

# FACING YOUR FEARS

By

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Fear is one of the many things in life which can be either good or bad, depending on what causes it and how we respond to it. Fear can be paralyzing, but it does not have to be. This series of messages by E. Harold Henderson is offered to help you understand and conquer fear in your life.

Psalm 56:3 is the key text for these studies: "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee."

## THE FACT OF FEARS

Sometimes I experience fear. Do you? Is it good or bad for us to have fears? It is neither. Fear is neutral. The good or bad of fear is determined by what causes it and how we respond to it.

It is good to fear God. Proverbs 9:10 says, "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*" On the other hand, it is bad to fear man or the circumstances we face on earth.

Proverbs 29:25 reads, “*The fear of man bringeth a snare.*” Even the Bible recognizes fear is good in some instances and bad in other instances.

Fear can be protective and helpful. Psalm 56:3 speaks of the protective nature of fear in saying, “*What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*” Fear protects and helps us if it turns us to confident trust in God. On the other hand, I John 4:18 admits that under some circumstances “*fear hath torment.*” Then it goes on to say that assurance of “*perfect love casteth out fear*”.

### **God’s love for us casts fear out of our minds.**

It is quite important that we understand fear. We must face the facts of fear, understand the facets and kinds of fears, be warned against the dangers of fear, examine a case study on how to handle fear and discern the remedy for fear. That is what I propose in this study on “Facing Your Fears.”

### **Definition**

It would be good to start with a definition of fear. At once we are faced with a two-fold definition of “fear” as it is used in our English language. (1) Fear is a feeling of anxiety and agitation caused by the presence or nearness of real or real or imagined danger, evil, pain or other threat. It is a feeling. It is a feeling of anxiety. It is a feeling of agitation. That feeling is aroused because we think we are threatened by something which will cause us harm. That is the most common meaning of the term “fear” in our daily usage.

(2) Fear is a feeling of reverence or awe, a respectful dread, particularly in relation to God. So we read in the Bible of “*the fear of the Lord.*” We do not fear God in the sense of expecting harm or danger from Him. We stand in awe before him in view of His majesty and power. So as we discuss our fears, let us draw a careful distinction between the threat of harm and the sense of awe.

### **Facts**

Fear has many parts in our personal experience. I call three of them to your attention. (1) There is a perception of danger from some person or thing. (2) There is an emotional response to that sense of danger. The autonomic nervous system is aroused. One has a rapid and unusually strong heartbeat. He experiences rapid or shallow breathing. There is trembling, sweating, muscular tension and dryness of the mouth. The voice quality and strength is often changed. An increase of adrenaline in the blood stream enables one to fight or flee. (3) There is action based on the perception and the emotion.

It is evident, therefore, that fear is both mental and physical. The mental perception comes first; then the physical response follows. It might be the mind misunderstands and causes fear when there is no basis for fear. An unexpected shadow in the dark might cause fear, only to discover the shadow was a shrub or the

family dog. The sensation of fear can be as real at an imagined danger as when the danger is real and present. In all our experiences of fear it is necessary for us to determine whether there is a real basis for our anxiety or whether it is a mere consequence of appearances which have no basis in fact.; In every situation ask yourself, “Is this truly an occasion for me to experience fear?”

## **Kinds**

Experience teaches us that there are different kinds of fear. Some are valid, and some are not. Some must be dealt with by Christian counseling, and some should not. Some are solved by memorizing scripture, or reminding one’s self of the personal care of God, and some are not. I call your attention to three different kinds of fear.

(1) There is an illogical fear. That is a fear without foundation. Some people live in fear of losing their health, for instance. They have no reason to suspect their health might fail; they are just afraid it might. That fear is illogical because it is without foundation, and the fear itself might create problems of health. Other people are afraid to get in crowds, to ride in an elevator, to go near water, to ride in an airplane, and the list could go on and on. Even though there may be some element of danger in some of those activities, there is no basis for such an illogical fear of them. Those fears should be dealt with under the guidance of a Christian counselor.

(2) There is a paralyzing fear. I remember as a lad I was walking down a country road with my brothers and sisters. Suddenly a car came around a curve in the road. All the other children quickly stepped aside to safety. I was such a child that I froze in terror, unable to move. One of my brothers caught my arm and pulled me out of the road. That is what I mean by a paralyzing fear.

