

LINDELL RECOVERY NETWORK

# FEAR

*No Longer Afraid*

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KEYS FOR LIVING LIBRARY





# THE LINDELL KEYS FOR RECOVERY HANDBOOK

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*The Thoughts and Emotions Series*

# FEAR

*No Longer Afraid*

**KEYS FOR LIVING LIBRARY**



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# A PERSONAL NOTE

*from Mike Lindell*

My passion is to see people recover from addiction! And that's why I'm proud to partner with author June Hunt and Hope for the Heart, and so excited to use the *Keys for Living* as part of the Lindell Recovery Network. People everywhere are struggling with addictions, wounds, and challenges in life. They need hope. They need help. And the *Keys for Living* provide that hope and real answers from God's Word.

This is the best material I've seen in biblical counseling and caregiving . . . with over 100 topics that speak to almost every presenting problem. There's nothing else like them. They take God's Word and apply it to life's challenges.

The *Keys for Living* are exceptional and outstanding resources for those who need help in overcoming the obstacles they face, and above all, to find Christ.

Read this book. Share it with others. Ask God in prayer to make it real in your life.

May God bless you as you do it!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Lindell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Lindell

Lindell Recovery Network



# INTRODUCTION

The first time I remember seeing excessive fear was when I was a young girl and our family was visiting a ranch in Wyoming. My brother Ray and I were playing together when we were suddenly startled by screams coming from an adjacent room.

We immediately ran into the kitchen, where the screams were coming from, to see what was eliciting such shrieks of terror. It was there that we saw our mother and her close friend, Helen, standing on top of the kitchen table screaming at the top of their lungs.

What were they so afraid of? A poor, panic-stricken mouse quivering in the corner! (I assure you, that teeny-tiny mouse was far more terrified than either of the giant human beings cowering on the table top.) Indeed, there was “a mouse in the house!”

Truthfully, Ray and I were so tickled seeing our mother acting in a way we considered quite irrational that we burst into gales of laughter. Their screams combined with our laughter made for a rather loud chorus of contrasts. (It was funny to us, but not so much to them!)

Most children enjoy tormenting their parents from time to time—all in the name of fun, of course! And we were no exception. So when we occasionally caught a wee mouse by the tail in a mousetrap, my brother and I would put the live little mouse inside an empty mayonnaise jar for all to see—especially our mother.

After poking holes in the lid so the mouse could breathe, we would make our surprise presentation. “Mom, we have a gift for you,” we’d announce to her with mischievous grins. She would return a warm smile. Then with great fanfare, we would abruptly present the trapped mouse to her and she would squeal as we broke into laughter.

There’s an old, familiar saying: “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” How much wiser I would have been had I figured out that “fun is also in the eye of the beholder.” For, indeed, we had way too much fun at our mother’s expense. And while she was always very good-natured about our pranks, the truth is, our glass-jar “presentations” could have sent her into a full-blown panic attack!

If we want to live without fear, we need to clearly understand that

“fear is in the *mind* of the beholder.” That means our thinking must be conquered before our fear can be quelled. How do we do that? The Bible offers us a clear explanation of the importance of transforming the way we think: *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will”* (Romans 12:2).

Interestingly, God never assumes we will live without fear. In fact, His Word specifically addresses fear: *“When I am afraid, I will put my trust in you”* (Psalm 56:3 NLT). Notice, this verse doesn’t say *if* we are afraid, but *when* we are afraid. Undeniably, there will be times when we will be afraid. God knows that!

However, we shouldn’t be consumed by fear. We shouldn’t quiver and quake and quit! Instead, we should simply say to God, *“When I am afraid, I will put my trust in you.”* Then our hearts can truly be at peace.

Next time you find yourself in a fear-producing situation, my prayer is that you will find freedom from your fear and that you’ll experience God’s peace as you fully trust in Him.

June Hunt  
*Founder, Hope For The Heart*

# FEAR

## *No Longer Afraid*

*Imagine* being terrorized—your life continually threatened, your heart gripped with fear. Imagine every day waking to the thought: *This day could be my last day—the last for my family, the last for my friends!* Imagine living in the constant fear of being burglarized and brutalized, vandalized and victimized, mauled and murdered.

Suddenly, someone appears out of the blue instructing you to do the unthinkable—take action and fight those you fear! But such an idea is impossible—even preposterous—especially for Gideon, who is inclined to *flee* in the face of fear.

*“Fear and trembling seized me and made all my bones shake.”*

(JOB 4:14)



# DEFINITIONS



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*“Fear can be mobilizing due to real-life circumstances and it can be paralyzing due to deceptive, false thoughts.”*



Now, imagine trying to thresh wheat in a winepress of all places! After the threshing, in order to separate the chaff (the inedible parts) from the wheat, a gentle outdoor breeze is needed. As both chaff and wheat are tossed into the air, the wind blows away the lightweight chaff and the heavier wheat falls to the ground. But in a winepress, the surrounding walls block the wind, and threshing is not likely to be effective.

So here you are in hiding, fearing for your life, and fighting an uphill battle for only a few grains of wheat. At this point, the angel of the Lord appears, saying, *“The LORD is with you, mighty warrior”* (Judges 6:12). He addresses you as what? A mighty warrior?

Who . . . you?

## What Is Fear?

Imagine being asked to do something you know you can't do. Like Gideon, rather than attempting to meet the challenge, you find yourself responding, “Thanks, but no thanks. You've got the *wrong* person.”

However, the angel announces that *you* are to lead the battle against your greatest enemy—one vastly outnumbering your army, one greatly feared by your people, and feared for good reason! The mammoth Midianites ravage and ransack your nation at will, leaving death and destruction in their wake. Understandably, you feel terrorized and your heart is filled with fear.

*“Whenever the Israelites planted their crops,  
the Midianites . . . ruined the crops all the way to Gaza  
and did not spare a living thing for Israel,  
neither sheep nor cattle nor donkeys.”*

(JUDGES 6:3–4)

**Fear** is a strong emotional reaction to a perceived imminent danger characterized by a fight, flight, or freeze response.<sup>1</sup>

**Fear** can be real or imagined, rational or irrational, normal or abnormal.

**Fear** acts as a protective reaction, placed in us by our creator to activate all our physical defense systems when we face real danger. Fear triggers the release of adrenaline in the body, which both prepares and propels us to action, often called the “fight or flight” response.

**Fear** is a natural emotion designed by God. However, *fearfulness* is not designed by God, for fearfulness suggests living in a state of fear.

**Fear** in Hebrew is *yare*,<sup>2</sup> which means “to be afraid, stand in awe or fear.” The Bible says about Gideon that . . .

*“He was afraid.”*  
(JUDGES 6:27)

## The Fear of the Lord

**Question:** “Throughout the Bible we are told not to fear people, circumstances, or the unknown, and yet we are told to fear God—to have ‘the fear of the LORD.’ How can I love and trust a God I’m told to fear?”

**Answer:** The biblical phrase “*the fear of the LORD*” depicts *reverential awe* for our all-powerful God, a deep-seated respect for our all-seeing God based on His sovereignty. Realize, the creator of the universe is still all-knowing God and He has the right to rule over you because He alone knows how to fulfill you.

What we know about God directly affects how we feel about God, stirring our emotions toward expressions of wonder, admiration, and worship. Reverential awe for God is a spiritual mind-set that encompasses both our minds and our hearts.

But while the fear of the Lord is never intended to terrorize us or prevent us from drawing close to Him, in all truthfulness there should be an element of authentic fear when contemplating interaction with Almighty God. Hebrews 10:31 clearly communicates: *“It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”*

The fear of the Lord can be compared to God’s design for a child relating to a loving father. The child expresses delight and deep, abiding trust in the father. At the same time, he feels a respect for his authority. Unconditional love is never questioned, but the child also learns that his father will exert discipline to quell disobedience in order to build godly character into his child.

In Christ we are invited to call God “Abba” . . . “Daddy” . . . “Father,” which means we have the indescribable privilege of having a familial relationship with God. Yet when we are tempted to go astray, we must never neglect the fear of the Lord in rightly relating to Him.

Scripture gives us wise instruction:

*“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our ‘God is a consuming fire.’”*

(HEBREWS 12:28–29)

## What Is Anxiety?

After the heavenly messenger delivers his initial instructions, Gideon begins to wonder: *If the Lord is really with us, why has all this evil happened?* And Gideon makes it clear that if God wants a deliverer, he is definitely not the man for the job! After all, he is the *least* in his family, belonging to the *weakest* clan, in the *small* tribe of Manasseh. Cowering with the angst of anxiety, Gideon exclaims, “*How can I save Israel?*” (Judges 6:15).

Gideon knows the monstrous Midianite army has a new weapon that enables them to make swift, long-range attacks against the Hebrews, rendering them virtually powerless. This terrible weapon is nothing other than *the camel!*

Without food or water and with a heavy load, a camel can travel 300 miles in just three or four days. During Israel’s harvest time, the Midianites would ascend from the desert and quickly cover the land “*like swarms of locusts.*” The Midianite troops and their camels, both “*impossible to count,*” would strip Israel bare of everything edible. They would return to the desert with their plunder, and wait until the next harvest season to return (Judges 6:5).

Existing like this for seven years reduces Gideon and all the Israelites to threshing meager amounts of grain in winepresses. They hide themselves and their food in mountain dens and caves. No wonder Gideon is fearfully anxious and fully persuaded “*the LORD has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian*” (Judges 6:13).

Gideon’s fear has a “close cousin” called *anxiety*.

**Anxiety**, in the psychological/psychiatric world, is the umbrella word covering varying degrees of worry and fear, ranging from mild to extreme.

**Anxiety** is an uneasiness or distress over a real or perceived threat and is characterized by extreme worry or brooding fear.

**Anxiety** stems from *uncertainty*—hoping something will happen but having no guarantee that it will, or fearing something will happen, but having no control over whether it will or not.

**Anxiety** can lead to “catastrophic thinking,” overestimating the likelihood of danger or a negative outcome.

**Anxiety** becomes a disorder when it becomes so intense that it dominates a person’s thoughts, feelings, and actions, thus impeding daily routines and activities of normal life.

### **Anxiety Disorders**

Phobias

Panic disorders

Acute stress disorder

Generalized anxiety disorder

Anxiety due to a medical condition

Substance-induced anxiety

When they found themselves in captivity, the Israelites had:

*“an anxious mind, eyes weary  
with longing, and a despairing heart.”*

(DEUTERONOMY 28:65)

## Fear vs. Worry

**Question:** “What is the difference between fear and worry?”

**Answer:** Worry is *mentally* dwelling on a possible, undesired happening in the *future*. Fear, on the other hand, is a strong *emotional* reaction to a perceived, *imminent* danger. Worry is distracting and can lead to distress and even depression. In addition, worry is unproductive because it concerns unknown future events. Fear focuses on present events, is energizing, and can prove to be productive by propelling a person to action that can remove or lessen any real danger. The Lord offers these comforting words to all those who are overwhelmed with worry or wrapped up in fear:

*“Call on me in the day of trouble;  
I will deliver you, and you will honor me.”*

(PSALM 50:15)

## What Is a Panic Attack?

When the Lord gives Gideon the directive, “*Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand*” (Judges 6:14), He is not giving Gideon a pep talk or a lesson in positive thinking. Rather, He is referring to His own strength operating inside Gideon. This becomes clear with His promise, “*I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive*” (Judges 6:16).

Nevertheless, Gideon wants proof that both the message and the messenger are truly from God—and indeed, he receives it.

Gideon presents to God an offering of meat and unleavened bread, and the moment the angel touches the offering with His staff, fire flames from the rock, the offering is incinerated, and the angel disappears—vanishes—without a trace! “*When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he exclaimed, ‘Alas, Sovereign LORD! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!’*” (Judges 6:22).

