



## Keep Heart!

### Guard Your Heart from Fear: Psalm 56:1-11

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. – Prov 4:23

#### ...phobia

- ? What are you most afraid of? How does this fear impact your decision-making?
- ? What has been the most unhelpful advice you've ever received in trying to rid yourself of a phobia? Why was the advice unhelpful? What would have been a better solution to offer, that did not elicit more fear?

#### Fear + Shame = Freeze

- ? As in the Geico commercial about decisions made in fear, the teenagers hide behind chainsaws instead of getting in the running car and leaving the horror scene. What are some of the consequences caused by indecision because of fear?
- ? Why do you feel shame in admitting your fears?
- ? Why is shame a roadblock to finding help in your fears?
- ? What would it take for the fear to no longer have a grip in your daily life?
- ? What happens to your heart when "prbgtc" (pray, read your bible, go to church) fails to rid you of your fear? Remember that David was a man after God's own heart and a "fearless" warrior, yet he feigned insanity because of his foniasophobia-fear of being murdered?<sup>1</sup> (1 Sam 21:13)
- ? How could it be considered a good a good thing when the pat (church) answers fail to rid you of your fear?

IN GOD I TRUST; I  
SHALL NOT BE AFRAID.  
WHAT CAN FLESH DO  
TO ME? Ps. 56:4B

#### Name it + Claim Him = Freedom

- ? *How can verbally recognizing your fear help free you from it?*
- ? *"Fear is not the absence of faith. It's the incentive for faith."* Do you agree or disagree? Explain.
- ? *How would remembering our identity as children of the king - men and women after God's own heart - help free us from the poor decisions we often make in the midst of fear?*
- ? *Will knowledge of our identity alone rescue us, or is more required for freedom? Backup your answers with Scripture.*

WHEN I AM AFRAID,  
I PUT MY TRUST IN YOU.  
Ps 56:3

<sup>1</sup> <https://phobia.wikia.org/wiki/Foniasophobia>

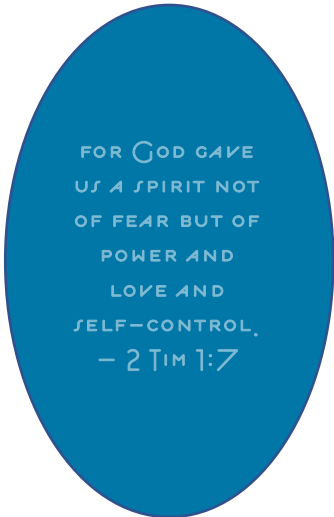
# The Shock Absorbers to the Potholes of Fear

2 Timothy 1:17

## The Spirit of Power

- ? Being relinquished from fear is an inside job accomplished though the Holy Spirit. Why do we so often try to solve things on our own before “*being strengthened with power though your inner being?*” Do we not think that the issue is important enough to call upon the Holy Spirit? Do we struggle calling out to God out of the fear that we will be disappointed when he doesn’t answer us?
- ? What kind of power does the Holy Spirit bring to us, as shown in Acts 1:8? What does this look like in everyday life?

*BUT YOU WILL RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS COME UPON YOU, AND YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES IN JERUSALEM AND IN ALL JUDEA AND SAMARIA, AND TO THE END OF THE EARTH.” ACTS 1:8*



FOR GOD GAVE  
US A SPIRIT NOT  
OF FEAR BUT OF  
POWER AND  
LOVE AND  
SELF-CONTROL,  
— 2 TIM 1:7

- ? It’s often been said that charismatics “run wild with the Holy Spirit’s power” and Baptists “stuff it in a box.” Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?
- ? Read Ephesians 3:16-19. What does it mean to truly *comprehend* “the love of Christ”? Can we still say that we *know* the Love of Christ if we are consumed with fear? What is going on in my heart if I’ve been praying/begging for the strength to comprehend the love of God and yet find myself so often still filled with fear?

## The Spirit of Love

- ? **Am I loved?** How does the enemy work at eroding our confidence in being loved by God and why do we listen?
- ? Read 1 John 4:19.

*“THERE IS NO FEAR IN LOVE, BUT PERFECT LOVE CASTS OUT FEAR, FOR FEAR HAS TO DO WITH PUNISHMENT, AND WHOEVER FEARS HAS NOT BEEN PERFECTED IN LOVE.”*

- ? If I am living in fear, is it true then that I don’t possess “perfect love”? Does this then also mean that I haven’t surrendered my heart to Jesus if I’m still living in fear? Why or why not?
- ? Proverbs 9:10 calls us into “*the fear of the Lord,*” and yet 1 John 4:19 says perfect love casts out fear. Define fear in each of these contexts and describe how you discern their differences.
- ? Sometimes the church is the last place one goes if they aren’t feeling loved. It may even be the place where some have been most wounded. Why is this?
- ? Many of Jesus’ harshest words of judgment were reserved for the religious, not the sinner. Why do we often get this backwards in the church today, and how could we modify our culture to better reflect our Savior? Do we often fail to exercise love because we don’t want to enable sin?