You read of such a fear in Numbers 13, 14 Israel had come out of Egypt by great demonstrations of God’s power on her behalf. She came to the southern border of the land of Palestine, which God had promised to give her, and sent 12 men to spy out the land. Their report was of walled cities and giant men. The people were so filled with fear that they were paralyzed. They could still move about the camp, but they were unable to begin their conquest of the land.

That kind of fear is emotionally and physically painful. It is resolved when someone takes us in hand and helps us deal logically with it.

(3) There is a protective fear. You would feel fear if you realized there was a poisonous serpent at your feet or a vicious dog leaping to attack you. You would respond to that fear by a quick move, a cry for help, and an attempt to escape. Such a fear is healthy. It makes you stop and look before crossing a street or crossing a railroad track. It makes you check the purity of water before you drink it, if you are uncertain of its purity. God has given us the capacity to feel a protective fear because we need it in the kind of world in which we live.

I have indicated in this discussion that fear can be either helpful or hurtful. In

all times of fear the mind of the Christian must be turned toward God. I have rejoiced once and again in the statement of Psalm 56:3, “*What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*” That is the wisest course to take. When dangers are near and our hearts are afraid, “*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge,*” Psalm 46:1,7. Therefore, trust in the Lord. Lay your fears at His feet. He will keep you in perfect peace.

## **SINFUL FEARS**

Is it a sin to experience fear? It all depends on what is meant by “fear.” The Bible recognizes three kinds of fear. In fact, the Greek language in which our New Testament was first written has three different words which indicate the three kinds of fear. (1) Fear (phobos) means to be scared and experience fear, dread or terror. (2) Fearfulness (deilia) means cowardice and timidity. (3) Godly fear (eulabeia) means caution and reverence, a mixture of piety and love. The first word is neutral, neither sinful nor holy of itself. The second word is a weakness never used in a good sense in the Bible. The third word is always in a holy context, indicating the proper attitude we should have toward God. So we may answer with both a “Yes” and a “No” to the question, “Is it a sin to experience fear?”

I call your attention to those occasions when it is a sin to be fearful. No reference is made here to the protective fear which causes us to guard ourselves against hurt or danger. Neither is reference made here to the attitude of reverent awe toward God. Attention is directed to those situations in which fear is an indication of lack of faith, presence of guilt or a spirit of rebellion against God. I call these to your attention because, if you are suffering such fears, you need to confess them to a God as a sin and receive his forgiveness. Let us seek a biblical answer to the question, “when is it a sin to experience fear?”

### **Needless fear**

It is sinful to fear when there is nothing to fear. Turn your attention to the fourteenth chapter of the book of Numbers in the Bible. God had promised Israel that He would bring them out of Egypt and settle them in Canaan. He had brought them out “*with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and wonders,*” Deuteronomy 26:8. They had seen His miracles over and over again in their exodus travels. There was no question about His power to do all He had promised to do. But their faith was weak.

Coming to the borders of the land of Canaan, they faltered in faith. So they sent twelve men in to search out the land and report back. Their report was that the land was all God said it would be, “*a land flowing with milk and honey.*” On the other hand, the Lord had not told them there were giants living in the land and that their cities were well fortified against attack. Their faith failed and they were filled

with fear.

But there was no reason to fear. Joshua and Caleb encouraged them with the words, *“If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us...the Lord is with us: fear them not.”* Numbers 14:8,9. They were saying that there was no reason for them to fear. God had proven himself faithful. Trust Him. But their faith failed and they sinned against God. Their fear was a sin because they feared when there was nothing to fear. When you have groundless fears, confess them to God as a sin and trust him.

### **Faithless fear**

It is sinful to fear rather than to trust God. Listen again to Psalm 56:3, *“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”* Memorize that verse. Repeat it to yourself every time fear arises. Make it your watchword, if you are beset by fears. Make it very personal, emphasizing the pronouns. *“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”*

The New Testament scriptures warn of the sin of unbelief. It cautions us against, *“an evil heart of unbelief”* which will lead one away from the Lord God (Hebrews 4:11). It reminds us that *“whatsoever is not of faith is sin,”* Romans 14:23.

Unbelief is sin because it questions or denies the faithfulness of God. It rejects His promises. It ignores His invitations to trust Him. It places a person on his own resources rather than depending on the resources of God. That may fill one’s mind with fear because he knows he is not capable of handling the situation. So his lack of faith is the reason for his fear.