Now Gideon realizes his encounter is with *the* angel of the Lord—meaning he saw a manifestation of the Lord God Himself, not merely an angel. Gideon knows this could mean sudden death! God had told Moses in Exodus 33:20, “*No one may see Me and live*” (meaning seeing God in His essential glory).<sup>3</sup>

*“But the LORD said to him,  
‘Peace! Do not be afraid.  
You are not going to die.’”*  
(JUDGES 6:23)

Fortunately, the Lord’s assurance prevents Gideon from experiencing prolonged panic. Yet there are many things in life that can cause us to feel overwhelmed with fright or filled with terror. And we feel the sense of panic expressed in the this scripture:

*“Fear and trembling have beset me;  
horror has overwhelmed me.”*  
(PSALM 55:5)

**Panic attacks** are sudden, brief episodes of intense fear with multiple physical symptoms (such as heart palpitations and dizziness) but without any precipitating external threat.<sup>4</sup>

**Panic attacks** are typically unexpected, “out of the blue” experiences. The first time they occur, people are usually involved in normal activities such as shopping or walking outdoors. Suddenly a barrage of frightening sensations strikes them, peaking in only a few minutes.<sup>5</sup>

**Panic attacks** can occur at any time. Sufferers know that just the fear of having another attack can trigger one—and so these episodes take on a life of their own.

**Panic attacks** can be considered fear out of control.

*“Terrors startle him on every side  
and dog his every step.”*  
(JOB 18:11)

## Panic Attack

**Question:** “Can I do anything to stop a panic attack?”

**Answer:** Yes. It is not known what causes panic attacks, but factors such as genetics, stress, and temperament may play a role.

When you first begin to experience shallow, rapid breathing, recognize these symptoms as the onset of *hyperventilation*. This state reduces the insufficient carbon dioxide in your blood, which in turn produces classic symptoms of a panic attack: lightheadedness, numbness or tingling of the extremities, heart palpitations, shortness of breath or tightness in the throat, and chills or nausea. Let the onset of the rapid breathing serve as a *warning signal*.

Although hyperventilation can resemble symptoms caused by other more serious medical problems (i.e., a heart attack), most isolated instances occur in nervous or tense people or those who breathe shallowly. Sudden hyperventilation is typically triggered by acute stress, anxiety, or emotional upset, while chronic hyperventilation may be an ongoing issue.<sup>6</sup>

Panic attacks can be stopped in many cases by following these directives:

**Recognize the signs.** A panic attack can happen anytime, anywhere. You may be asleep in bed, taking a hike, or having dinner with a friend when suddenly you feel a strong surge of fear. By knowing the signs of an oncoming panic attack, you can find a way to stop it.

**Talk to yourself.** Remind yourself that what you are feeling is *anxiety*, not real danger. Say to yourself: “There is nothing to be afraid of.” “This will pass.” “Just breathe.”

**Control your breathing.** A panic attack may make you take quick, shallow breaths. If this happens, close your eyes, inhale through your nose slowly and deeply, then let all that air out gently through your mouth. Count from one to five each time you inhale and exhale.

**Relax your muscles.** Tense one muscle at a time and then relax it. Repeat this until every muscle in your body is relaxed.

**Do some exercise.** Physical activity relieves stress, one of the main causes of panic attacks. Doing a workout that gets your heart pumping can help alleviate the increase of adrenaline produced by a physical “fight or flight” response and get you to a calmer place. Even a short 10-minute walk can help.

**Refocus your thoughts.** Look around and notice five things you *see* that instill peace. Then look for four things you can *touch*, three things you can *hear*, two pleasant *smells*, and one delightful *taste*. This exercise gives your mind something better to do than focus on your fear or bounce from one worry to the next.<sup>7</sup>

When experiencing a panic attack, you may feel as though you are dying! But that feeling is not based on fact. The truth is, *a panic attack won't kill you*. Whatever your perceived “threat,” let the words of Almighty God put your heart and mind at rest and shelter you with His peace:

*“Do not fear, for I am with you:  
Do not be dismayed for I am your God,  
I will strengthen you and help you;  
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*  
(ISAIAH 41:10)

## What Is a Phobia?

Gideon has a very real and legitimate fear that he will die, and his fear doesn't entirely go away despite God's assurances and call on his life. After the spectacular episode involving the offering, God instructs Gideon to tear down his father's altar to Baal and cut down his Asherah pole—items of pagan worship—and build an altar to Him.

Gideon obeys, but only under the cover of night because *“he was afraid of his family and the townspeople”* (Judges 6:27). Oddly enough, God calls this fearful man to defeat an entire army—of well over 100,000—yet this same man is afraid of his own family.

Like Gideon, some people experience profound fear without the slightest provocation. Such unwarranted fear is called a *phobia*.

**Phobias** are persistent, irrational fears of an object or a situation that typically presents no real threat.<sup>8</sup>

**Phobia**, the English word, comes from the Greek word *phobos*, which means “fear, flight or dread.” In the New Testament the word for fear is usually *phobos*, which, in the Greek language, first had the meaning of “flight,” and then later it referred to “that which may cause flight.”<sup>9</sup>

**Phobias** grow out of fear when . . .<sup>10</sup>

- The fear is clearly *excessive* and *irrational* (out of proportion to the actual degree of threat).
- The fear is associated with *avoidance behaviors* (deliberately avoiding any exposure to specific objects or situations to prevent becoming afraid).
- The fear is associated with *decreased quality of life* (curtailing enjoyment in life).

**Phobic disorders** consist of persistent, *irrational* fears that impair a person's ability to function normally.<sup>11</sup>

- If a phobia causes no major disturbance in a person's lifestyle, it is not considered a disorder (such as having an excessive fear of snakes, but rarely ever seeing a snake).
- However, a *phobic disorder* gains overpowering control that drives that person's negative assumptions, affecting their entire life (such as a fear of darkness or people).
- Those who suffer with a phobic disorder experience the most extreme form of fear.
- Not only do they live in a constant state of hyper-alertness, but their fear continuously controls their activities, limits their lives, and drastically diminishes their quality of life.

The one who suffers in this way could easily say,

*"The churning inside me never stops;  
days of suffering confront me."*

(JOB 30:27)

## Fear and Spiritual Warfare

**Question:** “Is fear an emotional condition or is there a demonic element to fear?”

**Answer:** Both can be true. Fear can be mobilizing due to real-life circumstances and it can be paralyzing due to deceptive, false thoughts. It can be a normal human reaction and it can also be an abnormal demonic attack. The difference is that the former is a logical, rational response to verifiable causes and the latter is a response to imagined or otherwise unverifiable causes. Since fear is a natural human emotion, it is the degree and cause of the fear that makes it suspect to being of a demonic nature.

Whatever the source, fear is always subject to God and the power of the Holy Spirit operating in the life of a Christian. In the name of Jesus and claiming the power of the Holy Spirit, a Christian can rebuke, resist, and stand against Satan. This is accomplished by living before God with a clear conscience, praying, reading, and applying the truths of God’s Word.

*“Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. . . . Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.”*

(EPHESIANS 6:11, 14–18)

## What Are Three Types of Phobias?<sup>12</sup>

While Gideon's fear does not reach phobic proportions, the type of phobia a person experiences is determined by the focus of that person's fear. There are three primary types of phobias—all of which are painfully fear-producing for the sufferer. Typically, those with phobias avoid any thought or sight of the stimulus that triggers a panic attack.

*“When I think about this, I am terrified;  
trembling seizes my body.”*  
(JOB 21:6)

### 1. **Specific Phobias** (formerly called Simple Phobias)

- **Fear of a specific object or situation**
  - ♦ This type of phobia is marked by a persistent fear experienced in the presence of or in the anticipated encountering of the object or situation feared.
  - ♦ **Examples of feared objects:** snakes and spiders, guns and knives, fire and lightning, satanic symbols (the color red) and occultic signs (666)
- **Zoophobia** is the fear of animals, characterized by a sense of danger even in the presence of nonthreatening animals.
  - ♦ **Examples of feared animals:** cats and dogs, squirrels and skunks, horses and zebras, giraffes and elephants
- **Acrophobia** is the fear of heights, characterized by feelings of extreme insecurity and of falling even when there is no danger of doing so.
  - ♦ **Examples of feared situations:** standing on a chair or roof, riding elevators or ferris wheels, climbing stairs or ladders, looking down a mountainside or mountaintop
- **Claustrophobia** is the fear of closed spaces, characterized by a sense of being smothered in a confined environment.
  - ♦ **Examples of feared places:** sleeping in small rooms and bunk beds, entering cellars and caves, driving under bridges or through tunnels, riding in cars, planes, and trains

## 2. Social Phobias (sometimes called Social Anxiety Disorder)

### – Fear of embarrassment

- ♦ This type of phobia is a fear of public embarrassment and is characterized by a paralyzing fear of appearing stupid or being judged as shameful in a social situation.
- ♦ **Examples of a persistent fear of social situations:** initiating a conversation, maintaining eye contact, eating in public, attending a party
- ♦ **Examples of a persistent fear of performance situations:** fear of public speaking, stage fright

## 3. Agoraphobia (literally, “fear of the marketplace”)

### – “Fear of fear” (called *phobophobia*)

- ♦ This phobia is the fear of having a panic attack in a place where escape could be difficult or embarrassing. It comes as a result of experiencing repeated panic attacks and is the fear of having another panic attack. Therefore, any situation that could cause a sense of panic is avoided.
- ♦ **Examples:** fear of walking outside the front door and of wide-open spaces, as well as uncontrollable social situations, such as the possibility of being approached by or encountering an “unsafe” person in an “unsafe” place such as shopping malls, airports, or bridges
- ♦ **Example:** being so afraid of having a panic attack in a public place or in a strange place that a person becomes homebound or even room-bound

In the Bible, these words reflect this paralyzing fear:

*“I so feared the crowd and so dreaded  
the contempt of the clans that I kept silent  
and would not go outside.”*

(JOB 31:34)

## Shyness and Isolation

**Question:** “I’ve lived with extreme shyness for years. In school, I became afraid of being rejected for saying something wrong, so I stopped talking. Now I isolate from people. How can I overcome my phobia of talking with people?”

**Answer:** Your fear of talking with others is called a social phobia or Social Anxiety Disorder—a persistent, irrational fear that impairs your ability to interact normally with people.

Your first step to overcoming this phobia is to understand that living with this kind of fear is not God’s plan for your life. Rather than fearing rejection by others, you can rest assured that you are completely accepted by God through Christ. You can trust God and appropriate His grace for the power to overcome your fear of rejection. Change is possible—and the Lord is your power source for change.

- Your phobia is likely rooted in the fear of rejection. Refuse to focus on what others may be thinking of you.
- Reduce your fear with the fact of the literal presence of Jesus in your life. Then lean on His strength to begin speaking small, casual sentences with others (like a sales clerk).
- Trust in God’s unconditional acceptance of you and His power to keep you safe in your relationship with Him.

*“Fear of man will prove to be a snare,  
but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe.”*

(PROVERBS 29:25)

## What Is God's Heart on Fear?

The apostle John, lovingly referred to as “*the disciple whom he [Jesus] loved*” (John 19:26), writes that “*perfect love drives out fear*” (1 John 4:18). He further tells us that, “*God is love*” (1 John 4:16). Logically, we can then say that fear has no place in God’s heart and no place in ours when we experience the unfathomable depth, breadth, and height of the life-changing love of God—the love He has for us all, the love He has specifically for you!

As you contemplate this love of God that is boundless, limitless, and free of fear, recall the reasons He has given in His Word that make it possible for you to live the fear-free life He provides and desires for you:

### He is with you and will never leave you.

*“The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged”* (DEUTERONOMY 31:8).

