

# Short & Sweet: Living in Fearful Times



Not snakes. Not mice. Not bats.

Spiders.

I am afraid of spiders. They are ugly. They have EIGHT creepy eyes (What has eight eyes?) They are hairy. They pop up when you least expect them and are gone when you return to kill them. Worst of all— they crunch when you hit them. Ugghhh!

But God tells us we need fear only one thing.

*“Don’t be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” Matthew 10:28*

If we fear only Him, we need fear nothing else.

## What is fear?

*Phobeo*, which is original Greek word for *fear* in Matthew 10:28, means *fear, dread, terror*. Who are those who can kill the body? Enemies, Isis, terrorists, any man. God tells us not

to fear them, but to only fear Him. How does this work? Who doesn't fear a person who is armed and dangerous? Hold that thought for a moment; we will revisit it in a moment. Please read the next verse:

*1 My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you,*

*2 turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—*

*3 indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding,*

*4 and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure,*

*5 then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.*

*Proverbs 2:1-5*

When traced back to its root, the Hebrew word used for *fear* in 5 is *yare'*, which means *to fear, reverence, honor, respect, to stand in awe of, be awed*. Not just fear, but holy fear. *Yare'* also means *to tremble with joy*.

While any reasonable person fears a person with a weapon, as Christians, we must center our life on God, not fear of man. We cannot hide in our houses and fulfill the Great Commission at the same time. Jesus came so we can have life abundant. He wants us to live by faith, trusting His plan for our life and our death. If we are facing great suffering, then there is great glory and reward at stake.

## **I have wrestled with this whole fear issue.**

It comes down to one thing: what drives my decisions? Are my decisions based on Truth, my personal preferences or the fear of man? In the end, I will obey whatever I fear.

# **I would like to throw another fear option on the table—fear of self.**

You know you suffer from *fear of self* if:

1. You always have to be comfortable.
2. Everyone must approve of your every decision.
3. You wouldn't dream of going to the grocery store without makeup.
4. You'd only take a mission trip if Starbucks and Panera were within walking distance of your destination.
5. You have to fly/not fly, ride a bus/not ride a bus, take a mule/don't take a mule, go somewhere only with/without your husband or (horrors!) go by yourself.
6. You have to have access to modern facilities, to bathe twice a day, and sleep in a private room.

Yes, I am guilty of many of the above and I'm sure you can add others.

I can only choose one: *the fear of God, the tyranny of self, or the fear of man.*

# **I am staging a revolution.**

I am done doing life afraid.

WHAT IF there is another terrorist attack today?

WHAT IF there is a significant natural disaster today?

WHAT IF someone doesn't like my new haircut?

SO WHAT if people think I'm nuts for being sold out for Jesus?

SO WHAT if people think I'm cra-cra for leaving a job with greater pay to take a position with fewer perks?

SO WHAT if people think I out of my mind for taking a chance

on a start-up?

Whatever comes, God promises to see me through and to use all things for my good and His glory. I'm done checking-in with THEM, and I'm going to live as God calls and leads.

Are you tired of living life afraid? Tired of living like a shadow person? Make no decisions based on *phobeo*, but on *yare*. Join me in my revolution. Let's fear God, take a step of faith and live.

## Action Points:

1. **Make a decision.** Do you look at your options and pick the safest? Do you ask your husband to decide for you? Do you let your girlfriends make all your decisions? Are your decisions based on your personal comfort or benefit (ouch!)?
2. **Pray about decisions.** Do what God calls you to do. Remember, God will never ask you to do something that does not line up with scripture.
3. **Face a fear.** Go to a movie by yourself. Initiate a conversation with a new person at church. Take a class. Make the call. Start the ministry. Join the team. Just do it. And if you have to, do it afraid.

Life is sweet. Face your fears.

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