Why suffer the agony of fears when you can rest content by faith in God? Why endure the guilt of sinful unbelief when you can be freed by faith in God? Remind yourself often that it is sinful for you to fear rather than to trust him.

### **Guilty Fear**

It is sinful to fear because of guilt. The guilt of unforgiven sin will certainly cause fears. Adam and Eve lived in perfect peace in the Garden of Eden until sin entered into their experience. They lived in harmony with one another and in peace with God. But fear came with guilt when they sinned against the clear command of God. Hearing the voice of the Lord as He walked in the garden in the cool of the day, they hid themselves instead of going to meet him. Adam explained, *“I was afraid...and I hid myself,”* Genesis 3:10. What a shame! Instead of hastening to God to ask His forgiveness, Adam and Eve endured their fears and hid from Him.

The Bible warns, *“The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are bold as a lion,”* Proverbs 28:1. Why do the wicked flee when no one is pursuing them? It is because of their fears. Sin always brings fear. That fear remains until the sinner is assured of forgiveness.

Even “religious” people are filled with fear when they have unconfessed and unforgiven sin. God’s prophet Isaiah wrote of such people in these words, *“The*

*sinner in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites,”* Isaiah 33:14.

Whence comes the fears which accompany sin? There is a fear of the sin being found out. There is a fear of the judgement of God falling upon the guilty sinner. There is a fear of the natural consequences of sin being realized in one's life. There is a fear of loss of influence or blemish on reputation among people we know. So many fears accompany our sin that we are wise to hasten to God for forgiveness.

King Herod, ruler over the Jews early in the Christian era, decreed the execution of John the Baptist. He was convicted of guilt for killing that great man of God. When Jesus began His personal ministry, Herod heard of the teachings and the miracles which Jesus did. The guilty king was filled with fear and said it was John the Baptist raised from death who was doing what Jesus did. His fear was produced by his guilt.

How much better to be relieved of fear by bringing it to God. Admit its cause. Seek His forgiveness. Depend upon His grace. Experience His love. And resolve, *“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee,”* Psalm 56:3.

## **DANGER OF FEARS**

Life is filled with paradoxes. One has to do with the subject of fears. On the one hand, it is dangerous not to be afraid. Otherwise, great harm might come to you. On the other hand, there is a danger in entertaining fears. It can be a cause for greater problems. Whether fear is good or bad depends on the circumstances involved. It would be foolish not to fear a ferocious animal or a poisonous serpent. It would be equally foolish to fear the watchcare of God over your life. I call your attention to four areas in which fear can be dangerous, areas where you need to be watchful in daily life.

### **Fear weakens one who is doing right**

Fear is dangerous when it weakens your hands in doing what is right. Fear can weaken you.

God warned ancient Israel that a consequence of her sinful rebellion against him would be a weakness caused by fear. Leviticus 26:36-37 reads, *“I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth...and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies.”* Behold the weakness caused by fear.

What difference there is between that warning and God's promise of strength upon the same people. Elsewhere, He promised, *“One man of you shall chase a thousand; for the Lord your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised*

*you,*” Joshua 23:10. The difference between their strength and weakness was that their strength was related to their faith, and their weakness was related to their fears.

Jesus spoke of the weakness of fear which will come upon people toward the end of the age. He explained the weakness in these words, “*Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth,*” Luke 21:26. For men’s hearts to fail does not mean that people will have what we call heart attacks and grow physically weak. It means courage will fail. The will to stand and resist shall fail. People will lose the power to make a stand because they are filled with fears. Fear is dangerous because it weakens. Be warned and be confident in Christ.

### **Fear leads to other sins**

Fear is dangerous because it can lead on to other sins. Read the tragic record of the fearful actions of Simon Peter, recorded in Matthew 26:69-75. Jesus had been arrested and taken away to hastily arranged trials before the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman civil rulers. Simon Peter followed to see what would happen to Jesus.

Peter saw Jesus mistreated, spit upon, slapped and knocked back and forth before the judges. He was fearful that if they treated the Master that way, they would do as bad or worse to the disciples.

