

## Lesson 19 Fear & Worry

### God Has His \_\_\_\_\_ for Our Lives

Matthew 6:33-34 (NKJV) But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

1 John 4:18 (NKJV) 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.

### Believing \_\_\_\_\_ About God

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The temptations to fear and to worry are common but can be overcome as you trust God for all things and in all circumstances. As you remain obedient to Scripture, you will not be hampered by fear and worry. Instead, you will experience the peace and joy that God provides through the Lord Jesus Christ (based on Psalm 37:1-5, 56:11; Matthew 6:33-34; John 14:27, 15:10-11, 16:33; 1 Corinthians 10:13, 10:31; Romans 8:28-29; Philippians 4:6-9; 1 Peter 3:13-16; 1 John 4:18, 5:4-5).

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Fear, worry and anxiety can become sins which can paralyze your mind, immobilize your body, and hinder your growth in Christ. Adam and Eve initially committed these sins in the Garden of Eden after believing Satan's lies and subsequently choosing to disobey God. Satan, not God, is behind these obstacles to spiritual maturity; but God has graciously given you all that is necessary to overcome them (based on Genesis 3:9-10; Matthew 6:25-34; Philippians 4:6-9; 2 Timothy 1:7; 1 John 4:18, 5:4-5).

#### **1. God's View**

(Principle 84) Overwhelming fear and worry can result from living to please yourself instead of living to please the Lord (based on Matthew 6:25-34, 25:14-30, esp. Verses 25-26; Luke 12:4; 1 Peter 3:13-16; 1 John 4:15-19).

Instead of a sinful self-focus, you are to fear (reverence) God (Deuteronomy 5:29, 13:4; Psalm 25:14, 33:8, 147:11; Proverbs 10:27; Luke 1:50, 12:5; 2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Peter 2: 17) and have a responsive concern (care) for others (based on 1 Corinthians 12:25; 2 Corinthians 11:24-30, esp. verse 28; Philippians 4:10).

## 2. Your Hope

(Principle 85) God has not given you a spirit of timidity (fear) but of power and love and discipline (sound judgment) (2 Timothy 1:7).

(Principle 86) God has promised to provide all the necessities of life as you seek to please Him (Proverbs 3:5-10; Luke 12:22-34; Philippians 4:19). God is always available to help you (Psalm 55:22, 94:17-19, 145:14), and He is firmly in control of every aspect of your life (based on Psalm 139:1-18; Jeremiah 17:7-8, 29:11; Lamentations 3:32; Romans 8:28-29, 35-39).

## 3. Your Change

(Principle 87) Put off timid, fearful, and troubled thinking. Put on love and sound judgment in the power of the Holy Spirit (based on 2 Timothy 1:7; 1 John 4:9-19, esp. verse 18). Recognize that in Christ Jesus you have peace (John 14:27, 16:33)

## Getting \_\_\_\_\_ Learning to Fear Not

*"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; **You are Mine.** When you pass through the waters, **I will be with you**; . . . When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you. For I am the Lord your God." (Isaiah 43:1b-3a, NKJV)*

It is just like our Lord to speak to us when we need Him the most. His tender "Fear not!" can calm the storm in our hearts regardless of the circumstances around us. Consider how He assured these great saints:

- \_\_\_\_\_: *The word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "**Do not be afraid**, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward" (Genesis 15:1).*
- \_\_\_\_\_: *And the Lord ... said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; **do not fear**, for I am with you" (Genesis 26:24).*
- \_\_\_\_\_: *So He said, "I am God, the God of your father; **do not fear** to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there" (Genesis 46:3). In other words, God said to Jacob, "Don't worry! I am running this."*
- \_\_\_\_\_: *"O man greatly beloved, **fear not!** Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!" (Daniel 10:19).*

- \_\_\_\_\_: *Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God" (Luke 1:30). Do you know what that word "favor" is? It is grace. If you are saved, you have been graced with *grace*! Thus, there is no need to fear.*
- \_\_\_\_\_: *And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men" (Luke 5:10).*
- \_\_\_\_\_: *"Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you" (Acts 27:24). That was when he was in the storm.*

## Taking Time to \_\_\_\_\_ Study God's Word

I love highlighting verses like these in my Bible so that when fearful times come, whatever shape they take, I have an instant source to remind me of God's promises! The next time you are afraid, and fear comes over you as you feel alone and defeated, claim by faith the presence of the Lord, for He truly is with you.

