

Trade Your Fears for Faith

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[0 : 0 0] All right, good morning again and welcome to faith. We're so glad that you're here together with us. We're going to be looking this morning in the book of Psalms, Psalm 56 this morning, and figuring out how we can trade our fears for faith.

There are many of us who deal with different types of fears. King David, the psalmist, the writer of Psalm 56, struggled with fears.

You think, well, he was a king. He was a warrior. He had gone into battle and killed many and was a mighty warrior and a strong king.

But yet David had fear. And I think if we're all going to be honest with ourselves, I believe there are certain things that we ourselves struggle with. He was surrounded by enemies. He was surrounded by difficult situations.

And I believe that many of us can identify with him, as we're going to read in a little bit. But suffice it to say that fear is the enemy of faith.

[1 : 0 6] Fear robs us of the best in our lives. God really wants us to have the best. Now, it doesn't mean the best of everything, the nicest cars, the biggest bank account.

That's not necessarily what God wants for us. But God wants what is best for us and in our lives. And trusting God trades our fears for faith.

And it brings us peace. So let's learn how we can, first of all, face fearful prospects. How we can face fearful prospects.

And we see that in Psalm 56, verses 1 and 2. Let's read that this morning. It says, Be merciful to me.

This is what David is writing in Psalm 56, verse 1. Be merciful to me, O God, for man would swallow me up. Fighting all day, he oppresses me.

[2 : 0 5] My enemies would hound me all day. For there are many who fight against me, O most high. So the psalmist is facing his fears.

He is putting it all out there before God. He's talking about his enemies that are hounding him. They are pursuing him. This psalm is ascribed to David's visit to Gath.

We see that in 1 Samuel 21.10 and Psalm 34, where people are wanting to destroy him. And we know that the Bible teaches us that Satan wants to destroy us.

The Bible talks about the devil. The Bible talks about Satan wanting to rob us of our joy. And he is using all types of different mechanisms.

He uses different things to cause us to be afraid, to cause us to not trust God, and just to miss out on what life has to offer us.

[3 : 0 7] And he will often use people to create those fears, or he will use people in our lives to accomplish this plan. And it seems that fear was oppressing David continually.

He says, My enemies would hound me all day in verse number 2. So continually they were after him. They were saying things about him.

They were twisting his words. And they were in pursuit of him. And there are many times that oppression comes in different ways.

It might be financial fears that you have. It might be relationship fears, or things that are oppressing you. Or it might be people that we are afraid of.

It might be someone in your life. It might be someone in your family. It might be someone at work. It might be a supervisor. It might be someone else that you are afraid of, or that maybe someone is out to get you.

[4 : 08] And sometimes those are not real fears, but are not real situations. But sometimes they are real. Sometimes people do want to use us to accomplish their plan, to accomplish their desire.

And they will stab us in the back. They will trample over us if they have an opportunity to. They will lie about us. They will twist our words. So sometimes it's people that will be used, or that will cause us the fear in our lives.

So the question this morning is, what's your most oppressive fear? Maybe it's failure. Maybe it's not looking good, or not performing well, or not having enough money for retirement, or not being able to make ends meet, or maybe a relationship that you're afraid may not work out.

Whatever it is, what is your most oppressive fear this morning? And what are you doing to overcome it? Well, here's the way.

Let's take a look at verse 3 this morning. How we can fight fear with faith. How we can take our fears and use our faith in God, the power that He gives us to overcome our fears.

[5 : 20] We see in Psalm 56 and verse number 3, King David said, Whenever I'm afraid, I will trust in you. Whenever fear floods my soul, whenever fear is taking over me, and I can't sleep at night, and when my stomach is churning because I'm afraid of what's going to happen, afraid of the future, afraid of what people will do, he says, God, I will trust in you.

Here's where again, faith and fear are opposites. David says, Whenever I'm afraid, I will trust in you. And faith's courage arrives right on time for David.

Because whenever trust arrives, trembling flees. And we know that whenever we're trusting in someone, especially trusting in someone who is always going to do what he says, and that's God.

As a matter of fact, the pastor from many, many years ago, C.H. Spurgeon, said, When faith is exercised, fear is banished, and holy triumph follows.

When we exercise our faith in God, and we say, God, I trust you. I'm afraid. I don't know what I'm going to do, but God, I trust you to accomplish what you will do in my life.

[6 : 45] Then fear's banished, and the Holy Spirit comes in, and provides the triumph. So where do we get this fear-fighting faith?

Where do we see this? Where do we get this? Let's look at verse 17 in the Psalms. Excuse me, in Romans. Romans chapter 10, verse 17.

Now we know that in the book of Romans chapter 10, the apostle Paul is talking about faith that provides salvation. Faith that is true faith, real faith. Not just what we believe in our heads.

