

Turning the Crap of Life, Into the Fruit of the Spirit

Fear

Fear, *n.*, a feeling of agitation and anxiety caused by the presence or imminence of danger. A state or condition marked by this feeling: *living in fear*. A feeling of disquiet or apprehension: *a fear of looking foolish*. A reason for dread or apprehension: *Being alone is my greatest fear*.

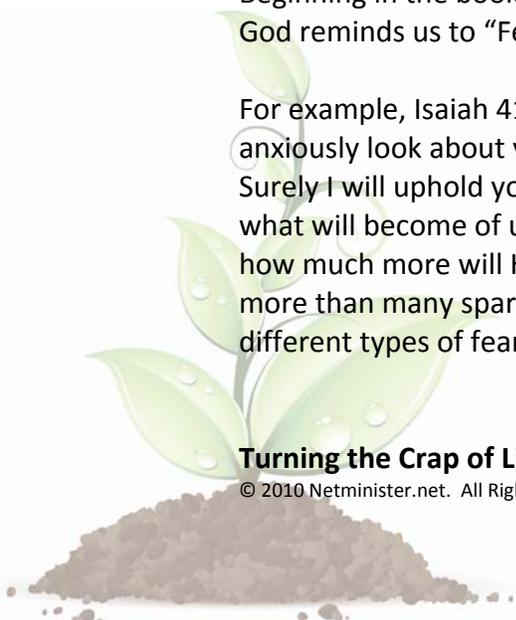
My daughter asked me a simple question, “if heaven is so great why are people afraid of dying?”

Psychiatrists tell us that there are 365 types of fear, literally one for every day of the year. The greatest fear is being in front of a group. Second is dying. That means according to Jerry Seinfeld, most people would rather be in the coffin than giving the eulogy.

The Bible mentions two specific types of fear. The first type is beneficial and is to be encouraged. The second type is a detriment and is to be overcome. The first type of fear is fear of the Lord. This type of fear does not necessarily mean to be afraid of something. Rather, it is a reverential awe of God; a reverence for His power and glory. However, it is also a proper respect for His wrath and anger. In other words, the fear of the Lord is a total acknowledgement of all that God is, which comes through knowing Him and His attributes.

Sometimes we are afraid, sometimes this “spirit of fear” overcomes us, and to overcome it we need to trust in and love God completely. “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). No one is perfect, and God knows this. That is why He has liberally sprinkled encouragement against fear throughout the Bible. Beginning in the book of Genesis and continuing throughout the book of Revelation, God reminds us to “Fear not.”

For example, Isaiah 41:10 encourages us, “Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” Often we fear the future and what will become of us. But Jesus reminds us that God cares for the birds of the air, so how much more will He provide for His children? “So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:31). Just these few verses cover many different types of fear. God tells us not to be afraid of being alone, of being too weak, of



not being heard, and of lacking physical necessities. These admonishments continue throughout the Bible, covering the many different aspects of the "spirit of fear."

In Psalm 56:11 the psalmist writes, "In God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" This is an awesome testimony to the power of trusting in God. Regardless of what happens, the psalmist will trust in God because he knows and understands the power of God. The key to overcoming fear, then, is total and complete trust in God. Trusting God is a refusal to give in to fear. It is a turning to God even in the darkest times and trusting Him to make things right. This trust comes from knowing God and knowing that He is good. As Job said when he was experiencing some of the most difficult trials recorded in the Bible, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13:15 NKJV).

Once we have learned to put our trust in God, we will no longer be afraid of the things that come against us. We will be like the psalmist who said with confidence "...let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you" (Psalm 5:11).

Why do we Fear?

2 Tim 1:7

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Fear – A timorous and servile spirit. Being afraid of the things around us. God has not given us that spirit. When we experience fear we can know immediately that it is NOT from God.

