



The End of Fear

Sunday 25th February 2024

GALATIANS 4:1-7

Would you consider yourself fearful or fearless or maybe someone in between? Wherever you place yourself on this scale, fear has a way of creeping up uninvited and taking a seat at the table of your heart. Let me illustrate this a little further.

▶ When I am in a very tall building and the glass is floor to ceiling, in my mind I know it is perfectly safe and I could lean my body weight with one hand against the glass and it won't give way. But fear keeps me away from doing such a thing. Or when I'm in a flight and it's getting a bit turbulent, fear says this might not end well and yet in my mind I tell myself the wings were tested way beyond what this current turbulence is put onto the plane. That knowledge does not make my fear go away. Have you ever wondered why?

The Bible does not associate fear with the mind. In other words fear is not a decision made, which is why it is so hard to just tell yourself not to fear. And why fearful people don't stop fearing just because some fearless soul tells them there is no logical reason to fear!

▶ Today's passage is the story of the believer's life in a nutshell. Verses 1-3 describe where we were,

Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, ²but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. ³Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.

▶ We were trapped thinking the way the rest of the world thinks, with a handful of basic ideas and principles that the rest of the world has but we were a slave to those ideas, but they were limited and we were outside of God's family.

▶ Then Paul describes in verses 4 and 5 how this all changed.

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Which reflect what Paul says in Romans 5:6, 'for when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.'

Jesus Christ freely chose to put himself into a position of a slave ‘under the law’ to redeem us – literally to buy us back from our slave master, from the power of sin. And the result of all this? Verses 6-7,

And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” ⁷Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Now you are a son/daughter, then you were an orphan. Now His Spirit lives within you, then it was just the spirit of this world. Now, you are a son/daughter, then you were a slave. Then you were owed nothing but an eternity without God, now you are an heir. Then you were an enemy of Christ, now you are an heir with Christ (Romans 8:17).

So my question is this. Why, if we have all this secured for us and guaranteed for us by His Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14), do we sometimes find ourselves in a place of fear?

In Deuteronomy 28:66-67 God describes what happens when we fail to obey all He has instructed. Note this warning is to His already redeemed people. It is a not a threat to unbelievers,

Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. ⁶⁷In the morning you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were evening!’ And at evening you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were morning!’ because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.

Then we have these other verse from Psalm 27:3 ‘Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, In this I will be confident.’ And Isaiah 21:4 ‘My heart wavered, fearfulness frightened me; The night for which I longed He turned into fear for me.’ And Isaiah 35:4 ‘Say to those who are fearful-hearted, “Be strong, do not fear!”

Notice the connection between fear and your heart. **Fear is not a problem of the mind and it cannot be fixed in your mind.**

Now let’s go to Romans 8:12-17,

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵**For you did not**

receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

➤ As a believer you no longer have to live according to the spirit of this world which is defined and limited by the thinking and understanding of mankind but you now live by the Spirit of God.

➤ And because you are one with God in Christ Jesus through the Spirit of God listen to 1 John 4:18,

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

Again John writes, ‘But whoever keeps His word, truly the **love of God is perfected in him**. By this we know that we are in Him.’ (1 John 2:5)

➤ Because perfect love is not just a silent unexpressed affection towards someone. Perfected love is a two-way exchange, not a one way street. **When perfected love finds its home in your heart, fear has no place to live!**

So how can we identify when this fear is affecting us? We look for its results and some of these include,

- Withdrawal
- Our witness falls silent
- We isolate ourselves
- Doubts rise
- Disconnections appear all over the place
- Obsessive thoughts take over our minds
- We end up ignoring responsibilities
- We make excuses for anything and everything
- We start to believe that God can’t and won’t use us
- We can turn to addictions
- Secrecy increases
- Erratic or no communication
- Creates biases in our decision-making

➤ So how do we beat fear? The answer is described in Galatians 4:6-7,

And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” ⁷Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

In John 15:15 Jesus says, ‘No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.’

As those who have believed you are a **friend** of God. As one in whom God’s Spirit lives you are the **family** of God. And our new relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ brings about perfect **fellowship**. Fellowship literally means to *enjoy partnership and participation on the basis of what we have in common*.



So there are three places where fear will struggle to live:

- Family
- Friendship
- Fellowship

If we make the deliberate decision to spend time investing in all three of these, it can be the end of fear.