Peter left the house where Jesus was being maltreated. The weather was cold, and certain of the guards had built a fire in the courtyard to keep warm. Peter stood by that fire, warming himself, hoping that no one would recognize him as a disciple of Jesus. A young woman asked him, “You also were with Jesus, weren’t you?” He denied that he was a disciple. Fear had taken him in the first step of sin. He lied.

He became so self-conscious and uncomfortable that he left there and moved to another place. A second young woman said to some who were nearby, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth,” Simon Peter took a second step of sin. He swore with an oath that he did not even know Jesus.

After a while a third person came to him and said, “Surely you are one of them (the disciples of Jesus); for your speech shows you are from Galilee.” Then Peter took the third step in sin as he began to curse and to swear, “*I know not the man.*”

Why did Peter deny his Lord? He was afraid. Have there been times in your life when your fear caused you to sin against God? That is the danger in fear.

### **Fear takes away one’s testimony**

Fear is dangerous when it takes away one’s testimony. The Gospel According to John, chapter 9, reports a miracle in which Jesus gave sight to a man who was born blind. The religious leaders knew a notable miracle had been done, but they did not want Jesus to get credit for it. They called the man’s parents and asked them about the miracle. They were afraid of the authority of the court. So they refused to say it

was Jesus who had performed the miracle on their son. We might shame them for failure to speak up when so great a miracle had been done to one they loved. But before we condemn them, let us ask if there has ever been a time when we were so intimidated by bold sinners that we kept our testimony quiet.

Over and again God tells His people, "*Fear not,*" He knows we will not be a proper witness for God so long as we are held in the bondage of fears. Fear will take-away one's testimony. That is one of its dangers.

### **Fear leads to injustice**

Fear is dangerous when it leads to injustice. John 19 recounts the trial of our Lord before Pilate. The trial ended with the condemnation of Jesus and His being led away to be crucified. But look at the place fear had in that miscarriage of justice.

Pilate examined Jesus in personal conversation and by having him beaten, as was the custom of the day. His examination proved no offense in Jesus. He did not deserve to die. So Pilate announced his intention to release Jesus and let him go free. The crowd cried out, "If you let this man go, you are not Caesar's friend: Jesus has made himself a king and has rebelled against Caesar." Pilate knew that accusation was false. Yet he did not dare to stand against the will of the people and release Jesus. He had a bowl of water brought, washed his hands in their presence and announced, "I am free from the blood of this innocent man." But even so, he turned Jesus over to the mob to be crucified.

What was Pilate's fault? He was afraid of the violence of the mob. His fear led to the gross injustice of putting an innocent man to death by the most horrible method of execution known in the ancient world. Fear led to a miscarriage of justice then and will do the same today.

Fear is no small thing. Our study has seen that fear can weaken one in doing what is right, can lead to other sins, can take-away one's testimony for God, and can lead to greater injustices. Be warned against yielding to fear.

Turn your heart once and again to God in the words of Psalm 56:3, "*What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*" Learn by experience that, as the scripture says, "*Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed,*" Romans' 10:11.

### **A CASE STUDY OF FEAR**

Someone has written, I'd rather see a sermon than to hear one any day I'd rather one would walk with me than merely tell the way, The eye's a better pupil and more willing than the ear...Good counsel is confusing, but an example is always clear.

God knows we need both precept and example to learn our lessons well. So He placed a great deal of teaching by principle in the Bible that we might learn the value of faith and how to overcome our fears. But He did not stop with principles alone. He gave us illustrations on how to deal with fear.

I call your attention to an event in the life of Jesus recorded in Matthew 14:22-31. King Herod had arrested John the Baptist and caused him to be executed. Jesus heard of it and took His disciples to the east side of the Sea of Galilee into a private place where they could rest. But word of His location spread, and a great multitude of people flocked to him to hear Him teach. They had hastened so in their journey that the people had brought no food with them. Jesus performed a miracle in taking a lunch for one little lad, multiplying the food and feeding several thousand people. The disciples were amazed. They knew they would never have to worry about food again; Jesus could supply it. But then Jesus led them to a boat to cross back over the Sea of Galilee. He remained behind to send away the crowd that had gathered. The disciples were in the midst of a storm on the sea when night fell upon them. They labored with all their skill, but the wind was contrary, and the waves high. In their distress, Jesus came to them, walking on the water through the storm. They cried out in fear, but Jesus assured them, "*It is I; be not afraid.*" At Jesus' invitation Simon Peter got out of the ship to walk to Jesus on the water. When Jesus and Simon entered back into the boat, the storm ceased. The disciples came and worshiped Jesus, saying, "*Of a truth thou art the Son of God.*" From that incident, let us learn some lessons about how to handle fear.

