

Speaking Out of Fear

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

—**Philippians 4:6**

Speaking out of fear always leads to evil (Ps. 37:8). God has not given us a spirit of fear (2 Tim. 1:7). Perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18). When we fear—and speak at the same time—what we say will come out wrong and may get us into serious trouble.

Take, for example, Abraham telling people that his wife was his sister. Abraham journeyed to Egypt and, knowing how beautiful his wife, Sarah, was, ordered her to say that she was his sister—so both of them would be spared. Abraham feared that someone would kill him in order to have her. So she did what he commanded.

It worked for a while. She was taken into Pharaoh's palace, where she was safe, while Abraham prospered. But God stepped in. The Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Sarah. Pharaoh somehow knew that God had caused these diseases and knew that Sarah was Abraham's wife. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife?" (Gen. 12:18). Abraham and Sarah mercifully were spared. They would never know what God Himself might have done had they trusted Him. Years later Isaac made the same mistake, repeating the error of his father (Gen. 26:7-22).

Speaking out of fear comes from assuming God is not going to look after us—so we speak in unbelief. It is the folly of self-protection. The truth is, God stepped in for both Abraham and Isaac. He will for us, too. But when we give into unbelief and speak—thinking we are justifiably protecting ourselves, our sin has a way of backfiring on us.

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