.
- B. Fight spirits (fear) with the Spirit! *“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.”* (John 6:63, ESV)

- C. Judge your thoughts! Discern what you are thinking! Separate what is godly and what is not. *"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."* (Hebrews 4:12, ESV)
- D. Be wise build strong. *"Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock."* (Matthew 7:24, NLT)
- E. Hang your life on every word of God. *"But Jesus told him, 'No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"* (Matthew 4:4, NLT)
- F. Know God and Know freedom from fear. *"I praise God for what he has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me?"* (Psalm 56:4, NLT)
- G. The Word has a mission...to deliver us. *"He sent out his word and healed them, snatching them from the door of death."* (Psalm 107:20, NLT) *"It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it."* (Isaiah 55:11, NLT)
- H. *"God's Word is an indispensable weapon."* The Message (Eph 6:17).

III. Dismantling Fear

- A. Recognize fear or see it for what it is. Face your fear! IE. Clint Eastwood in the street.
 1. Fear is a spirit/demon. It is a thief. It steal the quality and joy of living.
 2. It has an assignment: to neutralize your faith in God. To cause you to trust more in the devil than in God. To weaken your relationship with the Father.
 3. Understand that fear usually begins through unholy imaginations.
 4. We meditate on fear (run the video of the lies) growing a stronghold. The stronghold, the spirit of fear, is spiritual enslavement.
- B. We ask God where the fear first entered our soul. It was were we opened the door to fear. IE. You may have a fear of water because at some point you almost drown. Fear of fire. Fear of trusting because you have been hurt...by a pastor, a spouse, boyfriend/girlfriend.
 - a) Forgive the person who cause the initial pain.
 - b) Events - recognize it for what it is...was it accident, rare event like dog bite, spider bite, etc.
- C. Take captive every fearful thought. *"For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy **strongholds**. ⁵ We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,"* (2 Cor 10:4-5 ESV) *"We can demolish every deceptive fantasy that opposes God and break through every arrogant attitude that is raised up in defiance of the true knowledge of God. We capture, like prisoners of war, every thought and insist that it bow in obedience to the Anointed One."* (2 Cor 10:4-5 TPT)
 1. You have to tell it "NO!"
 2. You have to tell it to "Obey"

3. You talk to it: "You do not have authority over me. I belong to God. God is my Rock. You are powerless."
- D. We must then cast down that 'vain imagination' through faith in God and God's Word. We replace the lie with the truth. But Jesus said,
 1. *"But Jesus said, "And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*" (John 8:32, NLT) Kelly's dad modeled before us what that looked like. I had the truth (God is healer) but he knew it. His knowing led me to a place of believing.
 2. Demolish fear with the Truth. *"We can demolish every deceptive fantasy that opposes God and break through every arrogant attitude that is raised up in defiance of the true knowledge of God.* (2 Cor 10:4-5 TPT) Create a new video in your head. What's playing? The Truth!
- E. We ask God to fill us with His love. *"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love."* (1 John 4:18, ESV) This best happens by just sitting in the presence of God. Just sitting and receiving His love.
 1. When our mind is ruled by the presence of God and the life of His Word. We experience freedom from fear. We create a new video to watch in our hearts and head.
 2. Note: This all happens in the heart! Faith. Faith in the Promises. Faith in who He is.

Conclusion:

- Fear is a trespasser.
- Fear is a destroyer of our quality of life and of relationships.
- We are called to face our fear and win!
 - Stand your ground against fear.
 - Work the Word against fear.
 - Dismantle fear and Win!

In the film *The Shawshank Redemption*, Ellis "Red" Redding has spent his prime wasting away in prison because of a reckless act of violence he committed as a teenager. After 40 years of incarceration, Red finally receives his release to enjoy the freedom for which he's longed. However, he can't free himself from the habit of asking for permission each time he wishes to use the men's room. He's become "institutionalized." This newfound life scares him, because he's grown accustomed to the structure behind bars. Imprisonment had become safe for Red. He didn't have to exercise his own decision-making. Someone else did the thinking for him, and now, on the outside, he faces a prospect more daunting and terrifying than incarceration: freedom. Red confesses that he contemplates various ways to break his parole and return to the security of his prison cell. He sums up his dilemma in one line: **"It is a terrible thing to live in fear."**

Some people are afraid to be free for they are afraid of their new identity and how they should act.