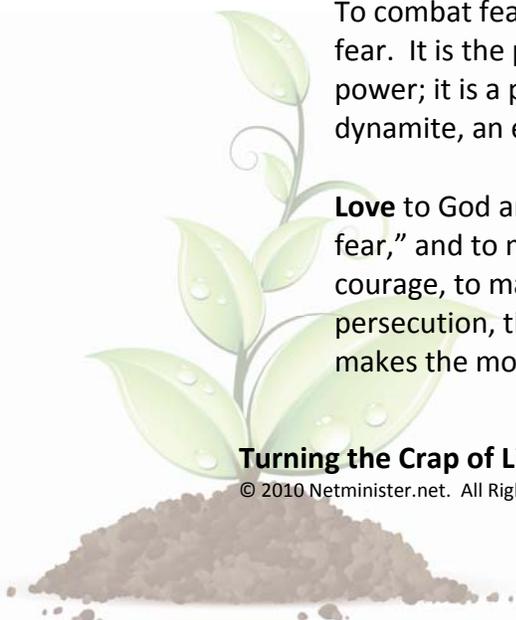
Power to encounter foes and dangers; power to bear up under trials; power to triumph in persecutions. That is, it is the nature of the gospel to inspire the mind with holy courage.

To combat fear we have to know that Jesus has given us power to overcome fear. It is the power to pray for strength in our time of need. It is not just a weak power; it is a power to overcome. The word for power is the word we use for dynamite, an explosive power.

Love to God and to the souls of men. The tendency of THIS, also, is to "cast out fear," and to make the mind bold and constant. Nothing will do more to inspire courage, to make a man fearless of danger, or ready to endure privation and persecution, than "love." The love of country, and wife, and children, and home, makes the most timid bold when they are assailed; and the love of Christ and of

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a dying world nerves the soul to great enterprises, and sustains it in the deepest sorrows.

That power is amplified by the love we have for one another and for Christ. When we love one another, it overcomes fear in our life.

1 John 4:17-19

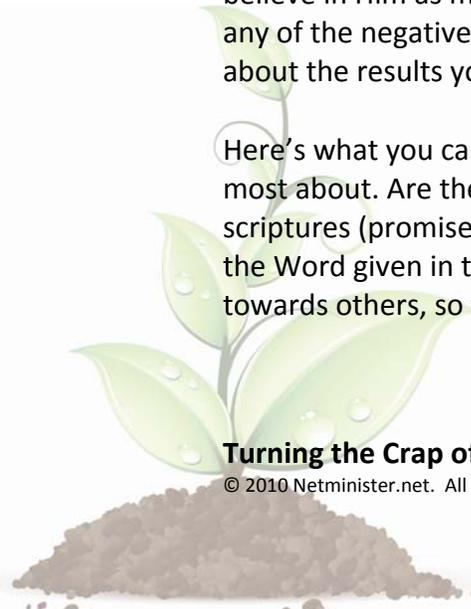
Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us.

Sound Mind. The Greek word denotes one of sober mind; a man of prudence and discretion. The state referred to here is that in which the mind is well balanced, and under right influences; in which it sees things in their just proportions and relations; in which it is not feverish and excited, but when everything is in its proper place.

We know from the things around us what is right and what is wrong. Most of the time we know without being preached at or demanded, but knowing it and doing it is the difference between a mind and a sound mind. A sound mind knows the truth and uses it on a daily and hourly moment to moment basis. Like breathing it is the way we live our life and the actions we take are directed by it.

Fear can rearrange things in your life to cause havoc just as faith can bring peace and harmony to restore the balance. Because faith is to operate in God's system which is of love, faith will operate only when the love of God is in operation. What is the love of God? It is the total absence of selfishness, unforgiveness, jealousy and strife. You can believe in Him as much as want and still operate in fear when you have running in you any of the negative traits mentioned. Fear will block the love of god (faith) to bring about the results you want.

Here's what you can do. Be honest and search for those areas in your life that you fear most about. Are they your finances, your possessions or strife with others? Find the scriptures (promises) that relate to the things you fear. Meditate on them daily. Confess the Word given in those scriptures eight, nine or ten times a day. Walk in God's love towards others, so that selfishness is destroyed. Fear will have no entry to come in.



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