

Ron Phillips: Rebuke the Spirit of Fear

After following the news in the wake of last week's terror attack at the Boston Marathon, it is obvious and understandable that emotions in our nation run the gamut.

We are saddened by the physical and emotional pain that our friends and fellow Americans face as a result of those killed and injured. Our prayers for healing and comfort go out to the victims and their families during this time.

We are angry that someone had the audacity to commit this heinous crime on a day (Patriot's Day) that was about everything that is right with our nation (courage, honor, freedom) on our own soil—our home.

We are confused as to why and how this could have happened. Who committed this act? Why did they do it? As our fine law enforcement officials investigate, we believe that answers will be forthcoming.

We are afraid. Many people in our nation are now living in fear on a variety of levels:

- People are in fear that it could happen again.
- Witnesses may face fear of the memories of that horrific day.
- Victims are fearful of moving forward into a future of uncertainty.

Terror, by its very definition, is about eliciting a fear response. Terror means "extreme fear." Terrorism is not simply about killing and wounding innocent men, women and children; it is about inciting fear in those who remain and causing people to live in fear.

The problem we face is that fear (terror) is a vicious cycle.

Fear is a magnet to demons. The more we discuss and voice our fear with our lips, the more demons are attracted to the atmosphere of fear. Fear is more than emotion ... fear is a spirit. Second Timothy 1:7 tells us that "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

In the Bible, Job was considered a righteous man. However, Job had a fatal flaw. In Job 3:25, Job confesses, "For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me, and what I dreaded has happened to me."

Job feared the loss of his children and his treasures, and Satan was drawn to that fear. And while we may think fear is an unavoidable part of life, living in fear is an existence we do not have to settle for. First John 4:18 tells us "perfect love casts out fear," and according to Proverbs 29:25, we have this promise: "The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe."

Abraham Lincoln is arguably the greatest president our country has ever seen. However, history bears out that he lost every single election in which he ran until he ran for president. What if he had allowed fear from past experiences to convince him to quit? How different would our country look today?

Former South African President Nelson Mandela once said, "I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it." For the believer in Jesus Christ, the opposite of fear is more than courage ... it is faith and hope.

For those of you who watch my television program *Abba's House With Ron Phillips*, you are familiar with my co-host, Angie McGregor. What many of you may not realize is that Angie is a gifted songwriter and singer.

Several years ago, in the immediate shadow of 9/11, Angie released a song that resonates today. Having faced down some fear in her own life, she penned the song, simply titled "I

Will Not Fear.” After the events of 9/11, this song took on a whole new meaning for all of us who heard it.

*For more than 30 years, **Ron Phillips** has been the pastor of Abba’s House (formerly Central Baptist Church) in Hixson, Tenn. As a lifelong Southern Baptist, a dramatic encounter with the Holy Spirit in 1989 changed his life and ministry to one that grasps who we really are in Christ and the gifts and fullness that are available to us through a Spirit-filled life. His television program, Abba’s House With Ron Phillips, blends solid biblical exposition with a simplicity anyone can understand. In addition, for 14 years, Phillips hosted the daily 15-minute radio program CenterPoint across the nation via radio and throughout the world via the Internet. He has now authored more than 20 books, including Awakened by the Spirit, Our Invisible Allies, Everyone’s Guide to Demons and Spiritual Warfare, The Foundations on the Holy Spirit series and his latest release from Charisma House, A God-Sized Future.*

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