### He is your light, salvation, and stronghold.

*“The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?”* (PSALM 27:1).

### He keeps you safe as you trust in Him.

*“Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe”* (PROVERBS 29:25).

### He has His hand on you.

*“You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me”* (PSALM 139:5).

### He guides and holds you.

*“Even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast”* (PSALM 139:10).

### He delivers you.

*“I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears”* (PSALM 34:4).

**He cares for you.**

*“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” (1 PETER 5:7).*

**He strengthens, helps, and upholds you.**

*“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (ISAIAH 41:10).*

**He works in all things for your good.**

*“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (ROMANS 8:28).*

**He says nothing can separate you from His love.**

*“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (ROMANS 8:38–39).*

**He has plans to give you hope and a future.**

*“‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future’” (JEREMIAH 29:11).*

**He has made you more than a conqueror.**

*“In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us” (ROMANS 8:37).*





# CHARACTERISTICS



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*“Don’t let your  
hearts be troubled.  
Trust in God,  
and trust  
also in me.”*

(JOHN 14:1 NLT)



Time and time again, fear resides in Gideon’s heart. A vast army of Midianites gathers again, ready to raid the land of Israel at harvest time. Meanwhile, the Lord has promised Gideon total victory. Yet Gideon still asks for divine confirmation concerning his call. *“Gideon said to God, ‘If you will save Israel by my hand as you have promised—look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said’”* (Judges 6:36–37).

God exercises great patience with Gideon’s fragile faith. The next morning, His reluctant servant finds a damp fleece and a dry floor. But wait a minute, Gideon must have pondered, might not that have happened naturally? Of course the floor would dry before the fleece. So Gideon asks God to participate in a second test, and this time to reverse the outcome. He asks for a dry fleece and a damp floor. And . . .

*“that night God did so.”*

(JUDGES 6:40)

## What Are Symptoms of Normal Fear?

The fear Gideon feels is completely understandable. His enemy is real. His life is in actual danger. He has “normal” fear. However, God has proven Himself to be both powerful and trustworthy. So why does God seem absent in this situation? It isn’t that God doesn’t see Gideon’s circumstances or denies his dilemma. God knows neither is a problem for Him, and Gideon needs to know that too! No fear, normal or abnormal, is beyond God’s ability to resolve.

*“Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm.*

*Nothing is too hard for you.”*

(JEREMIAH 32:17)

## Symptoms and Benefits of Normal Fear

Why would God give us the emotion of fear if it could be detrimental to us? The answer is found in asking another question: If at this moment you were surprised by an assailant with a knife in his hand, would you want the “benefits” of fear?

Put a check mark (✓) next to the symptoms you exhibit when you experience fear that would be beneficial in a life-threatening situation.

- Apprehension (to proceed with caution)
- Contracting muscles (to prepare for the “fight or flight” reaction)
- Dilated pupils (to increase vision, especially at night)
- Heightened senses (for the purpose of dealing with the feared object)
- Hyper-alertness (to increase awareness of danger)
- Increased breathing (to deliver more oxygen to the body)
- Increased energy (to provide the fuel you need to take immediate action)
- Increased heart rate (to fuel your muscles with blood)
- Increased perspiration (to cool the body down and prevent overheating)
- Increased talking (to aid in communication about the problem)
- Lessened sleep (to provide more “awake” time)
- Racing mind (to provide options to consider)

*“I heard and my heart pounded,  
my lips quivered at the sound;  
decay crept into my bones,  
and my legs trembled.”*

(HABAKKUK 3:16)

## What Are Symptoms of Abnormal Fear?

When abnormal fear exists, the level of fear a person feels is out of proportion to the actual situation. In fact, the fear may be totally unrelated to the situation. Abnormal fear can lead to a panic attack. The person with abnormal fear can identify with this anguished cry:

*“My heart is in anguish within me;  
the terrors of death have fallen on me.  
Fear and trembling have beset me;  
horror has overwhelmed me.  
I said, ‘Oh, that I had the wings of a dove!  
I would fly away and be at rest.  
I would flee far away and stay in the desert;  
I would hurry to my place of shelter,  
far from the tempest and storm.’”*  
(PSALM 55:4–8)

### Symptoms of Abnormal Fear<sup>13</sup>

A person experiences a panic attack when four or more of the following symptoms reach a peak within a few minutes. (The body cannot sustain the “fight or flight” status for long periods of time.)

Place a check mark (✓) next to the symptoms you have experienced:

- Chest pain or discomfort (feeling like you are having a heart attack)
- Chills or hot flashes (feeling like you must get to the hospital)
- Choking sensation, difficulty swallowing (feeling like your throat is closing up)
- Cold hands, tingling sensation (feeling like you are going numb)
- Detached sensation (feeling like you are losing touch with reality or yourself)
- Dizziness, lightheaded (feeling like you are going to faint)

- Fear of losing control (feeling like you are going crazy)
- Hyperventilating, shortness of breath (feeling like you are being smothered)
- Nausea, diarrhea, or abdominal pain and cramping (feeling like you have a life-threatening disease)
- Rapid heart rate, pounding heartbeat (feeling like your heart is going to jump out of your chest)
- Sweating, excessive perspiration (feeling embarrassed and conspicuous)
- Terror of dying (feeling like you are sure to die)
- Trembling or shaking (feeling like you are unable to control your body)

People with abnormal fear are not as afraid of the *object* of their fear as they are of the *symptoms* of their fear.<sup>14</sup> And, indeed, their fear is great. They experience the same feelings that Job did:

*“Terrors overwhelm me; my dignity is driven away  
as by the wind, my safety vanishes like a cloud.”*  
(JOB 30:15)

## What Characterizes Three Levels of Anxiety?

Gideon will gradually come to realize that *God’s call to a person is never dependent on that person’s strength or ability*. God’s call is always determined by His own plan and power, and we are asked to respond with faith in His strength. The more Gideon comes to believe God will give the Midianites into his hands, the more he is able to go forth in complete faith and follow God’s plan for the future. Though initially afraid, Gideon moves forward in faith.

Fear can paralyze or mobilize. Gideon could have been paralyzed by doubting God, by fearing the problems would never change, by wallowing in his bottom-of-the-rung status of being the least in his family. Negative doubt-filled messages could have played over and over in his mind. If that had been the case, his response to being addressed as a mighty warrior would have been, “Mighty warrior? Not a chance!”

Like Gideon, we all experience times of anxiety, but not all of us experience it in the same way, for the same reason, or to the same degree. Typically, we want to avoid anxiety. However, anxiety is not to be feared but is to be understood and to be used as a prompt to trust in the Lord all the more. The Lord Jesus Christ advises,

*“Don’t let your hearts be troubled.  
Trust in God, and trust also in me.”*  
(JOHN 14:1 NLT)

The level of anxiety people experience is generally identified as either moderate or intense. One can actually prove to be an asset, but the other is always a liability.

**Normal anxiety**—normal, fearful concern can be healthy and helpful:

- It motivates us and leads to increased efficiency.
- It forces us out of our “comfort zone.”
- It helps us avoid dangerous situations.
- It causes us to live dependently on the Lord.

Notice that the apostle Paul shared these words with the church in Philippi, whose concern for Epaphroditus caused Paul some measure of anxiety:

*“When you see him again you may be glad  
and I may have less anxiety.”*  
(PHILIPPIANS 2:28)

**Mild to moderate anxiety**—becomes limiting and begins to interfere with daily living:

- It makes concentration difficult.
- It causes forgetfulness.
- It hinders performance.
- It blocks communication with others.

Notice what Solomon—called the wisest man on earth—said:

*“Banish anxiety from your heart.”*  
(ECCLESIASTES 11:10)

**Intense anxiety**—abnormal fearful obsession is more profound and problematic:

- It becomes a severe preoccupation with fears.
- It requires tremendous effort to avoid triggers.
- It impacts physical health to an alarming degree.
- It harms relationships in many areas—professionally and personally.

Notice that the psalmist, who put these words to music, turned his focus to the Lord when he was feeling anxious:

*“When anxiety was great within me,  
your consolation brought me joy.”*  
(PSALM 94:19)

## Facing Fear: The Patsy Clairmont Story<sup>15</sup>

Taken from: HOW TO HANDLE YOUR EMOTIONS  
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What qualifies a person to speak fearlessly before audiences of tens of thousands, to author more than 20 books, to offer life-changing hope? How about a résumé that includes high school dropout, teenage runaway, prescription drug addict, and a fear-based female with multiple debilitating phobias? Not exactly what you'd consider a likely candidate! But that's God's specialty—healing everyday folks and helping them move from fear to faith, from panic to peace.

When Patsy ran away from home, it was all about control. She hated being out of control and wanted to be in control of her life. She partied into the night, smoked, and drank. Though just five feet tall, she wanted to go her own way in a big way. Still, she yearned for stability. So she soon became a teenage bride. But instead of being swept away to an impressive castle to live happily ever after, she found herself living in a depressing tenement infested with rats.

After Patsy's husband left for 18 months of military duty, their first child was born. Experiencing a sense of wonder and a value of life, Patsy realized there had to be a God. She began attending church . . . then gave her life to God.

Although she felt a change, her everyday existence remained the same. Disillusioned, she began to blame God for her circumstances. The control she thought she had relinquished to Him resulted in out-of-control behavior.

Patsy's emotions swung back and forth between anger and fear until one day she grabbed her son's small chair and threw it at her husband. Although he caught it before it could

hit him, Patsy was embarrassed and humiliated. She was overcome by fear, and experienced her first full-blown panic attack. She writes, “Oh, how hard that was for me to wake up in the morning already filled with fear, this ominous thing that I could not touch but that seemed to surround me on all sides. I would think, ‘I haven’t even done anything yet and already it’s hard for me to open my eyes and face yet another day.’ The dread was consuming my energy, the disorder was obvious in my home, in my mind, and in my emotions . . .”<sup>16</sup>

At times, Patsy’s panic attacks were so severe, her husband would take her to the hospital. She would need an injection to calm her. She said, “The panic attacks were so frightening that I began to feel like I was allergic to my anger, so I tried to push down the anger. As I pushed down the unresolved anger and my unrelenting guilt, what came forth from my life was unreasonable fear.”<sup>17</sup>

When Patsy realized she was not gaining control of her life, anger seethed inside her from the past. Although she couldn’t remember the early years of her childhood, the signs of trauma—of childhood victimization—began to surface.

Patsy tried desperately to escape her reality. To numb her pain and mute overwhelming fears, she became chemically dependent on tranquilizers, smoked two packs of cigarettes a day, and consumed large amounts of caffeine. Patsy depended on other people and addictive behaviors to attain a measure of control in life.

Patsy’s mother and husband tried to care for her, but her destructive tendencies began to choke the life out of them as well. Trying to hold onto them as her life raft, Patsy instead started pulling them under. “I seemed to be spiraling down deeper and deeper into this darkness as I would have one fear and give into that. It would call to its friends—‘Over here, you guys!’ And there would be more and more and more.”<sup>18</sup>

Patsy's fear escalated to the point that she was afraid of heights, storms, riding in cars, hospitals, elevators, crowds of people, and being all alone. Patsy had no knowledge of diagnosable mental conditions, much less any idea of what the term *agoraphobia* meant, but that did not stop this crippling condition from dominating her life. She isolated herself from society, choosing to live in near-solitary confinement in her home while her mother and husband watched and cared for her as best they could.

Patsy's condition worsened. Finally her doctor suggested she attend a self-help program. Out of desperation for help, she went. Patsy learned that though her situation was deeply distressing, it wasn't dangerous. In spite of her fears, she wasn't going to die. She was given a plan, and that plan gave her hope.

As Patsy began to achieve small successes, she discovered that people liked her. And although the swings between her high and low points were great, she began to get a handle on her symptoms.