### **Do not fear your circumstances**

Never be fearful in view of your circumstances. The disciples had reason to be afraid in view of their circumstances. They were in a small boat on a large body of water. It was night time. They were in the midst of a great storm. They had toiled for hours (for Jesus came to them after 3:00 a.m.) And were unable to make landfall. They were at least four miles from the shore. Their lives were in danger. It would be wise to be afraid in those circumstances, wouldn't it?

But let them turn their thoughts to God. They were there because Jesus told them to make the journey. They had seen a great demonstration of His miraculous power that very day in the multiplication of food to feed the multitude. They could be assured that He knew their plight and was able and willing to help them. Let them turn their thoughts to Him.

When you are in fearful circumstances, focus on God's commands and God's promises. Be sure you are obeying Him, and you can be assured that He is protecting you, whatever your circumstances.

Two Christians met and one asked, "How are you?"

The other replied, "Very well, under the circumstances."

The first responded, "What are you doing under the circumstances?"

Get out from under the circumstances and into the will of God. He will relieve your fears.

## **Jesus is master of your circumstances**

See Jesus as master of your fearful circumstances. Relate your fears to Him, His word, His promises, His purposes in your life. Remember: (a) Jesus ordains your circumstances. The disciples were in the storm because Jesus told them to make that journey. He wanted to teach them a great spiritual truth that could be learned only in a storm. So He sent them into that storm. Remember that the easy way is not always the best way. What you fear may be just what God ordains for you because He knows it will work out what is best for you. Trust Him to ordain your circumstances and trust Him to keep you through them

(b) Jesus knows how you feel in your circumstances. He came walking to the disciples on the water, and His first words were, "*It is I; be not afraid.*" Why did he say that? He knew they thought they were seeing a spirit and that they were filled with fear. Knowing how they felt, He spoke to relieve their fears, just as He will do for you.

(c) Jesus watches over you in your circumstances. He looked through the storm clouds and saw the disciples working with all their power to save their boat and their lives. He knew what they were facing. When Simon Peter asked to come to Him on the waters, He watched Simon walk and then began to sink. He was there to take his hand and rescue him. Never accept the thought that Jesus forgets you in your troubles. Never be afraid that He will let you sink. He watches over you.

(d) Jesus comes to you in your circumstances. In the midst of the storm, at 3:00 o'clock in the morning, Jesus came to the disciples, walking on the waters. He has promised never to leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5,6), and we can trust Him to keep His word. An ancient psalmist testified, "*I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears,*" Psalm 34:4. He will do the same for you. When your circumstances seem to overwhelm you and you see no way out, look for Jesus to appear. He is faithful and will be with you through them all.

(e) Jesus may or may not change your circumstances. He stilled the storm for the disciples. He brought their boat calmly to their destination. And He may do that for you. The sickness may be healed. The problem may be solved. The money may be supplied. He may change your circumstances.

Or, He may not! But if your circumstances do not change for the better, you will. He may permit your sickness to continue. He may permit the problem to continue. But be assured that His purposes are always good and His actions are always right. Continue to trust Him and refuse to harbor fears.

## **Jesus will calm your fears**

Jesus will calm your fears. I rejoice in the statement, "*Straightway (or, immediately) Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid,*" Oh, the joy of hearing His "*Fear Not.*"

Over 100 times in Holy Scripture God says to us, "*Fear not.*" It is His good

purpose to deliver us from our fears and strengthen our faith in Him. Do you hear His “*Fear Not*” spoken to your heart through this study? Do you learn to trust Him even in the storms? Can you face your disturbing circumstances without fear? You can if you adopt Psalm 53:6 as the theme of your life, “*What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*”

## **REMEDY FOR FEAR**

Wouldn't it be wonderful if there was a prescription which would deliver us from fear? We take medicine, and it relieves a headache, lowers our temperature or frees us from pain. Wouldn't it be wonderful if there was some remedy for fear which would deliver us from it?

The good news is that there is a remedy for fear. There are five rules which, if followed, will deliver you from the bondage which fear brings. They are biblical principles. They come from God himself. And they are certainly effective if they are followed. Review these five principles with me.