### THE HOUND OF HEAVEN

I FLED HIM, DOWN THE NIGHTS AND DOWN THE DAYS; I FLED HIM, DOWN THE ARCHES OF THE YEARS; I FLED HIM DOWN THE LABYRINTHINE WAYS OF MY OWN MIND; AND IN THE MIST OF TEARS I HID FROM HIM, AND UNDER RUNNING LAUGHTER, UP VISTAED HOPES I SPED; AND SHOT, PRECIPITATED, A DOWN TITANIC GLOOMS OF CHASMED FEARS, FROM THOSE STRONG FEET THAT FOLLOWED, FOLLOWED AFTER, BUT WITH UNHURRYING CHASE, AND UNPERTURBED PACE, DELIBERATE SPEED, MAJESTIC INSTANCY, THEY BEAT—AND A VOICE BEAT MORE INSTANT THAN THE FEET—“ALL THINGS BETRAY THEE, WHO BETRAYEST ME.” — FRANCIS THOMPSON

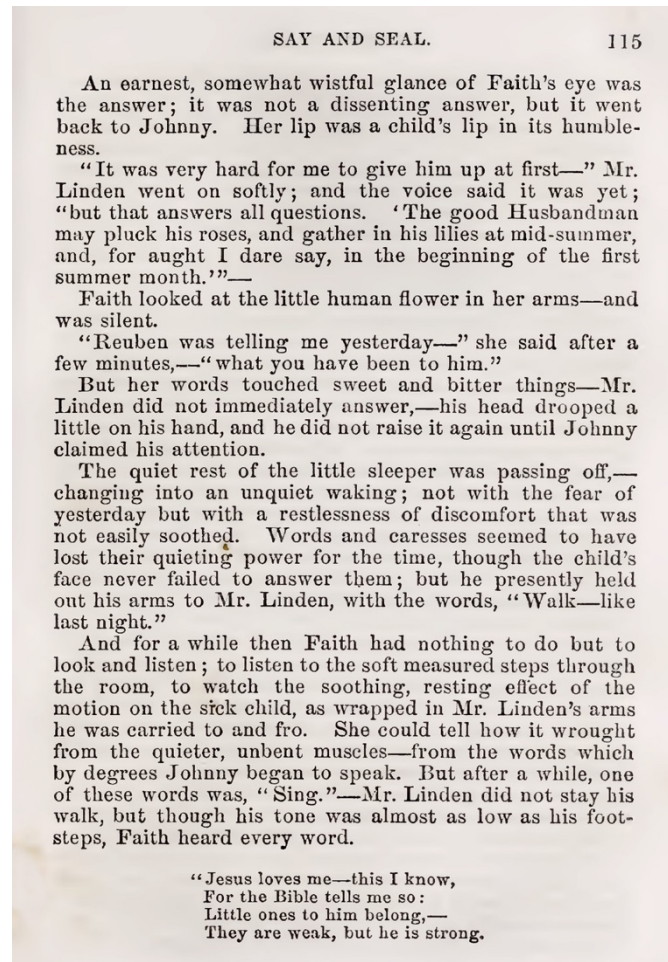
## The Spirit of Self-Control

- ? Self-control literally means “a sound mind.” What does it look like in daily life when one possesses a sound mind grounded in scripture? What wages war against it?
- ? How does consuming 24-hour news constantly work at eroding a mind stayed on Christ?
- ? What Scriptures can you call to mind that settle your mind in times of fear?
- ? In 1999, Minnesota’s Governor Jesse (*the Body*) Ventura was interviewed by a magazine and he said the following: “Organized religion is a sham and a crutch for weak-minded people who need strength in numbers,”<sup>2</sup> As abhorrent as that statement was from a sitting governor, he is not alone. Why do so many share his opinion about Christianity? Is he right?
- ? So often, fear is driven by the “what if’s” instead of the here and now. How do the “what if’s” draw us to madness and why are they so hard to shut off?
- ? The famed theologian Karl Barth remarked that a single song summed up the entirety of his life’s work and theology. This is what he said: “Yes, in the words of a song my mother used to sing me, ‘Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.’<sup>3</sup>” Why are the words “Jesus Loves Me” so profound and life-changing?

### The Story behind Jesus Loves Me

[Anna Bartlett Warner](#) (1827–1915)

In the context of the story, a sick boy, Johnny, is being comforted by his teacher, Mr. Linden, who offers these words to the child, thus the words relating to weakness, illness, and even the promise of heaven.<sup>4</sup>



<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/10/01/us/ventura-says-religion-is-for-weak.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/top-5-christian-theologians-karl-barth/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.hymnologyarchive.com/jesus-loves-me>