Then a friend called with an idea and prefaced it by saying that she wanted Patsy *to consider what God wanted her to do*. Suddenly Patsy became responsible *to God* instead of to her friend. Her friend's idea was for Patsy to go to a weekend retreat.

“For someone with agoraphobia, that was a major decision,” she admitted, “to leave the safety of home and to make sure I had enough tranquilizers to be in control of the situation, to purposefully put myself in the midst of over three thousand women. Just the thought of hours in a car to reach my destination frightened me because just to go from my home to the grocery store was a major trip and I could only go if my husband drove me.”<sup>19</sup>

However, Patsy did find the courage to attend the retreat—courage in the face of her fear. And while she was there, she heard truth that challenged her to be set free: “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:2 NIV 1984).

Patsy knew she needed to be transformed. Romans 12:2 told her she could accomplish that by the renewing of her mind—and that with a renewed mind, she would not live the rest of her life controlled by fear, but be able to experience God’s perfect will for her.

Patsy began to apply the truths of the Bible to her everyday living. Her addictive and destructive choices were replaced with Bible study, prayer, and changed patterns of thinking. Her life became transformed as she kicked the smoking habit, overcame her dependency on tranquilizers, and gained control over her panic attacks. With a renewed mind and with renewed hope from Christ, she experienced total transformation.

Patsy was once fearful of leaving her own home. But since her transformation, she has shared her story with over three million people—providing hope for healing, humor for the heart, and *fearlessly* standing tall.



# CAUSES



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*“Your perception of a situation affects both the degree of your fear, and the way you will respond to your fear.”*



What causes Gideon—the man God destines to be one of the greatest leaders in history—to fear the army God promises to defeat? First, Gideon lacks military experience, and second, he has lived under the oppression of the savage Midianites for seven years. These facts alone are enough to cause Gideon to doubt God’s promise of victory.

God’s next charge, however, would leave anyone completely paralyzed with fear. Gideon is to go against an army “*thick as locusts*” (Judges 7:12) numbering 135,000 (Judges 8:10). And he is to do this not with a larger army, or even one of the same size. Nor is he to do it with his small army of 32,000—just one-fourth the size of the Midianite army. Rather, he is to fight with the help of a drastically reduced and much smaller army! Why? So that Israel could not boast . . .

*“My own strength has saved me.”*  
(JUDGES 7:2)

## What Are Common Causes of Fear?<sup>20</sup>

God gives Gideon an unimaginable directive: Those who are fearful about fighting the Midianites can return home. Instantly, 22,000 men are eliminated! While these men had enough faith to fight, they did not have enough faith to fight *fearlessly*—something God required of Israel when going into battle. The fundamental principle? *Fear contaminates faith.* (See Deuteronomy 20:1–4, 8.)

Now only 10,000 men remain in Gideon’s ranks. Then God makes a seemingly more absurd statement: “*There are still too many men*” (Judges 7:4).

Situations that evoke no fear in some people are the same situations that evoke great fear in others. What makes the difference? Perception! A person’s perception of a situation and of God determines whether or not fear or faith will rule. Notice that Gideon is *not* one of the fearful men who returns home! His perception of his situation has begun to change.

Likewise, your perception of a situation affects both the degree of your fear (how much fear you will feel), and the way you will *respond* to your fear (what you will do because of the fear).

Fear is a natural, human reaction to a perceived threat—either physically or emotionally—in one or more of these three areas: love, significance, and security.<sup>21</sup>

### Your Love from Others Feels Threatened

- Examples of situations that might threaten your need to feel loved:
  - **Primary relationship:** “If I lose my marriage partner, I don’t know what I will do or how I can go on living.”
  - **Talents and abilities:** “If I’m not fun, I’ll lose my friends. Then I’ll be all alone.”
  - **Physical attractiveness:** “If I start looking older or put on weight, I will lose the affection I need so badly.”
  - **Position in a relationship:** “If I don’t cater to my friends, they’ll stop caring about me.”
- Solution: Learn that you are loved by the Lord beyond measure.

*“As high as the heavens are above the earth,  
so great is his love for those who fear him.”*

(PSALM 103:11)

### Your Significance Feels Threatened

- Examples of situations that might threaten your sense of significance:
  - **Identity:** “If I lose my position at work, everything I have worked to achieve will be lost. I’ll be a nobody.”
  - **Self-esteem:** “If I embarrass myself in front of people, I will never be able to be around them again. I’ll be too ashamed.”
  - **Reputation:** “If others find out about my compulsive habit, I’ll be humiliated and lose their respect.”
  - **Self-fulfillment:** “If I don’t achieve my goals, my life will be a failure.”

- Solution: Learn that you are so significant that the Lord chose to save you and give you His kingdom.

*“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.”*

(LUKE 12:32)

### Your Security Feels Threatened

- Examples of situations that might threaten your sense of security:
  - ♦ **Financial security:** “If I don’t do well on this presentation, I might lose my job. Then I won’t be able to support myself or my family.”
  - ♦ **Physical safety:** “If I walk alone at night, I could be attacked.”
  - ♦ **Physical health:** “If I am not careful about what I eat or touch, I may get sick.”
  - ♦ **Possessions:** “If I lose my home, I will have nowhere to live and I won’t be able to survive.”
- Solution: Learn that your security is in your personal relationship with the Lord.

*“In God I trust and am not afraid.  
What can man do to me?”*

(PSALM 56:11)

## What Are Key Contributors to Fear?

Fear does not appear in a vacuum. Just as Gideon’s seven years of terror at the hands of the Midianites set him up to be fearful, similarly, something set you up to be controlled by fear, and something serves to trigger that fear. This setup occurred in the past, while the trigger occurs in the present. Finding the truth about your past fearful setup will provide wisdom as to why you are being controlled by fear in the present.

*“You delight in truth in the inward being,  
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.  
(PSALM 51:6 ESV)*

## **Former Fear-Producing Experiences<sup>22</sup>**

### **Traumatic experiences:**

- Child abuse, childhood sexual abuse or rape
- Tragic accident
- Divorce or the death of a loved one or a cherished pet

### **Scare tactics used on you by others:**

- Threats of violence by a parent
- Threats of violence by siblings
- Threats of violence by peers or others

### **Underdeveloped sense of self-worth:**

- Neglect, criticism, or ridicule by others
- Poor school performance
- Lack of musical, artistic, or athletic abilities

### **Parents or family members who displayed excessive fear:**

- “My aunt had a panic disorder.”
- “My father worried constantly.”
- “My mother was fearful and overprotective.”

Acknowledge the reason for your fear and tell yourself the truth about both the past and the present.

*“When I was a child, I talked like a child,  
I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child.  
When I became a man,  
I put the ways of childhood behind me.”  
(1 CORINTHIANS 13:11)*

## Emotional Overload

### Denial of your own feelings:

- “I must suppress my pain.”
- “I must deny my disappointments.”
- “I must reject my anger.”

### Excessive need to please people:

- “I must keep everyone from getting angry.”
- “I must make everyone happy.”
- “I must be at peace with everyone.”

### Internalization of stress:

- “I have a lot of hidden anxiety.”
- “I fail to admit stressful situations.”
- “I have no outlet for venting my emotions.”

### Strict or perfectionist parents or authority figures:

- “I never pleased my parents.”
- “I never was good enough.”
- “I received harsh punishments.”

Acknowledge the reason for your fear and let the Lord help you heal from your emotional hurts.

*“Humble yourselves, therefore,  
under God’s mighty hand,  
that he may lift you up in due time.*

*Cast all your anxiety on him  
because he cares for you.”*

(1 PETER 5:6–7)

## Avoidance of Threatening Situations

### Refusing to face your fears:

- “I minimize my fearfulness.”
- “I think it will go away in time.”
- “I think I can avoid fearful situations.”

### Giving no opportunity for change:

- “I don’t seek help or talk to anyone.”
- “I don’t try to figure out why I am fearful.”
- “I don’t try to learn to confront my fear.”

### Continuing to reinforce your fears:

- “I accommodate my fears rather than challenge them.”
- “Everything I do is contingent on my fearfulness.”
- “I don’t go anywhere that might raise my anxiety level.”

### Reinforcing your negative thought patterns:

- “Fear dominates all of my decisions.”
- “I evaluate everything through the filter of fear.”
- “My thoughts are dominated by fear.”

Acknowledge the reason for your fears and let the Lord help you face them.

*“I am the LORD your God who  
takes hold of your right hand  
and says to you, Do not fear;  
I will help you.”  
(ISAIAH 41:13)*

## Runaway Imagination

### Expecting life to be threatening:

- “I always expect hostility and hatred.”
- “I always expect resistance and roadblocks.”
- “I always expect danger and disaster.”

### Assuming the worst will happen:

- “I always assume rejection and ridicule.”
- “I always assume hurt and heartache.”
- “I always assume frustration and failure.”

### Believing you can never change:

- “I have given up thinking my life will ever be good.”
- “I think I will be controlled by fear forever.”
- “I don’t believe God can or will help me.”

### Thinking you have no control over the situation:

- “I am overwhelmed when I experience fear.”
- “I am powerless when I experience fear.”
- “I can’t think clearly when I experience fear.”

Acknowledge the reason for your fear and replace the lies you are believing with the truth.

*“Whatever is true, whatever is noble,  
whatever is right, whatever is pure,  
whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—  
if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—  
think about such things.”*

(PHILIPPIANS 4:8)

## What Are Physical Causes of Fear and Anxiety?

So again, Gideon's troops are thinned! This time God is looking for fearless men who are fervently committed to engaging the enemy in battle—men who will keep pursuing the enemy even when hungry, thirsty, and exhausted.

God has Gideon lead the remaining thirsty men to a body of water where He reduces their ranks yet again. This time Gideon is to select only those who scoop water into their hands and lap it while maintaining vigilance. These 300 men become God's chosen army to defeat the Midianites:

*"The LORD said to Gideon,  
'With the three hundred men that lapped  
I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands.  
Let all the others go home.'"*  
(JUDGES 7:7)

We see no indication here of a physical cause for Gideon's fear—no coronary condition, no blocked arteries, no heart attack. However, God sees something in Gideon's heart that is fatal to faith—a fortress of fear, albeit crumbling, but still standing after living so many years under terror and tyranny. Gideon's fear continues to result from how he views his situation, how he views his insufficiency, and how he views God. He still lacks complete trust in God, whom Gideon sees as having no real commitment in spite of His promises and miraculous assurances.

Some people experience fear and anxiety when no fearful situation exists and they become further frustrated when they try to talk themselves out of their anxious feelings but to no avail. They have no idea their feelings are simply a reaction to something physical, such as a particular medication or illness.

If you suffer with a level of anxiety that interferes with your ability to function normally, consider taking the following steps:

### Obtain a thorough medical check-up.

- Tell the doctor that you feel unusually anxious. Be specific.
- If you do not get substantial help, get a second opinion from a medical doctor who specializes in anxiety disorders.

*“The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, for the ears of the wise seek it out”* (PROVERBS 18:15).

### Consider your medical condition.

- Ask a doctor to evaluate you for heart, endocrine, respiratory, metabolic, and neurological conditions. Identify any possible deficiency in B-vitamins, niacin, pyridoxine, calcium, or magnesium.
- The medical world has identified a condition called Anxiety Disorder Due to a Another Medical Condition.<sup>23</sup> That such a condition exists clearly indicates that a person’s poor physical health can contribute to anxiety or even panic attacks.

*“My heart falters, fear makes me tremble . . .”* (ISAIAH 21:4).

### Consider your exposure to substances.

- There is a form of anxiety that is called Substance/Medication-Induced Anxiety Disorder.<sup>24</sup>
- Any exposure to toxins, drugs, medications, vitamins, and minerals—legal and illegal, over-the-counter and prescription—should be evaluated, along with food substances (e.g., caffeine or sugar).

