

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: [Isaiah 12:1-6](#).
- B. From *The Bumps are What you Climb On* by W. Wiersbe (Ch. 18,14).
- C. There are hundreds of phobias in the world and all of us are afraid of something or someone to some degree.
- D. Tonight, I hope to give you some information on how to better handle ungodly, paralyzing fear.

I. NOT ALL FEAR IS BAD.

- A. Some kinds of fears are essential to life. It is good to have a fear of electricity, heights, a stove, etc., to keep us from harming ourselves.
- B. Paul says we are to be afraid if we have broken the civil law, for the authorities do not bear the sword for nothing (Rom. 13:4).
[for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.](#)
- C. But we are also told to fear God and keep His commandments (Eccl. 12:13). This is good. There are many passages in the NT that use the word "fear" and it means to have reverence or to have a healthy respect for.
[The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person.](#)
- D. Jesus said there is one we should fear (Mt. 10:28).
["And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."](#)

II. THE CHURCH IN SMYRNA WAS AFRAID.

- A. The brethren in Smyrna were told not to be afraid about what they were about to suffer (Rev. 2:10a).
[Do not fear what you are about to suffer...](#)
- B. There were three major problems in Smyrna that were causing the brethren to fear:
 - 1. Tribulation; they knew the potential for harm was there for doing good, so their fear kept them from acting.
 - 2. Poverty; economic woes of unemployment, inflation, and an uncertain future.
 - 3. Blasphemy; doing the right thing would cause the world to react with persecution.
- C. Yet, even in all of this, the brethren were told not to fear.

III. SOME OTHER THINGS THAT CAUSE FEAR.

- A. A guilty conscience. This is normal. Guilt should cause us to fear the wrath of God.
- B. Ignorance. Knowledge is power and comfort. (Computers are a good example.)
- C. Our own feelings of weakness. Doubt quickly translates into fear when we are called upon to do something we are uncomfortable with.
- D. But the root cause of fear; the real cause of fear is unbelief. We say that we have faith in a God who is all-powerful and all-knowing. Yet our fear denies that belief.

IV. VICTORY OVER FEAR.

- A. First, look by faith to God.
 - 1. God knows our needs (Mt. 6:31-32).
["Do not be anxious then, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "With what shall we clothe ourselves?" 32 "For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things."](#)

2. Nothing can separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:35-37).
Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? **36** Just as it is written, “FOR THY SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED.” **37** But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.
 3. God is in control of all things (**Psa. 23:1-6**).
- B. Second, lay hold of God's word (Rom. 10:17).
So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.
When you read the Bible, you find your faith growing. You will discover that God has always been adequate for the needs of His people.
 - C. Third, rejoice in the Lord always.
Jesus came to earth, died on the cross, was resurrected, and now sits on the right hand of the throne of God. He is alive now and forevermore! (Phil. 4:4; Rev. 1:17-18).
(Phil 4:4) Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!
(Rev 1:17-18) And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, **18** and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.”
 - D. Fourth, forbear with one another.
Do not fear times of trouble and intimidation (1Pet. 3:14).
But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, *you are* blessed. **AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED,**
 - E. Fifth, pray always.
Tell God about your fears and ask Him for courage and strength (2Tim. 1:7).
For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.
 - F. Sixth, think it through.
Think through the possible outcome scenarios and you will find your fears diminishing. By knowing what possibility could happen you can prepare for the eventual outcome (Phil. 4:8).
Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Perfect love casts out fear, for there is no fear in love (see 1Jn. 4:18).
- B. By increasing your faith, you can have victory over many of the fears in your life.
- C. The old saying is true; “I may not know what the future holds, but I know Who holds the future.”
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.