Not just where people, you know, people in the United States very often will say, well, you know what, I'm a Christian. Well, what do you mean by that? Well, maybe I was born in America, and America is a Christian country, right?

Well, maybe there are Christians in the United States, but it doesn't make us Christians just because we are Americans. Well, someone says, well, I was baptized when I was a baby.

[7 : 43] Well, that doesn't make us a Christian. And somebody may say, well, you know, I go to church. I'm a member of so-and-so church, faith Bible church, or first Baptist church, or Methodist, or wherever. And so I'm a Christian because I believe in Jesus.

Well, that doesn't make you a Christian either. And some people say, well, you know what, I live by the Ten Commandments, and I try to do good, and I try not to sin, and I try to live the best. I try to live by the golden rule, do unto others, as I would have them do unto me.

Well, that doesn't make us a Christian either. But as we look at verse 17 of Romans chapter 10, not only saving faith, but also faith that will drive away our fears, Bible says, so then, faith comes by what produces faith.

Or where do we find faith? By hearing and hearing by the word of God. As we take the Bible, as we take God's word, God's love letter to us, as we spend time reading it, as we spend time getting to know him, it will produce faith.

It will help us to deal with life's fears that we are dealing with. And so faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

[9 : 01] And so we know that we fight fear with faith, and how do we bolster our faith? How do we build our faith? By spending time in God's word.

It may be that you take the book of Proverbs, there's 30, 31 of those, and read one chapter, one proverb, one chapter a day. Could be that you take one chapter of the Bible a day and read it, or look online, Google Bible reading plans, or Bible reading in a year, and to read the entire Bible in a year.

And it will give you a plan that you can follow every morning or every evening before you go to bed. So if we saturate our minds with God's word, faith will drive our fears away.

If we saturate our minds with who God is, what he does, his promises, and we can stand on those promises, we can take them to the bank, because he, if he said it, he promised it, he will do it.

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Then next, we see that faith that is fixed on God makes the fear of man flee.

[10 : 17] Now you try to say that fast three times. But faith, where God is the source, and when we go to God, faith that's fixed on God makes the fear of man flee.

Because remember, David, in his psalm here, is talking about him being afraid of what his enemies will do, and what they're doing to him. And they're hounding him, they're twisting his words, and they're making him out to be the bad guy.

And he is dealing with this fear. Let's look back in chapter, in Psalm 56, verse 11. David says, in God, I have put my trust, so therefore, I will not be afraid.

And here is the key. Here's what David realizes, and this is a rhetorical question. What can man do to me? Of course you might think, you know, well, what's the worst they can do to me?

Well, they can kill me. Well, if you know Jesus as your Savior, and you know that you belong to God, and you know that when we breathe our last breath, the Bible says to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, we know that we go from living a life on earth to living a life in heaven with him.

[11 : 33] I mean, think about it. The prospect of spending eternity with God in heaven is pretty good. And so, what can man do to me? Well, they can kill me. But then, life with God after death, if we think about the prospect of it, and compare the two, the Apostle Paul says, we can't even compare, because the weight of heaven, and the weight of glory being with God doesn't even compare to being on earth.

Now, some of us really like being alive. I think most of us do. So, David says, what can man do to me? And most of our fears originate in distrust of people.

If we really stop and think about it, we worry about what people think of us. People will go through great lengths to change themselves, change their looks, change all types of things about us, because we are sometimes afraid of what people will think of us.

And also, we distrust people's motives, and maybe we fear their agendas. David, David's enemies, were twisting his words, they were dogging his steps, and he had no rest from their pursuits.

And that's what he's saying in Psalm 56. He says, my enemies hound me all day. Verse 2, for there are many who fight against me. And, verse 5, all day they twist my words.

[13 : 04] All their throats are against me, our thoughts are against me for evil. So, they just think evil about me. Verse 6, they gather together, they hide, they mark my steps. When they lie and wait for my life, verse 7, shall they escape by iniquity or sin?

In anger, cast down the peoples. Oh, God, you number my wanderings. And, verse 8, I don't have this on the screen, but if you have your Bibles, Psalm 56, verse number 8.

you ever wondered, does God care? You ever wondered, does God know what's going on in my life? Does he know how much I hurt? Does he know how much pain I'm going through?

Does he know how difficult it is? And I love verse 8. Put my tears into your bottle. Are they not in your book? Think about that.

David is saying, God, you've counted my tears. You know how many tears I've shed in my entire life. He's well acquainted with our griefs and our sorrows, the Bible says.

[14 : 08] Verse 9, And when I cry out to you, then my enemies will turn back. This I know, because God is for me. In God, I will praise his word.

In the Lord, I will praise his word. And that brings us to verse 11. In God, I have put my trust. I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

So David placed his faith in God. David knew that God knew and recognized and felt every tear that he had shed. God wants to have a relationship with each one of us.