Regardless of your affliction, know that your heavenly Father loves you, listens to you, and will help you.

*“He has not despised or scorned  
the suffering of the afflicted one;  
he has not hidden his face from him  
but has listened to his cry for help.”*

(PSALM 22:24)

## What Are Spiritual Causes of Excessive Fear?

Gideon's greatest weakness eventually becomes his greatest strength. He discovers that when he acknowledges he is weak and inadequate, God's strength and adequacy prevail in him.

Imagine! God having an encounter with a fear-filled Gideon, revealing truth to him about the fearsome man of God he will become and the plan God has for him—*then* God supplying him with only 300 men against an army of 135,000—so the victory would clearly be the Lord's! And though no man could ever defeat 450 men in their own strength, Gideon wholeheartedly goes!

The last kernel of fear is removed from Gideon's heart as he creeps among the sleeping Midianites and hears one man give the interpretation of a certain dream to another man:

*"This can be nothing other  
than the sword of Gideon. . . .  
God has given the Midianites  
and the whole camp into his hands."  
(JUDGES 7:14)*

Like any emotion, fear originates in the mind with conscious or subconscious fear-producing thoughts and beliefs. As you consider your own excessive fears and fearful situations, ask God to examine your heart and reveal the spiritual causes of your fears.

Your fears may stem from a struggle to believe one of the following:

**God's great love for you**—His grace-filled, unconditional, perfect love that drives out all fear.

*"Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love" (1 JOHN 4:18 NLT).*

**God's faithfulness and trustworthiness**—that does not flinch in the face of fear-producing situations.

*“The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy”*  
(PSALM 111:7–8).

**God’s power dwelling within you**—the power that makes it possible for you to overcome any fear.

*“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know . . . his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion”* (EPHESIANS 1:18–23).

**God’s protecting presence surrounding you**—a presence that strengthens, helps, and upholds you in times of uncertainty and fear.

*“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand”*  
(ISAIAH 41:10).

**God’s good plans for you**—plans He designed specifically for you in which fear has no part.

*“‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future’”* (JEREMIAH 29:11).

**God’s promises for you**—making it possible for you to escape the world’s fear-producing corruption.

*“His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires”* (2 PETER 1:3–4).

**God’s identity for you**—your new identity in Christ which directs your heart and mind to focus on heavenly things, not earthly, fearful things.

*“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory”* (COLOSSIANS 3:1–4).

**God's gift of salvation for you**—the gift of eternal life that provides perspective on your temporary fears and troubles.

*“We do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands” (2 CORINTHIANS 4:16–5:1).*

Overcoming fear that originates from a faulty belief system is a process. Like Gideon, you can begin moving toward total victory over your fears by taking one step of faith at a time—by believing what God says about you is true.

## What Is the Root Cause of Being Controlled by Fear?

Gideon knows he has to depend on God—not on himself and not on his army. God is able to use Gideon to gain a great military and spiritual victory, but Gideon must choose to put his trust in God. If Gideon decides to obey God—in spite of fear—while he is *preparing for* battle, Gideon will be able to obey God without fear in the midst of the battle. He must let God be God—the all-powerful One, who goes before us and conquers for His name’s sake.

History confirms Gideon’s choice. Like David, Gideon had to learn to trust God in the face of fear.

*“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod  
and your staff, they comfort me.”*

(PSALM 23:4 ESV)

### 3 Inner Needs

We all have three inner needs: the needs for love, significance, and security.<sup>25</sup>

**Love**—to know that someone is unconditionally committed to our best interest

*“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you”* (JOHN 15:12).

**Significance**—to know that our lives have meaning and purpose

*“I cry out to God Most High, to God, who fulfills his purpose for me”*  
(PSALM 57:2 ESV).

**Security**—to feel accepted and a sense of belonging

*“Whoever fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for their children it will be a refuge”* (PROVERBS 14:26).

### The Ultimate Need-Meeter

#### What do our inner needs reveal about us and our relationship with God?

God did not create any person or position or any amount of power or possessions to meet our deepest needs. People fail us and self-effort also fails to meet our deepest needs. If a person or thing could meet all our needs, we wouldn't need God! Our inner needs draw us into a deeper dependence on Christ and remind us that only God can satisfy the longings of our hearts. The Lord brings people and circumstances into our lives as an extension of His care, but ultimately only He can satisfy all the needs of our hearts. The Bible says . . .

*“The LORD will guide you always;  
he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land  
and will strengthen your frame.  
You will be like a well-watered garden,  
like a spring whose waters never fail.”*  
(ISAIAH 58:11)

All along, the Lord planned to meet our deepest needs for . . .

**Love**—*“I [the Lord] have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness”* (JEREMIAH 31:3).

**Significance**—*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future”* (JEREMIAH 29:11).

**Security**—*“The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged”* (DEUTERONOMY 31:8).

Our needs for love, significance, and security can be legitimately met in Christ Jesus! Philippians 4:19 makes it plain, *“My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.”*

**WRONG BELIEF:**

“I have no control over my fear. My only recourse is to avoid all fearful situations.”

**RIGHT BELIEF:**

“As I face my fear in the strength of the Lord, fear will not control me. Christ lives in me, and as I focus on His perfect love and His perfect truth, I will feel His perfect peace in the midst of every fear-producing situation.”

*“There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear,  
because fear has to do with punishment.  
The one who fears is not made perfect in love.”*

(1 JOHN 4:18)

## How to Have Freedom from Fear—Forever!

Throughout the Bible, God repeats these instructions over and over and over: *“Do not fear. Do not be afraid. Fear not.”* God tells us not to fear circumstances, people, or things. But we are told: *“Fear the LORD your God, serve him only . . .”* (Deuteronomy 6:13). This fear is not “fright” in the sense that we would be afraid of God. The meaning of this kind of fear is *reverence* and *awe for God*. We are to fear Him and be in awe of Him because He is the one and only all-powerful God. He alone has the ability to change us from being fearful of others to being courageously obedient to Him.

How can you find freedom from fear forever? First, acknowledge that God is worthy of your reverence. Second, submit your life and your fears to His authority by receiving His Son, Jesus, as your Lord and Savior. What does that involve?

### 4 Points of God’s Plan

Whether you’re trying to make sense of your past, trying to overcome something in the present, or trying to make changes for a better future, the Lord cares about you. He loves you. No matter what challenges you or your loved ones are facing, no matter the pain or difficult feelings you may be experiencing, no matter what you’ve done or what’s been done to you, there is hope. And that hope is found in Jesus Christ.

God has a plan for your life, and it begins with a personal relationship with Jesus. The most important decision you can ever make is whether you will accept His invitation. If you have never made that decision, these four simple truths can help you start your journey together with Him.

*“For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD,  
‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you,  
plans to give you hope and a future.’”*

(JEREMIAH 29:11)

### 1. God's Purpose for You: *Salvation*

- What was God's motivation in sending Jesus Christ to earth? To express His love for you by saving you! The Bible says, *"God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him"* (JOHN 3:16–17).
- What was Jesus' purpose in coming to earth? To forgive your sins, to empower you to have victory over sin, and to enable you to live a fulfilled life! Jesus said, *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"* (JOHN 10:10).

### 2. The Problem: *Sin*

- What exactly is sin? Sin is living independently of God's standard—knowing what is wrong and doing it anyway—also knowing what is right and choosing not to do it. The apostle Paul said, *"I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway"* (ROMANS 7:18–19 NLT).
- What is the major consequence of sin? Spiritual death, eternal separation from God. The Bible says, *"Your iniquities [sins] have separated you from your God"* (ISAIAH 59:2). Scripture also says, *"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (ROMANS 6:23).

### 3. God's Provision for You: *The Savior*

- Can anything remove the penalty for sin? Yes! Jesus died on the cross to personally pay the penalty for your sins. The Bible says, *"God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us"* (ROMANS 5:8).
- What is the solution to being separated from God? Belief in (entrusting your life to) Jesus Christ as the only way to God the Father. Jesus said, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (JOHN 14:6). The Bible says, *"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved"* (ACTS 16:31).

#### 4. Your Part: Surrender

- Give Christ control of your life, entrusting yourself to Him. Jesus said, *“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?”* (MATTHEW 16:24–26).
- Place your faith in (rely on) Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior and reject your “good works” as a means of earning God’s approval. The Bible says, *“It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast”* (EPHESIANS 2:8–9).

Has there been a time in your life when you know you’ve humbled your heart and received Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior—giving Him control of your life? You can tell God that you want to surrender your life to Christ in a simple, heartfelt prayer like this:

“God, I want a real relationship with you.  
I admit that many times I’ve chosen to go my own way  
instead of your way.  
Please forgive me for my sins.  
Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross  
to pay the penalty for my sins.  
Come into my life to be my Lord and my Savior.  
Change me from the inside out and make me the person  
you created me to be.  
In your holy name I pray. Amen.”

## What Can You Now Expect?

When you surrender your life to Christ, you receive the Holy Spirit who empowers you to live a life pleasing to God. The Bible says, *“His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life . . .”* (2 Peter 1:3). Jesus assures those who believe with these words:

*“Truly I tell you, whoever hears my word  
and believes him who sent me  
has eternal life and will not be judged  
but has crossed over from death to life.”*

(JOHN 5:24)

## From Fear to Faith<sup>26</sup>

Taken from: How to Handle Your Emotions  
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Imagine what it must have been like: the disciples, in a boat, on the lake, in the darkness, before the dawn.

Imagine their wavering emotions, their startled surprise. They saw “something” . . . something not seen before, something fearful, something terrifying. They saw a ghost!

Is their fear based on fantasy or fact? Myth or truth? Is what their perception of the situation true or false? Notice how quickly they move back and forth from fear to faith to fear to faith. It all depended on what they *perceived* to be true.

**Fear:** “When the disciples saw him [Jesus] walking on the lake, they were terrified. ‘It’s a ghost,’ they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: ‘Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.’ ‘Lord, if it’s you,’ Peter replied, ‘tell me to come to you on the water.’ ‘Come,’ he said” (Matthew 14:26–29).

**Faith:** “Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus” (verse 29).

**Fear:** “But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, ‘Lord, save me!’ Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. ‘You of little faith,’ he said, ‘why did you doubt?’ And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down” (verses 30–32).

**Faith:** “Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, ‘Truly you are the Son of God’” (verse 33).

What the disciples perceived as true controlled their emotions—though at times their perception was false. Of course, when Truth entered the boat, they moved from fear to faith, and His truth set them free.



# STEPS TO SOLUTION



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*“Examining your fear,  
its origin, its legitimacy,  
and its pattern can  
help you understand it  
and develop a strategy  
to resolve it.”*



Once Gideon hears words of his upcoming victory from the mouth of a Midianite, he worships God. Quickly, in the dark of night, he summons his men: “*Get up!*” commands Gideon. “*The LORD has given the Midianite camp into your hands*” (Judges 7:15). Obviously, something has changed in Gideon! His words could not be more direct, decisive, and divinely inspired. The stronghold of fear in his heart—that formidable fortress of fear—has finally fallen!

Dividing his men into three companies, Gideon gives each of them a trumpet for one hand and an empty jar with a torch inside for the other. Now, in yet another test of faith, God calls Gideon and his men to war—weaponless! They will face an army of 135,000 with not a sword, spear, or shield in sight!

God asks us to stand in His strength when we’re afraid—and that’s exactly what Gideon does.

*“Stand firm and see the deliverance  
the LORD will give you . . .  
Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged . . .  
the LORD will be with you.”  
(2 CHRONICLES 20:17)*

## Key Verse to Memorize

“*Watch me,*” Gideon further instructs, “*Follow my lead*” (Judges 7:17).

