

FEAR

- I. Some New Testament verses referring to "fear."
 - A. Greek word *phobos*, from which we get English word "phobia."
 - Acts 2:43 - "everyone kept feeling a sense of awe"
 - Acts 5:11 - "great fear came upon the whole church"
 - Rom. 8:15 - "you have not receive a spirit of slavery leading to fear"
 - I Cor. 2:3 - "I was with you in weakness and in fear"
 - II Cor. 7:5 - "conflicts without, fears within"
 - B. Greek word *deilas* referring to "fright" or "dread"
 - Matt. 8:26- "Why are you timid, you men of little faith?"
 - John 14:27 - "Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful"
 - II Tim. 1:7 - "God has not given us a spirit of timidity"
 - C. Greek word *eulabeia* referring to "reverence"
 - Heb. 12:28 - "offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe"

- II. English word "fear" has great range of meaning.
 - A. Reflex - abrupt and acute sense of alarm or surprise
 - B. Thrill - sensation of daring; roller-coaster, bungee jumping, gambling
 - C. Wariness - healthy awareness of the dangers
 - D. Cowardice - timidity, afraid to venture, intimidated
 - E. Apprehension - fret, worry
 - F. Anxiety - chronic sense of panic and terror, phobias, dread
 - G. Awe - honor, respect, reverence

- III. What do we fear? (a few examples)
 - A. Non-personal
 - Unknown, unfamiliar, lack, want, loss, unemployment, economic instability, loss of support, confinement, isolation, loss of health, cancer, incomprehensible, future, death, end times, judgment, war, nuclear warfare, bodily harm, social decay, governmental decline, lack of freedom, being dependent, exposure, darkness, guns, air travel, closed places, mice, spiders, dogs, snakes, fire, storms, earthquakes, catastrophe, heights, work, world, suffering, pain, tribulation...
 - B. Inter-personal
 - relationships, love, broken relationships, disapproval, what others think, what others might do, rejection, sexual desirability, what will happen to our family (spouse, children), strangers, abandonment, desertion, people, pagans, other races, crowds, the world, opponent, enemies, being ridiculed or embarrassed, loneliness, having nothing to say, offending someone...
 - C. Intra-personal
 - Failure, inadequacy, inability, responsibility, success, our capability to hurt, being out of control, security, being dependent, being fearful, being exposed, cracking up, insignificance, impropriety, ignorance...

- IV. What does fear do to us? Consequences of fear.
- A. Physically
Muscular tension, diarrhea, sleeplessness, indigestion, hyperactivity, sleep, headaches, cardiovascular problems, increased sexual desire
 - B. Psychologically
Demoralizing, debilitating, disorganized, distorts reality, warps perception, false self-confidence, procrastination, avoidance.
 - C. Spiritually
Question our relationship with God, doubts of salvation, question God's love, His ways, His provision, question our ability to live as Christian.

V. Why do we fear?

- A. Psychological causes?
 - 1. Feel threatened, perceived danger, feel powerless, inadequate, inferior, genuine guilt, false guilt, rejection
 - 2. Personality patterns
 - a. S - insignificance, incompleteness
 - b. E - isolation, uninvolved
 - c. L - instability, insincerity
 - d. F - ignorance, impropriety
- B. Spiritual causes?
 - 1. Does Satan cause us to fear? - II Tim. 1:7; Gen. 3:10
 - a. Is fear always wrong? an evil to be overcome? Rev. 21:8
 - (1) Fear not - Matt. 14:27; 17:7; Mk 5:36; 6:50; Lk. 1:13; 5:10; 8:50; Jn. 12:15; Acts 18:9; 27:24; Rev. 1:17
 - (2) Is fear part of being human? Job 41:35
 - (3) Is fear a deterrent to crime?
 - b. Is fear a choice we make to sin? a failure to have faith?
 - 2. Does God want us to fear?
 - a. Fear God - Acts 9:31; II Cor. 7:1; Col. 3:22; Eph. 5:21; I Pt 2:17
 - b. Fear the devil - Matt. 10:26-28; Lk. 12:4
 - c. Fear judgment - Heb. 10:31

VI. How do we respond to fear?

- A. Natural responses
Deny, defy, suppress, avoid, insulate, self-protection, rationalize, manipulate, control, narcoticize, escape
- B. God's intended response
 - 1. Fear of God - the end of all other fears, the essence of faith
 - 2. Faith
 - a. Presence of God - Gen. 15:1; Ps. 23:4; 34:4; 118:6; Isa. 41:10; 43:1,5; Matt. 14:27; 17:6; John 6:20; 12:15
 - b. Love of God - Ps. 118:4; Lk. 12:32; Rom. 8:15; I John 4:18
 - c. Activity of God - Ps. 56:3; Isa. 12:2; Matt. 8:26; John 14:1; I Pet. 5:7