

Fear

Objective

Learning to deal with enslaving fear in our lives.

References

www.insight.org – Dr. Charles Stanley

Scriptural Verse

“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” Is 41:10

Other relevant verses

- Psalm 27:1, 3
- Psalm 46:1-2
- Psalm 23:4
- Isaiah 54:17

Lesson Guidelines

Types of Fear

- Practical, protective fear – this is a natural reaction to danger in order to help us escape from situations that are hazardous, such as fire.
- Fear of God – this is the type of fear which means respect for the God who created the world.
- Enslaving fear – this is a devastating feeling that can have damaging consequences in our life. This type of fear is a sin because it involves a lack of reliance on our omnipotent God.

Sources of Fear

- Sin – separation from God results in us relying on our own strength which leads to fear of circumstances that are beyond our control.
- Learned behavior – some parents teach their kids to be afraid of many things instead of teaching them to trust in God at an early age. Children also pick up on this from their parents’ reaction to various situations.
- Imagination – imagining various possible dangerous situations that lead to fear of taking a risk or trying some thing new.
- Ignorance of the Holy Bible – there are many verses and stories that depict God’s power and His work for man. Lack of awareness of them will make it impossible to rely on God.
- Doubt – a faltering faith leads to fear.
- Poor self-image – the feeling that I am unable to do certain things because I don’t have the strength, intelligence, etc.

Consequences of Fear

- Division of the mind – we become unable to focus on the positive things in life because we are consumed with worry.
- Stifles the being – fear results in loss of happiness and joy.
- Procrastination (postponing doing something) and indecision – fear prevents us from taking proper action in a timely manner.
- Limits one's ability – living in constant fear results in an inability to function properly and the loss of some great opportunities in life.
- Undermines confidence – fear results in developing low self esteem.
- Causes torment and suffering – living in constant fear is devastating.
- Causes frequent panic.
- Enslaves and encompasses one's whole life.
- Blocks spiritual growth.

How to Heal Enslaving Fear

1. Ask yourself if you really want to be free of enslaving fear.
2. Recognize that the basic cause of fear is not recognizing God's sovereignty and His power.
3. Identify your fears.
4. Change your focus from the source of your fear to God.
5. Meditate on the Holy Bible – memorize verses in which God is telling His people not to fear because He is protecting them.
6. Make a conscious effort to change your fearful attitude towards life – when a sense of fear overwhelms you, say a quick prayer, recite some relevant verses and change the focus of your thoughts.

Conclusion

Fear is an emotion endowed upon us by God for our protection. However, a crippling fear that is devoid of faith is a sin and we must overcome it by making a conscious effort to change our attitude. Once we have identified the fear that overwhelms us we must equip ourselves with God's promises, found in Holy Scripture, that He will never leave us nor forsake us.

Discussion Points/Activities

1. What are some things that make us fearful?
2. What sort of activities can I engage in to fight this fear?
3. What Scriptural verses can help dissipate this sense of fear?