These are not the words nor the actions of the Gideon first introduced in the winepress. The once-cowering man has now become courageous. Clearly he is operating in the strength and the power of Almighty God!

The battalion of 300 proceeds to encircle the vast Midianite camp in the dark of night, with all eyes focused on their leader like a hawk. “*When I and all who are with me blow our trumpets, then from all around the camp blow yours and shout, ‘For the LORD and for Gideon!’*” (Judges 7:18).

A bone-chilling blast of trumpets startles the enemy camp, and the terrifying smashing of jars exposes blazing torches that now encircle the Midianites in a ring of fire. Bedlam breaks loose, and absolute chaos consumes the camp. Of course, the strategic mastermind of this brilliant battle plan was Gideon's commander-in-chief—the Lord Himself!

Whenever you find yourself in a fearful situation, realize, like Gideon, you are not alone. Rely on the Lord's presence in your life, focus on His strength, and claim and memorize the promise in this verse:

*“Do not fear, for I am with you;  
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.  
I will strengthen you and help you;  
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*

(ISAIAH 41:10)

## Key Passage to Read

In the blackness of night, the Midianites can't see their opponents. Nevertheless, they draw their swords and attack and attack and attack—*one another!* Pandemonium runs rampant, and *“the LORD caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords”* (Judges 7:22). Brother fought brother; friend fought friend. The result being that 120,000 of the mighty Midianite army lie dead (Judges 8:10) without Gideon even so much as raising a shield or losing a single one of his 300 men—and *God gets all the glory!* God and only God could achieve such an awesome feat. Surely the God of Israel is the one true God!

*“Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel,  
who alone does marvelous deeds.”*

(PSALM 72:18)

Gideon learned to rely totally on the Lord, his Shepherd, even when he walked through the valley of the shadow of death. Gideon feared no evil because from the beginning, he was told, “*The LORD is with you*” (Judges 6:12).

When you are stricken with fear, read Psalm 23. This psalm is one of the most beloved passages in all the Bible, and for good reason. It is full of truth we need to focus on to experience comfort, restoration, and peace rather than fear. Every verse in the psalm reminds us of truth that can calm our hearts.

### The Psalm 23 Strategy

*“The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul.  
He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake.  
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.  
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”*

Certain situations are more fearful than others. Sometimes it is enough to read Psalm 23 once to settle your fears. At other times, you may need to move to a quiet place without distractions so you can focus on each verse of the psalm and its promises.

**Verse 1:** *“The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.”*

Imagine a grassy, pastoral scene and the Lord there with you. Slowly say, “The Lord is my Shepherd” five times, each time emphasizing a different word:

**THE** Lord is my Shepherd.  
The **LORD** is my Shepherd.  
The Lord **IS** my Shepherd.  
The Lord is **MY** Shepherd.  
The Lord is my **SHEPHERD**.

**Verse 2:** *“He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters.”*

Imagine yourself lying down beside a soothing, calm pool of water.

**Verse 3:** *“He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake.”*

Take several slow deep breaths and say, “My Shepherd refreshes my soul” five times. Say it slowly, each time emphasizing a different word:

**MY** Shepherd refreshes my soul.  
My **SHEPHERD** refreshes my soul.  
My Shepherd **REFRESHES** my soul.  
My Shepherd refreshes **MY** soul.  
My Shepherd refreshes my **SOUL**.

**Verse 4:** *“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”*

Realize that you are not trapped. Say, “I will fear no evil, the Lord is with me” five times, repeating it slowly.

**Verse 5:** *“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.”*

Repeat the following statement five times, each time emphasizing a different word:

**THE** Lord is my Protector.  
The **LORD** is my Protector.  
The Lord **IS** my Protector.  
The Lord is **MY** Protector.  
The Lord is my **PROTECTOR**.

**Verse 6:** *“Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”*

Thank the Lord for the way He will use each fearful situation for good in your life.

“Dear God, I thank you that you are my Shepherd.  
You guide me, you protect me, and you give me your peace.  
You are the one who restores my soul.  
You know my weaknesses and the times I’ve caved in to fear.  
Now, in my weakness, I will choose to rely on your strength.  
You are my Shepherd.  
I am choosing to rely on your power to move me from fear to faith.  
As I turn my fear over to you, use it for good in my life  
to remind me of my continual need for you.  
In your holy name I pray. Amen”

Focus on your fear, and your panic will increase.  
Focus on your Shepherd, and your heart will be at peace.

## How to Have a Transformed Life

Now there is no knocking of knees, no trembling of hands. Gideon not only leads the charge against the Midianites, he also boldly stands up to criticism and relentlessly pursues what remains of the enemy. Along the way, he and his 300 men keep up the pursuit, despite physical exhaustion. When Gideon asks the men in the town of Succoth for sustenance to continue his quest, they scoff at his potential for success and refuse him.

Sometimes after a great success, we often revert back to an old habit—an attitude filled with fear and doubt—simply because someone treats us as we were treated in the past.

When the men of Succoth scoffed at Gideon, he could have collapsed emotionally—even though he had just experienced a miraculous victory. That’s why it is helpful for us to pause and evaluate each time a new situation arises that has the potential to fill our hearts with old fears and ask, “Why am I afraid?”

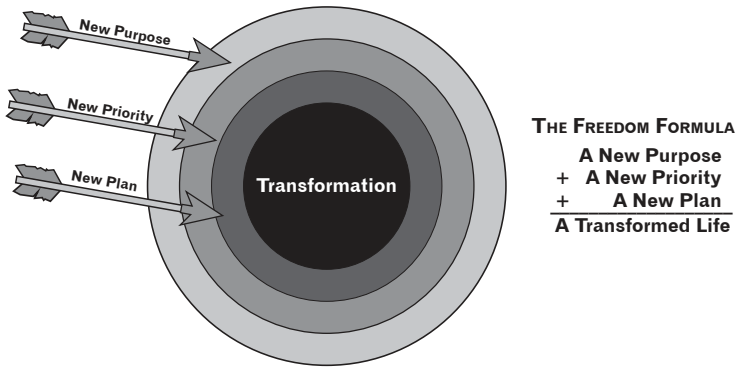
Examining your fear, its origin, its legitimacy, and its pattern can help you understand it and develop a strategy to resolve it. First, go before God, who is the source of wisdom, and pray this prayer from your heart:

*“Search me, God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
See if there is any offensive way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.”*

(PSALM 139:23–24)

Expect God to answer your petition and to lead you in devising a plan of action that will result in a transformation of your mind, heart, and behavior.

## Reaching the Target: Transformation!



### Target #1—A New Purpose

**God's purpose for me** is to be conformed to the character of Christ.

*“Those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son” (ROMANS 8:29).*

— “I’ll do whatever it takes to be conformed to the character of Christ.”

### Target #2—A New Priority

**God's priority for me** is to change my thinking.

*“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (ROMANS 12:2).*

— “I’ll do whatever it takes to line up my thinking with God’s thinking.”

### Target #3—A New Plan

**God's plan for me** is to rely on Christ’s strength, not my strength, to be all He created me to be.

*“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (PHILIPPIANS 4:13 NKJV).*

— “I’ll do whatever it takes to fulfill His plan in His strength.”

## My Personalized Plan

Gideon makes the same request for supplies at a second town, Peniel, and once again is refused. Resuming their pursuit, Gideon and his men rout the entire remaining army of 15,000 and capture their cruel kings. Gideon continues living out his personal transformation from fear to faith as he completes the task God has called him to accomplish. And he does it in the face of criticism and opposition not only from his enemies but from his own countrymen! And he does it because he knows his God is trustworthy.

Knowing the truth and then acting on the truth is essential to conquering fear. The source of truth is the One who does not lie—our God who cannot lie.

The first step in applying truth is to identify the false assumptions behind the fears you are experiencing and to replace them with the truth.

*“You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

(JOHN 8:32)

**Identify a specific fear I have:** I am truly afraid of \_\_\_\_\_.

To identify the lies behind this fear, I will . . .

— **Ask myself:**

- ♦ Is my fear tied to recent events, or did it originate from a specific situation in the past?
- ♦ Is my fear based on a real threat or merely a perceived one?
- ♦ Is my fear wrongly associated with an event or object that should not be feared?
- ♦ Is my fear coming from certain places, people, or things that remind me of past unpleasant consequences?
- ♦ Is my fear based on my own experience or was it instilled in me by someone significant to me in childhood?
- ♦ Is my fear due to a persistent fear-based mind-set, even though the circumstance, relationship, or lifestyle in which it was rooted no longer exists?

- ♦ Is my fear a result of continuously faking fear over such a long period of time that it has now become real to me? Have I come to believe my own lie?

*“The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways,  
but the folly of fools is deception.”*

(PROVERBS 14:8)

**When I feel afraid** of a person or a situation, I will . . .

- **Ask myself** what I am afraid is going to happen, and then:
  - ♦ **Analyze:** Is what I fear actually likely to happen?
  - ♦ **Theorize:** What is the worst possible outcome?
  - ♦ **Neutralize:** Why would the worst outcome not be so bad?
  - ♦ **Generalize:** When have I already faced and survived an equally bad outcome?
  - ♦ **Strategize:** What possible ways can I respond if my fear comes true?
  - ♦ **Realize:** Will fixating on my fear guarantee its continued repetition?
  - ♦ **Finalize:** If my fear really has nothing to do with what’s happening now, am I willing to put it out of my mind by focusing my attention elsewhere on something pleasant and joyful?

*“On him we have set our hope  
that he will continue to deliver us.”*

(2 CORINTHIANS 1:10)

**In order to determine** if the fear I am currently feeling is from the past or the present, I will . . .

- **Ask myself** these questions:
  - ♦ What past fear am I bringing into the present?
  - ♦ What trauma(s) first instilled my fear?
  - ♦ What is going on when I’m feeling this fear?
  - ♦ How old do I feel emotionally when I experience this fear?

- What has currently triggered this fear?
- Where am I when I am feeling this fear?
- How is this fear affecting my life now? What is it costing me?

*“One thing I do: Forgetting what is behind  
and straining toward what is ahead.”*

(PHILIPPIANS 3:13)

**Finally**, once I am truly committed to getting out of the grip of fear, I will . . .

— **Make a commitment** to myself and God to . . .

- **Do** what it takes to control my fear and to change from being fear-full to being faith-full.
- **Tell** myself, “I will not let this fear run my life. I will not let past fears control me. I will trust God to protect me and to meet my needs.”
- **Decide** to live in the here and now and act in a way that is not based on fear.
- **Repeat** this phrase often: “That was then; this is now. That was then; this is now.”
- **Share** my fear and my plan for change with a trustworthy person.
- **Tell** my confidant, “Years ago certain circumstances in my life led me to develop a fear of \_\_\_\_\_. Over the years, it has robbed me of joy, and I am determined to overcome it by (state my plan).”
- **Ask** my confidant, “Would you be willing to encourage me in my endeavor by (state my need)?”

As I choose to face my fear with faith, I will claim this scripture as my own:

*“I sought the LORD, and he answered me;  
he delivered me from all my fears.”*

(PSALM 34:4)

## How to Move from Fear to Faith

Gideon moves from testing God to triumphing with God, from a fear-based fleece to a faith-based foundation. Previously, Gideon kept asking God for supernatural signs to affirm that God would do what He clearly and repeatedly said He would do. (See Judges 6:36–40.) Ultimately, Gideon moves from weakness to strength, from doubt to faith, from vacillating to victorious—and he does it by trusting in the one true God and taking action based on that trust. It is God who gives Gideon victory in defeating both his foes and his fears.

