

Introduction:

- Do you know the difference between Dubai and Abudhabi? The people in Dubai don't like the Flintstones. The people in Abudhabi-doo!
- Most things that we fear have to do with our sight (what we see) but mostly with (what we perceive) or imagine. For example:
 - IE. Song by Makyah "I put the bug in the old trash can, and the bug never bugged me no more!" Afraid of dead wasp.
 - I found a dead wasp on the floor. I showed it to Makyah and she screamed and backed up. I recognized the fear. And realized that the fear must be dismantled. She had to see it for what it was-dead. I picked it up and put it in my hand. Dead - can't hurt me. I finally got her to touch it. Progress. I asked her to let me put it in her hand so she could throw it away. No way! After a few moments she let me put it in her hand we threw it in the trash can. Thus the celebration song!
 - She was afraid of wasp. But not as afraid of a dead wasp. She had to see the wasp differently.
- Max Lucado: "A legend from India tells about a mouse who was terrified of cats until a magician agreed to transform him into a cat. That resolved his fear . . . until he met a dog, so the magician changed him into a dog. the mouse-turned-cat-turned-dog was content until he met a tiger--so once again, the magician changed him into what he feared. But when the tiger came complaining that he had met a hunter, the magician refused to help. 'I will make you into a mouse again, for though you have the body of a tiger, you still have the heart of a mouse.'"

APPLICATION No matter how we might seek to change our outward circumstances, there will always be something to fear. It's the heart, not the body, that must change. It's only when we place our trust in God that we are finally able to overcome all our fears.

I. Facing Fear An Enemy Of Your Soul

- A. **Fear** is an emotion induced by a perceived threat which causes people to quickly pull away from the thing feared and usually hide. **Fear** is a basic survival mechanism occurring in response to a specific stimulus, such as pain or the perceived threat of danger. There is the startle reflex fear and then there is the avoidance fear. **Fear** is found all through the Bible. Ie. Adam and Eve hid from God, Elijah hid from Jezebel, Gideon was insecure and hid, David was afraid, the twelve disciples dealt with fear (drowning, people, abandonment), etc. So we find fear all through the Bible and at the same time. One of the most repeated phrases by God in scripture is, "Do not be afraid." What are some examples of perceived threats? Fear could be...
- a) Fear of failure- exam time, evaluation time, performance time, not being good enough-for spouse-coach-in law - or parent.
 - b) Fear of poverty -wealthy people have this fear, poor people have it. Fear of poverty is the fear of not having enough.
 - c) Fear of rejection - Adam and Eve (from God), from spouse, a parent, a friend

- d) Fear of people - related to fear of rejection and other ways they might hurt or embarrass you. IE. According to most studies, people's number one fear is public speaking. In fact they are more afraid of public speaking than of snakes! Yikes! Podium!!!
- e) Fear of peers - insecurity, rejection
- f) Fear of 'letting go' children to school, husband to work, teenager to college...fear of letting go is result of not trusting God.
 - (1) that leads to 'control'
 - (2) fear forces people into a places of control. You seek to control so that you do not get hurt, or feel rejection. So fear is often a perceived threat/imagination.
- B. Fear greatly affects the quality of our lives. Fear is frequently related to the specific behaviors of escape and avoidance, thus it affects the quality of our relationships. When you start making reservations to be doing something else you are afraid.
 - 1. fear erects walls between people, spouses, parents and children, etc. divides us.
 - 2. fear affects our intimacy. It does not let people get in too close.
 - 3. fear affects us physically. So many diseases, physical and mental are rooted in fear.
- C. Fear affects how you live and how you enjoy life.
 - a) Il. Margot Woelk - was a young lady chosen to taste Adolf Hitlers food. Her job was to eat food (great food) but she couldn't enjoy it because she never knew if it was going to be her last. She was always expecting to die!
 - b) We eat food to live and we enjoy it but it would be a curse to eat food expecting to die. Fear lowers your quality of life.
- D. Fear is the root of other 'fear words' such as worry, anxiety, insecurity and unbelief. Fear is an enemy of your soul.
 - 1. Fear is a response to immediate danger.
 - 2. Anxiety/worry is a response to unclear or imagined negative possibilities.
 - 3. When we are afraid we make life miserable for ourselves and for those around us.
- E. Fear attacks the very foundation of our relationship with God...our faith! Fear is faith in the devil. We call that unbelief.
- F. Fear, like bitterness and unforgiveness, attracts other demonic entities to it. IE. Unplugging the freezer while on vacation. Stink, flies, etc. Therefore we must see fear as an enemy of our soul and take the fight to it. We do not want fear attracting other unclean things.

