

Caitlyn, Ali and Brian  
Youth Group Meeting, 2/10/07, "Fear"

"We have nothing to fear but fear itself." FDR

A It's dark out, and you're home alone. The house is quiet other than the sound of the show you're watching on TV. You see it and hear it at the same time: The front door is suddenly thrown against the door frame. Your breathing speeds up. Your heart races. Your muscles tighten.

B A split second later, you know it's the wind. No one is trying to get into your home. For a split second, you were so afraid that you reacted as if your life were in danger, your body initiating the fight-or-flight response that is critical to any animal's survival. But really, there was no danger at all. What happened to cause such an intense reaction? What exactly is fear?

Fear is...

- C
- A feeling of agitation and anxiety caused by the presences of imminence of danger
  - A state or condition marked by this feeling.
  - A feeling of disquiet or apprehension
  - Extreme reverence or awe, as towards a supreme power
  - A reason for dread or apprehension.

There are several types of fears...

- A
- fears that are imagined
  - fears that are projected or displaced
  - fears that are learned
  - fears that are caused by a threat to our physical or emotional security

What causes fear?

- B
- Fear is caused by instinct. Without fear we could not survive, we would walk into traffic, stick out hands into crocodile's mouths, and jump off cliffs.
  - Fear can also be caused by traumatic experiences.
  - Any type of fear can be learned.

Are fears good or bad?

- C
- Fears can be good and bad, they can protect us from potentially harmful situations, but they can also keep us from doing things we could enjoy. Fears become a problem when you have too many or they are irrational.

"Ninety percent of the things we fear never happen."

A

The question is, how do we overcome our fears?

First. Learn to admit them. This is the first step for resolving any problem. As Jesus, the Master Teacher, once said, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Second. Verbalize your fears. This gets them out in the open where they can be dealt with.

**You can control your actions regardless of your feelings.**

B

Third. Don't allow your fears to control you. It's okay and normal to be scared out of your socks at times. However, it's immature to allow your feelings to control your actions. You can control your actions regardless of your feelings. It's not always easy but it is a choice we all have!

Fourth. If your fears are imaginary, acknowledge this and refuse to believe them. Get facts before jumping to conclusions. Remember, what the mind dwells on, it will eventually believe and act on. Refuse to dwell on fearful thoughts.

Fifth. If a fear is an ongoing anxiety that has no apparent cause, realize that it is most likely a symptom of some hidden fear. If so, it may be wise to see a trained counselor to help you find and resolve the cause.

C

Sixth. If the fear is real, accept your situation but take whatever steps you can to change the circumstances that cause your fear. If you fear a layoff, upgrade your training to suit the needs of the changing work environment. If you fear being alone, reach out to others and help meet some of their needs. In so doing, you will meet some of your own. Realize, too that most adverse situations don't last forever.

Seventh. Above all, learn to trust in God. There is no greater way to overcome fear. And this is a choice we all can make. The Bible says, "Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe."<sup>2</sup>

Trusting God is not a copout or an excuse for avoiding personal responsibility for our well-being. Trusting God knows that no matter what happens, God will bring good out of it if we do what we need to do and trust the rest to him. The Bible also says, "For we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him."<sup>3</sup>