

Faith Problems-Fear

Community Group Questions

1. What is your biggest fear?
2. Has this fear ever kept you from doing something you needed to do?
3. Is there something that you feel can increase your faith in this area?
4. Talk about a time in which you faced a fear and it worked out.

*Hebrew 11:1 says Now **faith** is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*

So in other words your faith is “a confidence that what you believe is true and you feel so attached to that it impacts the way you live”

So a “Faith Problem” is something that is standing in the way of you believing in a truth or acting on that belief.

The faith problem we will deal with today is **Fear**

A Chapman University study of 1500 Americans was taken on the topic of fear in 2014

Public speaking, heights, bugs/snakes/other animals, drowning, blood/needles, claustrophobia, flying strangers, zombies, darkness, clowns, ghosts. I am going to call some of these secondary type fears

The truth is in life we have what I am going to call primary fears, such as failure, loss of a loved one, health issues, safety issues, financial issues, comfort and security issues.

Before we study fear...Finish this sentence, I am afraid...

No matter how great or small, how realistic or unrealistic your fears are they can cause a problem in your faith.

Today we will examine the reasons for our fears, then learn how work through our fears and finally learn about healthy fears.

In *Mark 4:35-41 we find that the disciples experienced fear

Reasons for fears.

-Past experiences- I am sure the disciples have encountered bad storms in the past being many of them were fishermen. They knew how dangerous and violent the storms could be so naturally they were afraid.

-Maybe you had a bad experience in the past.

-Maybe you fear the commitment of a relationship because in the past someone broke their commitment to you.

-Maybe you fear financial ruin because you grew up in household that was always financially struggling.

-Maybe you fear failure because you have many failures in the past.

Our past experiences can create fear in us if we allow it to.

-Observing what has happened to others. The disciples if they themselves were never caught in storm before this time, they most likely knew someone that was and lived to tell about it or someone that was and did not make it. Many of our fears are based on what other people have experienced.

I want to appeal to you parents on this point because the study that I quoted from said “people that watch more TV have more fears”.

Allowing your children to take in too much media can cause your child to be very fearful of their surroundings and life in general Idea: 9am on Saturdays Fox 5 “The Real Winning Edge”

-Wandering mind. The disciples thinking the worst...”we are going to die”. Is that you when it comes to year fears? Does your mind just go to the worst case scenario?

Chuck Swindoll said "Fear is a powerful enemy. It feeds on itself and grows so that you feel controlled by it.

You become consumed and controlled by the fear, so much so that it hinders forward motion in your life because it is all you think about.

-Lack of faith. After they woke Jesus up and accused Him of not caring, He calmed the storm and said to them. *"Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?"* When fear takes over it displays our lack of faith.

So how do we...**Working through our fears**

-Focus on the future

Isaiah 43:18-19 Isaiah the Prophet is speaking to Israel about their salvations and he says *"Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.*

In other words don't focus on the past.

Shakespeare said "What's past is prologue."

Many times we get so hung up on the past that it makes us fear the future. It is wise for us to learn from the past and unwise for us to get hung up on what happened to us or what we did in the past.

For example, if something bad happened to you and it could have been prevented by a decision. Next time rather than living in fear, learn from the bad decision and make a good one.

Maybe it is past failure and because you are afraid failing again you decide not to try again, or you were embarrassed and think I will never put myself out there like that.

-Face the fear- If the fear is something that is common in everyday life you will actually paralyze yourself from doing what you need to do. *Psalm 23:4-5 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. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.*

But I find that in life even if it is NOT something you need to do in life it is helpful to face fears because it prepares you for situations that will arise that you will need confidence.

Spearfishing illustration

-Maybe you have a fear of confronting someone that is sinning against you.

-Maybe you have a fear of telling your boss you will not be dishonest for the company anymore.

Face the fear and realize that God is with you in it.

Psalm 34:4 I sought the LORD, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears.

-Seeking help from others. Remember those people you observed and that is why you have that fear? Observed people that overcame troubling or fearful circumstances. (Bethany Hamilton)

*Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

-Guard your mind. I can tell you that the only reason Zombies made the list of fears is TV and movies. Just in case you are wondering...they are not real.

When talking about vacations people always ask "have you ever been on a cruise?"

My mind automatically goes to...sick from germs, someone in my family will get assaulted or I will fall off the ship and swim in shark infested waters all night. Why...I saw a Dateline special

Phil 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

-Trust the Lord

Think about Jesus...did He experience fear? Yeah the prayer that He offered up in the garden of Gethsemane illustrates that. But what did He do? He placed the situation in the hands of the Father

*Psalm 27:1 GOSPEL *Psalm 56:3-4 &11,

2 Tim 1:7 "for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control"

What type of fear is healthy and necessary?

MLK "Normal fear protects us; abnormal fear paralyzes us. Normal fear motivates us to improve our individual and collective welfare; abnormal fear constantly poisons and distorts our inner lives. Our problem is not to be rid of fear but, rather to harness and master it."

-Fear of falling into sin, letting God down and others down. I have adopted something I learned from Robert Oliver, he was the Pastor that hired me almost 20 years ago. When he came up to preach at my installation service we got to spend some time together and he said to me *"Mike I always pray that God would kill me before I fall into any sin that will bring disgrace to Christ, my wife and family and the church"*

As Christians we have a huge responsibility to be faithful to the Lord, not because He will not love us or we will lose our salvation. Those

things will not change no matter what. But we remain faithful to bring glory to Jesus. When we fall into sinful patterns it can and will bring disgrace to the name of Jesus, our family and the church, which is other Christians. So we need to have a healthy fear of falling into sin.

-So we pray...*"lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one"*

-And we do good

Psalm 112:6-8 For the righteous will never be moved; he will be remembered forever.

He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD. His heart is steady; he will not be afraid, until he looks in triumph on his adversaries.

-Fear of God- most of you understand that this is having a healthy respect for who God is and the fact that He has ultimate power over. I want to close with 3 very important Bible verses

Matthew 10:28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Sounds harsh huh? but remember God's ultimate plan is get rid of evil, and that sound good, unless we are the evil.

1 John 4:18-19 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because he first loved us.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