II. The Fight Against Fear

- A. Here is where God is taking us this morning.
 - 1. God is bringing us into a place of confidence in who He is. That is called faith. This is where our victory over fear is found.
 - 2. Faith in God produces the exact opposite of faith in fear.

3. You can only receive God to the measure of what you trust Him in. Receiving Him is what gives us authority to become something. John 1:12 Receiving Him gives us authority. Authority to rule over our fears.
- B. *"For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. ⁵ We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,"* (2 Cor 10:4-5 ESV) *"We can demolish every deceptive fantasy that opposes God and break through every arrogant attitude that is raised up in defiance of the true knowledge of God. We capture, like prisoners of war, every thought and insist that it bow in obedience to the Anointed One."* (2 Cor 10:4-5 TPT) Let's break this passage down.
1. We have already established that fear is mostly perceived in our minds. Left to itself it becomes a stronghold. I.e. We have all meant people who struggle with fear.
 2. Stronghold is: *"A strong hold is an area of the mind where darkness reigns. It is a system of logic that an individual has come to accept."* John Paul Jackson p.173 Unmasking Jezebel.
 3. Strongholds are thought patterns that are outside the word of God. As such they keep us from becoming like Christ. They make us prisoners of torment and bondage.
 4. Strongholds begin with vain imaginations or (TPT) deceptive fantasies. These are thoughts/mental pictures that are designed to get us to believe a lie. And once we believe the lie we empower the liar ...the father of lies. The lies lead to a spiritual paralysis called a stronghold, or a fortified dark place in the mind.
 - a) Fear - thought is sown in the mind.
 - b) We agree with the lie, therefore we take the bait. The video now starts playing in our head
 - c) We believe the lie, swallow the hook...now we are a prisoner of our fear.
 - d) We now have to fight to get out of prison. But Jesus has told us...*that the gates of hell will not be able to prevail!* Mt 16:18
- C. But our weapons are mighty!
1. There is one weapon I want you to pick up this morning. The Word of God. *"The Holy Spirit is the one who gives life, that which is of the natural realm is of no help. The words I speak to you are Spirit and life. But there are still some of you who won't believe."* (John 6:63, TPT)
 - a) The Word is Spirit and life. (Zoe) Vitality
 - b) Fear reduces the quality of life.
 - c) The Word gives life and gives it to us abundantly.
 2. The Word reorders our thoughts. When we devour the Word, the Word creates another video in our mind. This one cause life to come forth and not death! Here is where God is taking us this morning. The Word speaks to us. It is the voice of God and God's voice begins the dismantling process of fear.

- a) Through the Word, God is bringing us into a place of confidence in who He is. That is called faith. We believe the truth and not a lie. This is where our victory over fear is found. IE. There are things in life that are true but they are not truth. It is true you may have disease. That is true but it is not truth. Truth is what God has said!
- b) Faith in God produces the exact opposite of faith in fear.
- c) When we grow in confidence we grow in trust.
- d) Ie. "I put the bug in the old trash can..." I just had to get my granddaughter to be confident in what I was telling her as she grew in confidence she decided (her thoughts) she could trust me. PawPaw loves me! I can trust him.

III. Dismantling Fear

- A. Recognize fear or see it for what it is.
 - 1. Understand that fear usually begins through unholy imaginations.
 - 2. We meditate on fear (run the video of the lies) growing a stronghold. The stronghold, the spirit of fear, is spiritual enslavement.
- B. To get free
 - 1. We ask God where the fear first entered our soul. It was were we opened the door to fear.
 - 2. We must then cast down that 'vain imagination' through faith in God and God's Word. We replace the lie with the truth.
 - 3. We ask God to fill us with His love. *"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."* (1 John 4:18, ESV) This best happens by just sitting in the presence of God. Just sitting and receiving His love.
 - 4. When our mind is ruled by the presence of God and the life of His Word. We experience freedom from fear. We create a new video to watch in our hearts and head.
 - 5. Note: This all happens in the heart!

Conclusion:

- You can be a mouse, a cat, a dog or a tiger. But if your heart is filled with fear you will attract other negative things. But if you change your heart...you could be a mouse that makes an elephant run!
- You can ask God for forgiveness this morning. "Forgive me for not trusting you?"
- Most people can't become Christians until they get to the place they can say... "I trust you with my life." Who would like to make Jesus the Lord of your life today?