

7 Ways to Defeat Your Soul-Crippling Fear

I remember the first time I ever felt paralyzing fear. I was about 10 or 11 years old. Barely in double-digits.

I had experienced my first real-life encounter with death and it terrified me. When I say terrify, I mean that for months on end I couldn't get to sleep for hours—sometimes I'd lay there in bed over half the night terrified at the tricks my mind was playing with me.

I would lay there stiff, terrified to move even a muscle, as I tried so hard to turn off my over-active imagination.

I would go through seasons where I would be OK, and then one small word or picture would send me spiraling back down the hole of terrorizing fear.

This went on for years.

But I'm learning to use these principles from Psalm 46-50 in defeating fear in my life.

7 Ways to Defeat Fear Every Time

As we wrap up the first part of our Psalms study with Good Morning Girls, we see come to a close with these amazing principles in defeating fear and anxiety in our lives.

And this is a battle we must engage in.

We must not allow fear to rule our lives, because fear is the denial of God's sovereignty, which is His character. It is the essence of who He is.

When we fail to acknowledge His supreme power over every detail of our lives, we deny He is God.

So while the initial feeling of fear in our hearts is not sin, our failure to rule over it and defeat it is most certainly sin. The Word of God commands us time and again:

- Do not fear
- Be bold
- Be courageous
- Do not be anxious

And these are commands, they are not just good ideas for a healthy, Christian life. God has commanded us to renew our mind, take every thought captive, and to live with a sound mind as God's children.

1. Check your heart.

I want to start at chapter 50, before we even engage in the battle against fear, and here's why:

Before we can engage in a war, we must understand our battlefield and the strategy of our enemy. We must first answer the question: why and what?

Why am I anxious and afraid? What am I afraid of?

If we want to conquer our fear, we must go to the root of it, and the root of it is always our failure to comprehend the omniscience, omnipresence, supreme power and sovereignty of God.

We have a lack of the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, and wisdom births in our heart a boldness and courage to face every circumstance with assurance that no matter what, God will deliver us.

Just like the three young men in Daniel 3.

They were able to say, "But even if [God] does not [deliver us] be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up"

(Dan. 3:18).

Their faith in God was so unshakable, that even if God hadn't delivered them from the fire, they would still stand firm in their faith that He is God.

So, we must first examine our hearts to find the area where we have failed to allow God to be sovereign.

2. Make a choice.

Defeating fear is a choice.

It is not imparted by the laying on of hands. This I have learned by my many, many trips to the altar for prayer as a child and teen.

I just wanted to sleep peacefully, with no night terrors and no horrifying scenarios that my over-active imagination came up with to terrorize me. But the one thing I didn't understand was that God had already set me free!

He set me free 2,000 years ago when He died on the cross. Now, it was up to me to make a choice to fight for that freedom.

David in Psalm 46:2-3 says, "Therefore we will not fear:

- Even though the earth be removed
- Though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea
- Though its waters roar and foam
- Though the mountains shake with its swelling

In other words, my whole world can come crashing down around my ears and I'm worse off than Job, scraping his boils with a piece of broken pottery.

Even still, *I will not fear!*

This verse is very similar to: "Though the fig tree does not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the yield of the

olive fails, and the fields produce no food; though the flocks are cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls—yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will exult in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength; He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and He will make me walk on my high places.

These are verses that build our faith and encourage us to make the choice to stand firm, even when our legs are shaking and our knees are knocking together.

Eventually, we will begin to feel supernatural strength surge through us as we boldly declare in a strong voice, "Therefore I will not fear."

3. Quiet your heart,

"There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God" (Ps. 46:4).

"He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters" (Ps. 23:2).

I love the imagery in these verses.

First of all, they are places: river, streams, pastures, still waters.

God wants to lead us to a peaceful place. But we have to be willing to go. We have to be willing to leave behind the drama, the noise of social media, turn off the devices and willingly go to a place where our heart will be quieted.

