

Fear 1 - Introduction

Bible study:

2 Cor 3:17

Psalm 146:7-8

John 8:36

Is 'fear' sin? fear itself – no, but the responses we often have to sin – yes.

When did fear first appear? (Gen 3:1 – 11)

As soon as Adam and Eve disobeyed God they experienced shame and fear.

Fear is a consequence of sin. Before the fall fear didn't exist. It is interesting that it was among the first negative emotions to appear. (Shame then fear).

Sin is often thought of as “the bad things we do” associated with shame / guilt etc. But sin is in fact much bigger! It has affected the whole natural order - the whole of creation. It is the cause of the world's problems, the consequences play out in people's lives. We see and experience the negative fall out! It affects us personally and corporately. **(Find Bible verses which show how the whole of creation is affected by sin).**

So it is important that people who struggle with fear don't beat themselves up with feeling “more sinful” as they may have fear issues through no fault of their own (from traumatic experiences etc.).

Can you think of examples of incidents that have resulted in fear that weren't your fault. And examples of fear that were a consequence of a wrong choice / deliberate action?

It is a fact of the fall! We are all tainted by sin. All broken, all affected by fear in one way or another. Needing to be transformed into the image of Jesus. **(You may want to find some Bible verses to highlight this).**

Fear mismanaged often leads to sin – not necessarily “doing something bad” but it turns us inwards – focuses our energy and attention on ourselves and the problem / situation, rather than looking trustingly to God. We each go to our corner and hide.

How has fear affected your life?

External fear: (outside things which make us react in fear) spiders / the dark / heights etc. How do you deal with these fears?

Internal fears (BIG SUBJECT!): fears often rooted in childhood / experiences in adulthood, linked with an event or memory which triggers a negative reaction (for example being criticised when you were young / feeling ugly / being sacked and feeling a failure / anger / weak areas in your personality / substance misuse etc. etc.) **Is anyone willing to share a testimony of a childhood or adulthood event which causes fear in the present?**

Material or circumstantial fears: being sued, finishing last, the mole on our back, the new kid on the block, sound of the clock ticking us to the grave, etc. etc. fear of the future, things going wrong, fear of people, fear of change.

Any others to add? What do people need prayer for in this area?

Spiritual fear:

Spirit of fear (**what do people think about this?**)

Fear of God (this will be covered at another time :0)

Fear = hiding = darkness **read Eph 5: 8 – 11** how do we expose our fears? (bring them into the light)

Read Matthew 14: 22 – 32

Discuss – Disciples reaction to Jesus on the water (crying out in fear)

The disciples on the boat (only one ventured out)

Peter getting out of the boat

Are we drowning on old storm water? (you might not remember this bit from the talk!)

How can we “storm proof” the boat? (meaning how do we storm proof our lives spiritually?)

If I were one of the disciples -where would I have been (in the boat afraid or overcoming fear and stepping out)?! What practical and spiritual things can we do to help us step out of the boat?

Read Ephesians 6: 10 – 20

What can we learn about the environment we live in and how to deal with it? Note how the armour covers all our most vulnerable parts (hearts – breastplate, mind – helmet of salvation, feet (to stop us running) shoes of peace etc.)

Read Ephesians 3: 14 – 21