Gideon’s success in saving his people from perishing, conquering enemy kings, and gaining victory over vast armies cause the people of Israel to ask him to rule over them. However, Gideon tells them,

*“I will not rule over you . . .  
The LORD will rule over you.”*  
(JUDGES 8:23)

God’s call on Gideon’s life is clear: He is to go forth in the Lord’s strength and “*save Israel out of Midian’s hand*” (Judges 6:14). But that call does not include ruling over Israel. Gideon knows this, and he also knows that God is not to be replaced by the man He made into a mighty warrior and empowered to accomplish His purposes. Gideon is still just a man, and God is still the almighty Ruler of the universe.

As you seek to follow Gideon’s example in moving from fear to faith . . .

**Begin with a healthy fear (awe) of God.** Believe that God . . .

- Created you because He loves you.
- Has a purpose and a plan for your life.
- Has the right to have authority over you.
- Wants you to entrust your life to Him.
- Has the power to change you.
- Will keep you safe as you trust in Him.

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,  
but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”*

(PROVERBS 1:7)

**Be determined to eradicate your fear-based mind-set.** Fear-based thinking . . .

- Means you are not fully trusting God, who alone is always and forever trustworthy.
- Prevents you from appropriating the grace of God.
- Keeps you in bondage to fear and robs you of peace.
- Damages you physically, emotionally, and spiritually.
- Distorts the power, sufficiency, and faithfulness of God.
- Turns your focus from God to people or other circumstances.

*“I trust in God, so why should I be afraid?  
What can mere mortals do to me?”*

(PSALM 56:4 NLT)

**Be assertive in analyzing your fear and discovering its source.** Are you fearful of . . .

- Rejection: Do you need to be loved?
- Failure: Do you need to feel significant?
- Financial loss: Do you need to feel secure?
- Broken relationships: Do you need to feel loved?
- Being alone: Do you need to feel significant?
- Job loss: Do you need to feel secure?

*“Fear of man will prove to be a snare,  
but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.”*

(PROVERBS 29:25)

**Be persuaded of the extent of God's love for you.** God's love provides you with . . .

- Complete acceptance.
- A realization of your true value.
- Confidence in His ability to accomplish His plans for you.
- The assurance that you will be loved for all eternity.
- Power to overcome fear.
- True security.

*"I am convinced that neither death nor life,  
neither angels nor demons,  
neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,  
neither height nor depth,  
nor anything else in all creation,  
will be able to separate us  
from the love of God that is  
in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

(ROMANS 8:38–39)

**Be dedicated to developing your faith in the Lord.** Ask God to help you be . . .

- Actively involved in a Bible study (2 Timothy 2:15).
- In daily prayer—truly talking with God (Philippians 4:6).
- Consistently active in a local church that teaches the Word of God (Hebrews 10:25).
- Committed to memorizing and meditating on God's Word (Philippians 4:8).
- Obedient to God's promptings in your spirit (Philippians 4:5).
- Pure in your thoughts with your spiritual eyes fixed on Christ (1 Timothy 1:5).

*"Blessed is the one . . . whose delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and who meditates on his law day and night."*

(PSALM 1:1–2)

**Be engaged with other believers.** As you cultivate fellowship, be . . .

- Active in spending time with fellow Christians (Hebrews 10:25).
- Prepared to help those who are isolated or in distress (James 1:27).
- Willing to testify to God’s faithfulness in your life (Lamentations 3:22–23).
- Focused on serving others (Philippians 4:10).
- Responsible to assist others in need (1 John 3:17–18).
- Accountable to a small, intimate group of growing Christians.

*“As iron sharpens iron,  
so one person sharpens another.”*

(PROVERBS 27:17)

**Be tenacious in using God’s Word to rein in your fears.** Meditate on these truths:

- Psalm 27:1—*“The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?”*
- Isaiah 41:13—*“For I am the LORD your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.”*
- Psalm 46:1–2—*“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear . . .”*
- Psalm 56:3—*“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.”*
- Psalm 112:6–7—*“Surely the righteous will never be shaken; they will be remembered forever. They will have no fear of bad news; their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the LORD.”*
- Psalm 118:6—*“The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?”*

**Be focused on facing your fear through the power of Christ.** Ask God for the grace to . . .

- Know that Christ is always ready to respond to your needs.
- Acknowledge Christ’s presence in your life and call for His help.

- Trust in the faithfulness of God to meet all your needs through Christ.
- Remember that Christ has gone before you and prepared the way for you to go.
- Release your fear to Him and receive His powerful love.
- Act in love toward others by focusing on their needs and relying on Christ.

*“The one who calls you is faithful,  
and he will do it.”*

(1 THESSALONIANS 5:24)

**Be set free from fear and be strong in faith.** As you do, you will also become more . . .

- Trusting (taking God at His Word and believing His promises).
- Peaceful (memorizing and repeatedly reciting Psalm 23).
- Thankful (making a list every day of God’s blessings).
- Prayerful (setting aside time every day to pray for others).
- Faithful (diligently reading God’s Word, witnessing, attending church, and giving).
- Christlike (studying the character of Christ and spending more time with Him).

*“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord,  
continue to live your lives in him,  
rooted and built up in him,  
strengthened in the faith  
as you were taught, and overflowing  
with thankfulness.”*

(COLOSSIANS 2:6–7)

## Fear of Death

**Question:** “I have had a number of panic attacks and thought I was going to die. How can I overcome my irrational fear of death?”

**Answer:** Realize, because Jesus broke the power of death by His death and resurrection, He can set you free from the fear of physical death. The Bible says,

*“Because God’s children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying”*  
(HEBREWS 2:14–15 NLT).

Jesus promises that those who believe in Him will have eternal life, even though they physically die. He says,

*“I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die”* (JOHN 11:25–26 NLT).

You can experience peace—lasting peace—when you realize that you have absolutely no control over the moment of your death . . . but God does. Based on the Bible, God has already determined the exact number of your days on earth. Therefore, face the fact of your death head-on.

Say to the Lord:

- “I choose to trust you with your perfect plan for my life—  
and my death.”
- “I yield my will to your will.”
- “Thank you for giving me your perfect peace.”

*“You saw me before I was born.  
Every day of my life was recorded in your book.  
Every moment was laid out before  
a single day had passed.”*  
(PSALM 139:16 NLT)

## Fearing the Death of a Child

**Question:** “How can I overcome my overwhelming fear that my children might die?”

**Answer:** Unquestionably, your children *will* die—some day. But the question no one can answer with certainty is *when*. That is, no one but God. Realize that God knew and ordained the length of each of your children’s lives before they were conceived. Your fear can’t change that fact. Instead of having fear, which is not beneficial, you can benefit your children in the following ways:

- Pray that you will be a Christlike example for them.
- Pray that you will draw your children to the Lord by the life you live.
- Pray this prayer of trust:

“Lord, thank you for loving my children. And thank you that I can trust you to do what is best for them. Since the length of their lives is already in your sovereign hands, I choose to no longer be controlled by fear. Rather, I choose to trust you and thank you for every day I have with them. I commit myself to helping them grow in Christlike character. In your holy name I pray. Amen.”

*“A person’s days are determined;  
you have decreed the number of his months  
and have set limits he cannot exceed.”*

(JOB 14:5)

## How to Decrease Your Fear with “Desensitization”<sup>27</sup>

In spite of his enormous initial fear, Gideon eventually accomplishes the supernatural in the power of God because he believes in the promises of God and acts on them in faith. At first, he sees himself as a weak thresher, but God sees him as a mighty warrior. Then as Gideon takes God at His word and acts out of faith rather than fear, his faith in God grows, his courage as a warrior grows, and finally he comes to see himself as God sees him. With each progressively more fearful situation, God’s reassurance helps Gideon choose, as an act of his will, to trust God and move forward in victory. With each new step, Gideon’s fear becomes weaker and his faith becomes stronger.

Identifying your fear and its “triggers” help deprive those triggers of their power. Regular, repeated exposure to a trigger (something that initiates a sense of fear or danger) can help to desensitize you to it. You can move toward victory as you develop a right mind-set.

*“So prepare your minds for action . . .”*

(1 PETER 1:13 NLT)

### Moving from Panic to Peace

If you are overly sensitive to an object or situation, “desensitization” can be the key that opens the door to freedom. Systematically repeat each of the following steps one at a time. Repeat each step daily for a week or two, or until you no longer have a strong emotional reaction to the object or situation. Then move on to the next step. A slight reaction is expected and permissible before moving to the next step.

#### **Gradually increase your exposure to the fear.**

*Example of a Specific Phobia: fear of elevators*

- Stand near an elevator and watch people get on and off.
- Push the button *as if* you are getting ready to step inside.

- Step inside when other people are not around. Hold the “Door Open” button, count to five and step out.
- Step inside again (when others are not around). Hold the “Door Open” button, count to ten and then step out.
- Step inside, ride up only one floor, and exit.
- Ride up two floors, then three—and eventually all the way up and down for ten minutes.

Ask a supportive person to be present as you take each step—initially doing the activity with you, then later not participating, but remaining present to encourage and praise.

*“I take great pride in you.  
I am greatly encouraged.”*  
(2 CORINTHIANS 7:4)

### Practice facing your fear.

*Example of a Social Phobia:* fear of initiating conversation

- Initiate by simply saying hello with a smile.
- Practice being genuinely interested in each person you speak with. Ask yourself: *What is truly important to this person?* Then mention it or ask about it.
- Listen carefully to what others say.
- Ask follow-up questions.
- Ask simple, open-ended questions of others about themselves—questions that can’t be answered with just a *Yes* or *No*.
- Be intentional. Use the words *you* and *yours* more than you use *I* and *my*.
- Make brief statements about yourself.
- Practice asking questions about their loved ones.
- Practice asking general questions anyone could answer, such as:
  - ♦ “Who has been one of the most influential people in your life?”
  - ♦ “What was your favorite subject in school?”
  - ♦ “What is something you do that you never tire of doing?”

- ♦ “Of everything you’ve done, what has brought you the greatest satisfaction in your life?”

*“A word fitly spoken is like  
apples of gold in settings of silver.”*

(PROVERBS 25:11 NKJV)

**Repeat each step again until it evokes little reaction.**

*Example of Agoraphobia:* fear of a panic attack (fear in open spaces)

- Open your front door and leave it open.
- Stand in the open doorway for as long as possible.
- Go out the door and stand on the porch—breathe deeply.
- Walk down the sidewalk to the edge of your property.
- Walk around the outside of the house.
- Sit in the car while it is in the driveway.
- Have someone drive you around the block.
- Drive yourself around the block.
- Go to the mall and sit in your car in the parking lot.
- Go to the mall when it is not too crowded and walk around.
- Go into a store and greet a sales clerk.
- Make a small purchase.

As you take each step, say,

*“The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid.”*

(PSALM 118:6)

**Note:** For serious phobic reactions, the process of *desensitization* is almost always used in combination with medical treatment.

## How to Counter Your Fears with Facts

If you grew up in an environment where fear reigned, as Gideon did, you could have easily developed a fear-based mentality as a child and then grown into an adult who is now controlled by fear. At times, you feel powerless to confront or to match someone strength-for-strength. You will remain, as Gideon did, at the mercy of those around you who are “master manipulators” with their arsenal of fear tactics *unless* you come to recognize the bondage you are in and accept the fact that Christ came to free the oppressed. Yes, Christ came to set you free—just as He set Gideon free centuries before.

*“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me to proclaim  
good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim  
freedom for the prisoners  
and recovery of sight for the blind,  
to set the oppressed free.”*  
(LUKE 4:18)

### Fear vs. Fact

**Fear:** “I can’t help this feeling of intense fear!”

**Fact:** “This feeling is a bluff to my mind and body. It is not grounded in truth.”

*“So we say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?’”* (HEBREWS 13:6).