Do you recall that Hebrews 13:5- "***I will never leave you nor forsake you***"-is from Joshua 1:5? God never changes: "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever*" (Hebrews 13:8). God said to Joshua, "I have been with you in the past, and I will never leave you. I am right by you, and I want you to experience My presence. When you feel My presence you will not fear." He says the same to us today!

As a beloved child of God, when you are afraid, cry out to Him, "Abba, Father!" (Romans 8:15). Since "Abba" is the equivalent of the English words "Daddy" or "Papa," listen for His comforting voice as He says to you, "Fear not! Daddy's here!"

## Learning to Make \_\_\_\_\_ to Live in Hope

Fear is not from God, for He *has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind* (2 Timothy 1:7). Fear comes from our flesh; it surrounds us in the world, and it is the realm of the devil. So when the signs of end times multiply, and you are feeling anxious or fearful, ask God for His peace *which surpasses all understanding* (Philippians 4:7).

Fear not is the most often repeated negative prohibition in God's Word. The Lord wants us not to fear.

We live in a world that is possessed by fear: fears of death, fears in life, fears about danger, fears over the truth, and on we could go. But in this world of fear we are to Live a Word Filled Life – even in fearful times.

There is a way to live in constant touch with the God of Heaven – no matter what.

This offered lifestyle is called by various names in God's Word. The Apostle Paul in Ephesians 5:18 calls it: “the Spirit filled life”; and in Colossians 3.16 calls it: “the Word Filled Life”.

God offers His Presence and Influence to surround every part of my life.  
God offers an unbroken line of communication, supply, and fellowship with Himself.  
God has an offer to those who live in fearful times. More than any other prohibition God<sup>1</sup> repeatedly calls out to us to not fear.

Fear is not from God, it comes from our flesh, it surrounds us in the world, and it is the realm of the Devil.

## **Joshua \_\_\_\_\_ us to Live God’s Promises in Fearful Times**

This life is possible, no matter what goes on around us. As we turn to Joshua the 6<sup>th</sup> book of the Bible we open to an account of God Himself talking to a man named Joshua. Joshua is a real person, and has been asked by God to do something he had never before done. He is to lead a military campaign with untrained soldiers, in unfamiliar territory, and conquer an entire land in seven years. Look at what the Lord says to him.

Joshua 1:1-9 (NKJV) After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ assistant, saying: 2 “Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. 4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. 5 No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. 6 Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. 7 Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

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<sup>1</sup> There are at least 113 verses with either “fear not” or “be not afraid” (86 in the Old Testament; and 27 in the New Testament). It is just like our Lord to speak to us when we need Him the most. His tender “Fear not!” can calm the storm in our hearts regardless of the circumstances around us. This is the way He assured Abraham (Gen. 15:1), Isaac (Gen. 26:24), and Jacob (Gen. 46:3), as well as Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 20:15–17), Daniel (Dan. 10:12, 19), Mary (Luke 1:30), and Peter (Luke 5:10). The next time you feel alone and defeated, meditate on Hebrews 13:5 and Isaiah 41:10 and 43:1–7, and claim by faith the presence of the Lord. He is with you!

Joshua was approaching 90 years of age<sup>2</sup> when called on by God to lead a seven plus year war against entrenched enemies. Joshua had already graduated from prep school. He had followed Moses for 40 years, everywhere he went. He had learned to obey and see God at work in protecting the nation of Israel, providing for their daily needs. But now the legendary presence of that monumental man from Egypt is gone.

There were giants, there were huge walled cities and vast armies, and there was this group of people that hadn't been exactly cooperative with Moses. And what would be a normal human response? FEAR. And that is exactly what the Lord confronts and comforts Joshua about – be courageous, don't fear if I am with you.

God speaks to Joshua, and gives him a promise -- Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, **for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.**"

There is one solution for facing trouble – take God with you.  
There is an antidote for fear – experiencing God's Presence.

Joshua's strength to trust God in fearful times was built upon the habits of a Word Filled Life he had chosen while he was in the military and in politics. The hectic schedule and constant life on the road, heading to and from battles, never stopped him from time with the Lord.