### **Remember God loves you**

When you are fearful, remember that God loves you. Since He loves you, He is devoted to take care of you. Suppose you are faced with a situation you cannot handle. You see no solution for the problem. You feel totally alone and unable to cope. Turn your thoughts to God. Remind yourself, “God loves me. He is taking care of me. I can trust Him to help me through this trial.” What assurance can comfort that will bring to your mind.

I remember the testimony of the Apostle John when he wrote, “*We have known and believed the love that God hath to us,*” I John 4:16. That means we have come to understand (know by experience) and trust the love that God has for us. Such an assurance will deliver us from fear. Assure your heart, “I will see this situation through successfully, for the God who loves me is watching over me.” Say with confidence, “*I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also in become my salvation.*” Isaiah 12:2.

### **Remember God dwells in you**

When you are fearful, remember that God dwells in you. He is not only with you; He is within you. When you trusted Jesus as your personal Savior, the Holy Spirit of God moved within your spirit, and He has lived within you ever since. He will continue to live the life of God in you until you are in His presence in Heaven. Hear this testimony from I John 4:12-13, 15: “*God dwelleth in us, and his love in perfected in us. Hearby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit...Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God,*

*God dwelleth in him, and he in God.*” What a basis for assurance and remedy for fear!

Since God dwells in you, He is always with you. You face no situation alone. He is present, concerned and ready to help you. Make the testimony of Hebrews 13:5,6 your testimony: *“He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”* God and one person is a majority in any situation. Say with the apostle Paul, *“I can do all things through Christ which strengthen me.”* Philippians 4:13.

If I knew Jesus Christ was in the next room praying for me, I would not be afraid to face ten thousand foes alone. But much better than that, He is living His life in me and making His strength available to me. I will never fear.

### **Express God’s love**

When you are fearful, express the love of God through you. Romans 5:5 informs us that the love of God is broadcast in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who lives in us. The love of God himself, divine love, is in our hearts.

But what does our showing love to others have to do with our dealing with fears? (1) It will take attention off ourselves and place it on others. That will help us forget our fears. (2) It will remind us of God’s love toward us and give us assurance in the face of our fears.

First John 4:18-21 repeats a single theme over and again: God loves us, His love resides in us, and His love can be expressed to others through us. He does not love us merely to make us loved but to make us loving. Have you tried to express the love of God, not just your own human affection, to people about you? If so, you have discovered how it delivers you from your worries and fears. It gives you an assurance nothing else will.

When you are fearful, remind yourself, “God loves me. His love is given to me. I can love others as He loves me.” And that will give you surprising assurance. *“We have known and believed the love that God hath to us,”* I John 4:16.

### **Set your mind on God**

When you are fearful, think of God more than you think of your fears. Fill your mind with thoughts of God. You will find your heart strangely strengthened.

I love the testimony of Psalm 27: *“The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Through a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident..In the*

*time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavillion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me upon a rock...I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord.”* That is beautiful, isn't it?

Reverence for God (called “the fear of the Lord” in the Bible) is the key to release from fear of man or circumstances on earth. Fill your mind with thoughts of God, and you will be delivered from fears.

### **Give your fears to God**

When you are fearful, cast all your fears on the Lord. First Peter 5:7 reads, “*Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*” Listen how other translators express the idea. Moffat says, “Let all your anxieties fall upon him.” Williams chooses the wording, “Cast every worry you have upon Him.” Knox reads, “Throw back on him the burden of all your anxiety.” And the Amplified Bible expands the wording in an effort to gather up the whole meaning when it says, “Casting the whole of your care, all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all, on Him, for he cares for you affectionately, and cares about you watchfully.” Oh, glory! How he cares for you and me. Why should we ever be fearful since our blessed Lord cares for us? Will you resolve to be done with worries, anxieties and fears? Will you offer them to God as a spiritual sacrifice, giving up the right to hold them any more? It will take an act of the will to make such a surrender. It will take a repeated act of the will to lay them at His feet each time they arise. But that is the way to spiritual victory over your fears.

I urge you to make practical and personal application of this study to your personal life. Do not continue in fear. Do not be upset by anxieties. Surrender yourself and your circumstances to God; know that He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully. What time you are afraid, trust in God.