

The Key to Overcoming Fear

God wants to replace your fear with a confidence that comes from knowing who you really are in Christ

I remember a time years ago when I was invited to speak at a conference. There were workshops during the day about different topics and then larger meetings in the evenings with more well-known speakers. In this particular instance, one of the workshop speakers canceled suddenly, and I was asked to fill in.

Now, I was not well-known at the time, and I felt out of my league even being asked to do it. But I agreed to speak, trusting God to help me.

When I stood up to speak, I was so nervous. I had never spoken to such a large group before, and all I could think at that moment was, *I'm just a Bible teacher from Fenton, Missouri. What am I doing here?*

When I opened my mouth, all that came out at first was a squeak. But God was with me, and He helped me do what I needed to do.

If I had let fear rule me, I probably would have decided that day to quit speaking at conferences, and then I never would have experienced God's call on my life to share the gospel with people around the world or to help them learn how to live out their faith every day.

In the same way, I wonder how many people have gifts and talents from God but aren't using them because they tried and failed one time. So many people are frustrated because they know they're not doing what they're meant to do, but they're letting fear rule them.

Listen to me on this: *Everyone experiences fear.* There are big

fears that we're very aware of and little ones that we may not even realize we have. Fear is a tool the devil uses to make us miserable and destroy our lives. Because it's such a common way that Satan attacks people's lives, I think of it as the master spirit he uses to manipulate people and keep them out of God's will.

Simply put, fear is the opposite of faith. God wants us to walk by faith, and Satan wants us to walk by fear. When we learn to live by faith, not letting fear rule our lives, we can live fulfilling, satisfying, peaceful and joyful lives in Christ.

Fear begins with a thought and then creates intense emotions that can rule us and lead us to make foolish decisions. Proverbs 23:7 tells us that "as [a man] thinks in his heart, so is he." I like to say it like this: *Where the mind goes, the man follows.*

This is why the Bible talks about meditating on God's Word and having our minds renewed (see Rom. 12:2). When you meditate on the Word, you roll the Scripture over and over in your mind until it becomes part of you. Meditation takes information and turns it into revelation. When you get revelation about something, the truth of it sets you free from the lie that was holding you back from something God had for you.

I want you to get a revelation about this: The key to being who God made you to be is to learn who you are in Christ and see yourself in Him. When you're born again through a relationship with Jesus Christ, you actually become "recreated in Christ Jesus, [born anew] that we may do those good works which God predestined ... for us ... [living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us to live]" (Eph. 2:10, AMP).

This means that whatever Jesus is, we are too. He is strong; therefore, in Him we are strong. He is courageous, so in Him

we are courageous. He is a conqueror, so we can be too. He has peace and joy, and we have peace and joy. He's capable and bold, so in Christ, we can do whatever we need to do with His boldness.

As we read the Bible and meditate on what God says about us, we will become all we're designed to be. I've learned that if my feelings or thoughts don't line up with God's Word, then what I feel and think is wrong, and I replace it with the truth. It starts by making the decision to trust that God's Word is the truth.

So what does God's Word say about you? As you spend time reading and meditating on His Word, you will be able to recognize the fears in your life that are holding you back. Then you can overcome them as you see yourself in Christ and discover that, in Him, you have all you need to do what you were created to do.

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