Then as he enters his second career, as the leader of the Nation of Israel, Joshua also found time for the Lord twice daily! His habits built up in his youth served him well. He loved to spend time in God's Presence and learn all he could at the Tent of Meeting – kind of like church and Sunday School.

## The Power of Grace Prompted Habits

When he was older that habit of investing time for God to the exclusion of other activities never left Joshua. How did General Joshua Ben-Nun ever do it as a career military and political leader?

- **JOSHUA STARTED A \_\_\_\_\_ WHEN HE WAS A YOUNG MAN:** Exodus 33:11 So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle. *Joshua stayed on with the Lord. He loved to hang around the Tent of Meeting with God.*

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<sup>2</sup> John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.

- **JOSHUA \_\_\_\_\_ GOD'S COMMAND:** Joshua 1:8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. *Joshua loved God's Word to stay on his mind and in his mouth.*
- **JOSHUA \_\_\_\_\_ WITH IT TO THE END:** Joshua 24:15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” *And he purposed that no matter what any other family did, his was staying faithful to the Lord. That resolve only was possible because of the first two.*

## PERSONAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

- *Are you lingering in God's presence as He opens His Word to you?*
- *Are God's Words stuck to your heart, your mind, your mouth? That is what the Lord wants! Then you can lead your family God's way.*

Fearful times are coming – don't get swept up by the spirit of fear all around us, it is not from God! Remember and meditate upon the promises the Lord has made.

The next time you are afraid, and fear comes over you as you feel alone and defeated, meditate on these Scriptures and claim by faith the presence of the Lord. He is with you!

*Isaiah 41:10 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.'*

*Isaiah 43:1-7 (NKJV) But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you. 3 For I am the Lord your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place. 4 Since you were precious in My sight, You have been honored, And I have loved you; Therefore I will give men for you, And people for your life. 5 Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, And gather you from the west; 6 I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not keep them back!' Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth— 7 Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him."*

*Hebrews 13:5 Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

# How do we apply these truths?

## Like Joshua, choose to believe God implicitly

Theologian R. C. Sproul points out that there is a great difference between *believing in* God and *believing* God. Many people will say that they believe in God; that is, they admit that he exists. But they do not believe *him*; they do not believe what he says. Joshua believed God and, like all heroes of the faith, acted on that belief. God told him, “Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go” (Josh. 1:9).

Joshua firmly expected God to defeat his enemies. So he attacked them anticipating victory.

1. Pause and reflect on the verses in this lesson, especially 2 Timothy 1:7 and Joshua 1:8-9. Look them up, and then read them aloud.
2. Now, and ask yourself: “Do I really trust God HIMSELF? Or do I just trust IN the idea or concept of God?”

## Like Joshua, choose to believe God Completely

Perhaps the most important thing that is said about Joshua in this book is found in Joshua 11:15:

“As the LORD commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and Joshua did it; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.”

Pause to reflect upon this remarkable statement! Joshua “left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.” God commanded him to lead Israel as they conquered Canaan. Joshua did so with step-by-step obedience to what God commanded.

First the Scriptures record he took Jericho, then Ai, then Gibeon, then the cities of the south, then the cities of the north. Then Joshua continued his obedience by arranging the settlement of the Promised Lands as described in Joshua 13–22. Joshua did all that the Lord commanded him to do. No one could point to one single thing and say, “Joshua, you forgot to do this. The task isn’t finished.”

3. Pause and reflect on Joshua 11:15. Look it up, and then read it aloud.
4. How much more fully could God use each of us if that could be the case with each of us—if no one could point to anything we had left undone, but instead could say, “(Your Name) has left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded.” If that were the case, we would all see conquests even more extensive and blessings even greater than those experienced by the armies of Israel.<sup>3</sup>
5. Now, and ask yourself: “Do I really obey everything that God has commanded me?” Then ask the Lord to do as David did in Psalm 139:23-24, and search your heart to see if there is any part of your life that is not under His control. What would some areas be, list them:
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
6. Now, surrender each to the Lord and repent of any disobedience, and renew your promise to love, follow, and obey Him.

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<sup>3</sup> Boice, J. M. (2005). *Joshua* (pp. 91–92). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.