

Damsel in Distress

#7 Dealing with our Fears

I. Introduction

- A. Definition: "Fear is a chain reaction in the brain that starts with a stressful stimulus and ends with the release of chemicals that causes a racing heart, fast breathing and energized muscles, among other things, also known as the fight-or-flight response."

One of the most paralyzing and frustrating problems in all of life (especially for women) is FEAR. We are consumed with the real or imagined repercussions caused by the fear of the unknown, the fear of calamity, the fear of sickness, the fear of death, the fear of losing our family, the fear of losing our jobs, the fear of being misunderstood and so it goes.

- B. A word about phobias ("the persistent fear of an object or situation in which the sufferer commits to great lengths in avoiding, typically disproportionate to the actual danger posed, often being recognized as irrational.")
- C. Fear (of the right things in the right dose) is a good thing. It allows us to respond appropriately.
- D. Some examples of godly people facing fears:

Consider:

1. Timothy (young, inexperienced facing new challenges) 2 Tim. 1:7
2. Isaiah (facing an overwhelming enemy) Isa. 41:10
3. David (at the loss of a loved one)

II. In a very practical way, David addressed FEAR in Psalm 27

- A. Probably written in the time when Doeg the Edomite spoke against David to Saul (1 Sam. 21-22), this song divides itself into three parts:
1. David expresses his confidence in God (praises) vs. 1-6
 2. David acknowledges his dependence with a list of needs vs. 7-13
 3. David reminds us all to WAIT on the Lord vs. 14
- B. He starts with the praises (vs. 1-6)

1. Vs. 1: His focus is on the person of God not just the works of God. David knows God personally. He is not some distant deity worshipped with fire sacrifices. It is an intimate relationship.

“Light”: see Ps. 4:6, 18:28, 43:3, John 1:4, 1 John 1:5

“Stronghold”: See Ps. 18:2, 28:8, 31:2, 43:2

Both metaphors “pertain to the work of God in giving relief and victory, crowning his people with His blessings.”

“Whom shall I fear?”

“Of whom shall I be afraid?”

It is the greatness of God in relation to the insignificance of his own problems.

Look at Romans 8:31-39

2. Vs. 2-3: David rehearses the specific occasions of potential fear...“evil doers” “adversaries” “enemies,” they are “devouring” and “encamped against me.” These aren’t just possibilities. It isn’t IF ...it is WHEN these conflicts or trials afflict your life (see James 1) and, yet he is CONFIDENT.
3. Vs. 4-6 David glories in His fellowship with the Lord. His contact with Yahweh is intimate and direct. “He will conceal me. He will hide me. He will lift me up. And I will offer sacrifices. I will sing praises to the Lord.”

This isn’t a public David, this is a personal David alone with His God.

4. We too are COMMANDED to respond in faith. In Eph. 5:18 we are commanded to “...be filled with the Spirit” and to show it by singing (vs. 19), giving thanks (vs. 20) and by being subject to another (vs. 21).

- C. Then (and only then) does he start to list his needs and address his fears (vs. 7-13)

Note: there is a whole list of commands in these verses too...David is using strong imperatives with God.

“Hear...answer me!” (vs. 7), “Do not hide your face...do not turn...do not abandon me!” (vs. 9), “Teach me!”... (vs. 11), “Do not deliver me over to...my adversaries!” (vs. 12)

There is boldness here. It is a respectful and yet passionate approach to God. It is rooted in his personal relationship with the Lord. Look at Heb. 4:16, James 5:16 and Phil. 4:6.

- D. And then David sets a context for dealing with all those things that cause us angst...WAIT vs. 14

The “blessed pause”: **WAIT** The Hebrew term means “to twist or stretch.” “The noun form means ‘line, cord, thread.’ A vivid picture emerges. It is a verb describing the making of strong, powerful rope or cord by twisting and weaving ourselves so tightly around the Lord that our weaknesses and frail characteristics are replaced by

His power and unparalleled strength. It describes very literally the truth of what has been termed the 'exchanged life.' As we wait, our weakness is exchanged for His strength." ("Living Beyond" p. 103)

Isa. 40:31 "Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength..."

Phil. 4:13 "I can do all things through Him (IN HIM) who strengthens me."

III. So what? Next time you are threatened:

Ps. 118:6 "The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"

Prov. 3:24 "When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet."

2 Tim. 1:7 "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."

A. Declare what you know...claim it!

2 Tim. 1:12 "...For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

B. Express what you need...boldly!

Heb. 4:16 "Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

C. Wait...twist yourself around the strands of His strength and relax.

Ps. 46:10 "Be still and know that I am God..."

"Our prayer life becomes restful when it really dawns upon us that we have done all we are supposed to do when we have spoken to Him about it. From that moment we have left it with Him. It is His responsibility." O. Hallesby