So how does this real fear, how does this faith that cast out fear truly begin?

Well, let's look at Romans chapter 5, verse number 1. This type of faith begins when we trust Christ as our Savior.

[15 : 14] Verse 5 of Romans chapter 5, verse 1 of Romans chapter 5 says, Therefore, having been justified, how? By faith. We have what?

Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. When we place our faith in Christ, the Bible teaches us that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him should have everlasting life.

Should not perish, but have everlasting life. The Bible says, But God demonstrated his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

God loves you so much. It doesn't matter what you've done. It doesn't matter what our, it doesn't matter how checkered our past is. It doesn't matter because the Bible says, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Think about it. And we think about the person that's the most moral person that we could think of. Bible says that that person as well is a sinner.

[16 : 23] All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. But God demonstrated his love toward us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

The Bible says the wages of sin is death. Not only physical death, Adam and Eve began to die physically after they took a bite of that fruit in the Garden of Eden.

But what occurred when they chose to disobey God was they were separated from that relationship with him. And they died spiritually.

They were separated from God. And the Bible says the wages of sin, matter of fact, we deserve to spend eternity apart from God. Well, the wages of sin is death.

But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. So what's the key to heaven? How do we get there? Not by being a good person. Not by being baptized.

[17 : 21] Not by going to church. That's not how we become a member of God's family. The Bible says, all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. If we realize we're sinners, if we realize that we don't have it in ourselves to get right with God.

But we come to him and say, God, I can't do it. I'm a sinner. And I don't even deserve to be in your family. But I know that Jesus died on the cross in my place. And I'm trusting what Jesus did on the cross of Calvary to pay for my sin.

And you told me that if I simply come to you and trust what Jesus did on the cross in my place as being the full payment for my sin, that all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

And if that's you this morning, if you're not really sure if you're right with God, that's the way to know. Just go to him and say, God, I want you in my life.

I'm trusting Jesus to forgive my sin. And I am going to follow him with my life. And that's really all it takes. And that's where true faith begins.

[18 : 35] Now let's take a look at John 14, 26 and 27. But the helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

And I love what he says in John 14, 27. Peace I leave with you. And this was a time when Jesus' disciples were pretty troubled.

This was a time when they were not sure what was going to happen next. Jesus said, I'm leaving you with peace. My peace I'm giving to you, not as the world gives.

Because the world finds, tries, the world tries to search out peace or seek out peace in different ways. Some people seek it out in the bottles. Some people seek it out in pills.

Some people seek it out through relationships. Some people seek peace through a large bank account. Some people seek peace in all different kinds of ways. But the problem is, those things can be taken away in a moment.

[19 : 45] They're not secure. They are not permanent. But he says, not as the world gives, do I give you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

The psalmist found he didn't have to fear people. His trust in God caused his fear of man to flee. And he discovered that God was bigger than all his fears.

God is, as the old song goes, God is bigger than any mountain. God is bigger than anything that could produce fear in our life. So, is this a fearful time for you?

Maybe there's something that you're dealing with. We know that the Bible says, perfect love casts out fear. 1 John chapter 4 and verse number 18. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.

Because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. When we are, as the Bible says, in Christ, when we've trusted Christ as our Savior, when we're trusting what he did on the cross of Calvary to get us right with God.

[20 : 58] Not on, not on our own righteousness, but on the righteousness, righteousness of Jesus Christ that's given to us when we trust him in faith. The Bible says, that's when perfect love is able to cast out fear because we know that faith in Christ brings peace with God and also provides the peace of God in our lives.

So this morning, will you, will I, respond in faith to God's love and be free? We can be free of fear.

We can be free from the penalty of sin and that comes from trusting Christ as our Savior. It's a free gift he gets. Salvation is by grace through faith, not of ourselves.

It's the gift of God. Not of works, lest anyone should boast. That's the beauty of it. Can't be good enough to get to heaven. Can't work hard enough to get to heaven.

Salvation, peace with, the peace with God comes as a gift. Jesus Christ paid the price of that gift when he died on the cross of Calvary.

[22 : 16] he wants to give that gift to you and to me and we appropriate it by faith. Simply trusting and receiving that free gift. Let's pray.

Lord, this morning, Lord, thank you for your goodness. I thank you, Heavenly Father, that you are a powerful God, a God that can dispel fear and with, through our faith in you, dear God, we know that you can help us, free us from our fears.

Father, if there's anyone here this morning that doesn't know Jesus Christ as their Savior, is not really sure if they're right with you this morning, I pray that your Holy Spirit would open up our minds, help us to realize that we can be right with you simply by trusting Christ as our Savior.

Lord, we thank you for what you're going to do, what you're going to accomplish in our lives today. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.