I won't lie—this can be very intimidating.

One of the most intimidating things for someone who battles anxiety is silence. Pure silence. Silence so quiet that it's almost deafening.

Because in the silence, our fears suddenly become behemoth in stature.

But ignoring our fears with drama and noise won't make them go away. When we get alone in silence, we will face our fears and get to a place of quiet.

And quiet is far more than silence; it is an unflappable peace.

4. Remind yourself of God's greatness.

"Come, see the works of the Lord, who makes desolations in the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts off the spear; he burns the chariot in the fire" (Ps. 46:8-9).

One of the many reasons it is vital for us to read the Bible daily is because it builds our faith. It reminds us of the amazing and supernatural things God has done.

Sometimes we are so blinded by our present circumstance that we even lose sight of our own testimony, but the Bible reminds us of the way God intervened in impossible ways.

Sometimes, we have to take hold of our cheeks, look ourselves in the eye, and say, "Come! Behold the works of the Lord, who has done these impossible things. And if He did them then, He can do them now!"

5. Rejoice in the victory you already have.

"Clap your hands, all you people! Shout to God with a joyful voice. ... God went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet" (Ps. 47:1, 5).

This isn't just a psalm calling people to praise God; it is a psalm of victory.

I love the Hebrew word for "clap" in verse one. It is *taqa*, and it means more than just to clap your hands together. It also means to strike a blow.

The same Hebrew word was used in Judges 4 when the woman Jael won the victory over Canaan by driving a tent peg through Sisera's temple and killing him.

The word for "drove" is the same Hebrew word: *taqa*.

Clapping our hands is more than just keeping time to a song, it is an act of warfare against the enemy. Each time we clap our hands, we drive him back. We drive him back!

We issue a death-blow of victory!

Because Christ *has* already won the victory, we just need to rejoice in that and remind the enemy that's he's already defeated.

6. Worship.

Worship is such a powerful weapon at driving back the enemy.

And Psalm 48 is such a beautiful reminder of what worship really is—an exaltation of God, a rehearsal of His attributes, an elevation of Him in our hearts.

"Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised In the city of our God, in His holy mountain. ... We have thought of Your lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of Your temple. ... For this is our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even to death" (Ps. 48:1, 9, 14).

As we begin to rehearse in our heart who God is, what He has done and how great and powerful He is faith begins to grow in our heart as we become more conscious of just how mighty He truly is.

7. Meditate on God's truth.

Psalm 49 is a reminder of God's truth: we don't have to live in fear in this generation of evil. We shouldn't put our hope and trust in anything other than God, because wealth and power

will not save us.

In my own life, I have found meditating on the truths of God's Word to be a powerful tool in refocusing my mind and emotions on God.

As I meditate on Scripture, my mind is renewed and my emotions are calmed down, and peace has room to fill my heart.

In my post "How Eastern Meditation Differs From Biblical Meditation," I explain what biblical meditation is.

We're commanded to meditate on Scripture in Joshua 1:8, "This Book of the Law must not depart from your mouth. Meditate on it day and night so that you may act carefully according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way successful, and you will be wise."

As we take time to examine our hearts, make a choice to stand in faith, quiet our hearts, rejoice in the victory Christ has already won, worship God for who He is and meditate on His Word, we will drive out fear.

The more consistent we are in doing this, we'll see fear grow weaker as our faith grows stronger. {eo}

Rosilind Jukic, a Pacific Northwest native, is a missionary living in Croatia and married to her hero. Together they live in the country with their two active boys, where she enjoys fruity candles and a hot cup of herbal tea on a blustery fall evening. She holds an associate degree in practical theology and is passionate about discipling and encouraging women. Her passion for writing led her to author a number of books. She is the author of "A Little R & R," where she encourages women to find contentment in what God created them to be. She can also be found at these other places on a regular basis. You may follow her on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Google +.

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