**Fear:** “I have this feeling of doom—a feeling I am going to die.”

**Fact:** “The time of my death is in God’s hands. I will choose to trust Him.”

*“From one man he [God] made all the nations . . . and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands” (ACTS 17:26).*

**Fear:** “I’m afraid of what others are thinking about me.”

**Fact:** “My peace comes from pleasing God, not in pleasing others.”

*“We make it our goal to please him” (2 CORINTHIANS 5:9).*

**Fear:** “I am hopeless and can never change.”

**Fact:** “In Christ, I am a new person. Nothing is hopeless.”

*“If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 CORINTHIANS 5:17).*

**Fear:** “I am so nervous, I can’t think clearly.”

**Fact:** “God will guard my mind and give me peace.”

*“The peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (PHILIPPIANS 4:7).*

**Fear:** “To be safe, I have to be in control.”

**Fact:** “God is in control of my life, and He is with me step by step.”

*“The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged” (DEUTERONOMY 31:8).*

**Fear:** “I feel trapped with no way of escape.”

**Fact:** “God always makes a way of escape.”

*“No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it” (1 CORINTHIANS 10:13).*

## How to Not Overlook the Obvious

In reality, God is actually the one who does what He calls Gideon to do because He is the one who enables Gideon to do it. All God requires is that Gideon refuse to focus on the fear he feels and choose to step forward in faith. And Gideon's faith increases as he faces each new fear-producing situation. He goes from fearfully tearing down his father's altar and Asherah pole under the cover of darkness to boldly pursuing the Midianites in the bright light of day!

Certain general things to consider when dealing with fears are often overlooked just because they are so simple and "obvious." It's like looking at the forest but missing the trees. The following suggestions may seem simplistic, but they can be the foundation on which to build an effective plan for overcoming unwanted fear and anxiety.

*"They are like a man building a house,  
who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock.  
When a flood came, the torrent struck  
that house but could not shake it,  
because it was well built."  
(LUKE 6:48)*

**Get a thorough medical check-up**—and ask if any condition could be causing you anxiety.

**Ask your doctor to evaluate** all your medications.

**Get adequate sleep.**

**Get regular exercise.**

**Plan for times of laughter, fun, and recreation.**

**Be around encouraging people** and remove yourself from negative ones.

**Adopt a healthy diet.** Avoid alcohol and drugs.

**Develop the habit of living one day at a time.**

### Listen to inspirational music.

**Ask a trusted friend to help you** imagine the worst that could happen to you in a particular situation and consider why it wouldn't be so bad.

*“Let us then approach God's throne  
of grace with confidence,  
so that we may receive mercy  
and find grace to help us in our time of need.”*

(HEBREWS 4:16)

## How to Support Someone Struggling with Fear

A key lesson we can learn from Gideon is that he does exactly what God requires. In time, he refuses to focus on his fear and chooses to step forward in faith. He knows he is not a mighty warrior, but he learns that God can be the warrior within him! It's not complicated—Gideon's supernatural victory comes simply because he walks both *fearfully* with God by faith and *fearlessly* with God by faith.

Sometimes God chooses a specific person, such as a friend or family member, to walk with the one who needs more faith. Just as God told Gideon to take Purah with him into the Midianite camp, fearful people need fearless friends to walk alongside to help them find the road to freedom.

Those who are fearful need a friend. Those who are timid need a teammate. Those who are worried need someone wise. Those who cower need an encourager. Those who are tormented by fear need inspiration from those who have found freedom from fear.

To support a loved one who is struggling with fear, learn what to do and what not to do. You may very well be that person's answer to prayer.

*“There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”*  
(PROVERBS 18:24)

## **Dos and Don'ts for Family and Friends**<sup>28</sup>

**Don't** become impatient when you don't understand the person's fear.

**Do** understand that what fearful people *feel* is *real*.

*“Whoever is patient has great understanding, but one who is quick-tempered displays folly”* (PROVERBS 14:29).

**Don't** think the person is doing this for attention.

**Do** realize fearful people are embarrassed and want to change.

*“I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do”* (ROMANS 7:15).

**Don't** be critical or use demeaning statements.

**Do** be gentle and supportive. Build up the person's confidence.

*“Encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing”*  
(1 THESSALONIANS 5:11).

**Don't** assume you know what is best.

**Do** ask how you can help.

*“We urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone”*  
(1 THESSALONIANS 5:14).

**Don't** make the person face a threatening situation without advance planning.

**Do** give the person instruction in positive self-talk and relaxation exercises.

*“Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life”*  
(PROVERBS 4:13).

**Don’t** make the person face the situation alone.

**Do** be there and assure the person of your support.

*“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: if either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up”* (ECCLESIASTES 4:9–10).

**Don’t** begin with difficult situations.

**Do** help the person begin facing a particular fear in small increments.

*“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance”*  
(JAMES 1:2–3).

**Don’t** constantly ask, “How are you feeling?”

**Do** help the person see the value of having other interests.

*“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others”* (PHILIPPIANS 2:4 ESV).

**Don’t** show disappointment and displeasure if the person fails.

**Do** encourage the person and compliment their efforts to conquer fear.

*“Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act”* (PROVERBS 3:27).

**Don’t** say, “Don’t be absurd; there’s nothing for you to fear!”

**Do** say, “No matter how you feel, tell yourself the truth and say, ‘I will take one step at a time.’”

*“The wise in heart are called discerning, and gracious words promote instruction”*  
(PROVERBS 16:21).

**Don't** say, "Don't be a coward; you *have* to do this!"

**Do** say, "I know this is difficult for you, but it's not dangerous. You have the courage to do this."

*"The hearts of the wise make their mouths prudent, and their lips promote instruction"* (PROVERBS 16:23).

**Don't** say, "Quit living in the past; this is not that bad."

**Do** say, "Remember to stay in the present and remind yourself, 'That was then; this is now.'"

*"Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones"* (PROVERBS 16:24).

## Epilogue

Among the thousands of people mentioned in the Bible, Gideon is selected by God to be one of the few in His famous “Hall of Faith” in Hebrews chapter 11. The individuals mentioned here demonstrated in their lives the power of living by faith. Fewer than 20 names are listed on this Honor Roll of Old Testament Saints with Gideon being one of them. In fact, we are told specifically that it was “*through faith*” that Gideon “*conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised . . .*” (Hebrews 11:32–33).

Once apprehensive and in need of assurance, Gideon’s transformation from being fearfully timid to being fearlessly triumphant is evident as he confronts the captive kings of Midian. Asking what kind of men they had killed at Tabor, Gideon’s once fearsome enemies reply, “*Men like you,’ . . . ‘each one with the bearing of a prince’*” (Judges 8:18).

The once-meeek man from the small clan of Manasseh now bears a princely posture and has become a powerful warrior—the *mighty* warrior God called him to be.

A similar transformation awaits all who take God at His Word and act in faith—even in the midst of fearful circumstances.



# SCRIPTURES TO MEMORIZE



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*“First seek the counsel  
of the LORD.”*

(1 KINGS 22:5)



God's Word offers the hope and promise of a changed life. The Lord will renew your mind—transforming the way you think, act, and live—as you saturate yourself in His Word. In the following questions, the bold-faced words serve as prompts to help you more easily memorize the verses related to this topic. May God's truth come alive to you, flourish in you, and flow through you.

Is it possible to be **delivered from all my fears**?

*"I sought the LORD, and he answered me;  
He **delivered me from all my fears.**"*

(PSALM 34:4)

How can I keep my **fear of man** and others  
from being like **a snare** to my emotions?

*"**Fear of man** will prove to be **a snare**,  
but whoever trusts in the LORD  
is kept safe."*

(PROVERBS 29:25)

What does the Bible say to overcome **all your anxiety**?

*"Humble yourselves, therefore, under  
God's mighty hand, that he may lift you  
up in due time. Cast **all your anxiety** on  
him because he cares for you."*

(1 PETER 5:6–7)

**God is my salvation**, but how can that help me **not be afraid**?

*"Surely **God is my salvation**; I will trust  
and **not be afraid**. The LORD, the LORD himself,  
is my strength and my defense;  
he has become my salvation."*

(ISAIAH 12:2)

How can **the Lord Himself** help me to **not be afraid** and **not be discouraged**?

*“**The Lord himself** goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do **not be afraid**; do **not be discouraged**.”*

(DEUTERONOMY 31:8)

Why is it important to ask God to **search my heart** and **know my anxious thoughts**?

*“**Search** me, God, and know **my heart**; test me **and know my anxious thoughts**. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”*

(PSALM 139:23-24)

**When I am afraid**, what should I do?

*“**When I am afraid**, I put my trust in you.”*

(PSALM 56:3)

Even though God says, “**I am with you**,” how would that **help strengthen** me to **not have fear**?

*“Do **not fear**, for **I am with you**; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will **strengthen** you and **help** you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*

(ISAIAH 41:10)

Since **the Lord is with me**, what perspective should I have so **I will not be afraid**?

***“The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid.***

*What can mere mortals do to me?”*

(PSALM 118:6)

Scripture tells me, “**do not be anxious about anything**,” but how can I do that?

***“Do not be anxious about anything,***

*but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

*And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*

(PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7)





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# Hope for the Heart

... presenting God's Truth for Today's Problems

## **Our Partnership**

We are honored to partner with **Lindell Recovery Network**—to encourage, equip, and empower others with the truth of God's Word. What a joy to see lives changed as we share His hope—together!

## **A Legacy of Hope**

Special thanks to author, broadcaster, and biblical counselor **June Hunt**, founder of Hope For The Heart, for her years of research, writing, editing, and guidance in developing the *Keys for Living Library*.

## **Anchored to a Solid Foundation**

God's Word is our sure and steady anchor, the foundation of our ministry and all our resources. We are grateful to God for His 30+ years of guidance and enabling us to impact the world with His truth that sets people free.

## **Resources for the Continuum of Care and Ministry**

We present biblical hope and practical help through our print and digital resources (over two million books sold), radio broadcasts, and podcasts. Likewise, our counseling services and seminars, the International Christian Coaching Institute (ICCI), the Lifeline to Hope caregiver training program, credentialing and certifications, and a global outreach that touches over 60 countries in 36 languages and on 6 continents—are all designed to help people have a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD,  
‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you,  
plans to give you hope and a future.’”  
(Jeremiah 29:11)*

To learn more about Hope For The Heart, our ministry, resources, and initiatives, call 1-800-488-HOPE (4673) or visit [HopeForTheHeart.org](http://HopeForTheHeart.org).

**[www.HopeForTheHeart.org](http://www.HopeForTheHeart.org)**



# FEAR

## *No Longer Afraid*

Are you often overwhelmed with feelings of foreboding...even when things are going well? Do you frequently find the muscles in your neck tightening and your stomach churning when in unfamiliar situations or places? Fear is like a chain around your heart—it paralyzes, entraps, and enslaves. In these *Keys for Living*, discover how to move from fear to faith—from panic to peace. Understand the love and power of Christ in your life as you depend on Him for strength and help in every fearful situation you face.

### KEYS FOR LIVING LIBRARY



*“First seek the counsel of the LORD.”*  
(1 Kings 22:5)

Life is full of challenges, but there is hope. The *Keys for Living Library* provides biblical truth and practical help for more than 100 topics to help you overcome difficulties, grow in maturity, and move forward in life. In each of the 100+ Keys, you'll discover God's wisdom and guidance in a simple format:

- *Definitions* help you understand the topic from God's perspective.
- *Characteristics* give insight into the different aspects of the topic.
- *Causes* shed light on the underlying issues related to the topic.
- *Steps to Solution* show you how to be transformed and walk in freedom.

Jesus said, *“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full”* (John 10:10). Our prayer is that God will use these *Keys for Living* to encourage, equip, and empower you with His life-changing truth.

