



THE POWER OF FEAR

Series: The Power of Fear

Message: Facing the Power of Fear

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Smythe Street Church

Baptism Video

Congratulations, Gabe on your baptism. It is so encouraging to see.

We are so grateful for all the people who are declaring their decision to follow Jesus in baptism. It has been an incredible month. We actually have three more baptisms coming up this week. We have two people being baptized this afternoon and another on Thursday. We'll be sharing their videos in the coming weeks.

If you have not been baptized, it is the first major step of obedience in the life of a follower of Jesus. If you want to know more about baptism and what is about just drop us a message at office@ssc.church or you can call our church office at (506) 458-8206 – you can find that on our website. One of our team would be glad to get back to you soon.

Last Sunday

Last Sunday we launched into “The Power of Fear”, a two week journey on appreciating and responding to fear. We're not going to cover everything we hit last week, but as an overview, we stopped to look at how ‘the fear of the LORD’ is the starting point for achieving wisdom in life.

Proverbs 14:27 (NIV)

The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, turning a person from the snares of death.

THE FEAR OF GOD GIVES US LIFE CHANGING PERSPECTIVE.

We looked at how when we stand on the edge of the ocean we are amazed, inspired yet overwhelmed with its scope and power, and that is but a small glimpse into what it is to fathom and be overwhelmed with the greatness of God.

This Sunday: Facing the Power of Fear

Perhaps it was the connection to the power of the water that pulled my heart towards the verse we are launching with this week.

Luke 8:22–25 (NIV)

One day Jesus said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side of the lake.” So they got into a boat and set out. As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger.

The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Master, Master, we’re going to drown!”

He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. “Where is your faith?” he asked his disciples.

In fear and amazement they asked one another, “Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him.”

Parallel in **Mark 4:40 (NIV)**

He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

In response to their fear (which you can also read in Mark 4 and Matthew 8), Jesus asks his disciples, “Where is your faith?” “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” “Why are you fearful you of little faith?”

JESUS CONNECTS THE ABILITY TO FACE FEAR WITH OUR FAITH.

This begs some interesting questions:

- Does having faith mean I will never be afraid?
- Do I just need to ‘believe harder’ and I can control what happens to me?

Today, I

Romans 4 – What Is Faith – Faith Is Trust

Faith is trust

Illustration: Do I trust this rope to hold my weight?

Tell the story of Abraham.

Romans 4:18–19 (NIV)

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed (faith) and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead.

Not reading all of Romans 4 one word stands behind faith = trust = believe.

Abraham had faith, he trusted God, but his faith, his trust did not deny reality.

Two Misunderstandings of faith:

FAITH IS NOT THE DENIAL OF REALITY

He looked at his situation with honest eyes, and said, God I trust you in light of what I see, and know you are bigger.

The object of our faith as believers is God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

This is freeing, because we don’t have to have ‘faith in faith’ but we have a ‘trust in God’

Faith is different than Control

We think sometimes if we can muster enough faith that we are the ones with the power to change what is unchangeable.

Read a book recently *Everything Happens for a Reason (and Other Lies I've Loved)* by Kate Bowler. Kate is a professor who wrote the first complete history of the emergence of the Prosperity Gospel in North America.

In her 20's she discovered she had stage 4 cancer, and the book details her journey.

“CONTROL IS A DRUG, AND WE ARE ALL HOOKED, WHETHER OR NOT WE BELIEVE THE PROSPERITY GOSPEL’S ASSURANCE THAT WE CAN MASTER THE FUTURE WITH OUR WORDS AND ATTITUDES.”¹

God does miracles, God changes things, but our trust is in God not our ability to Control.

Fear Not – for I am with you.

Now as for how faith can help us deal with fear, I was struck that there are many times in Scripture when people are instructed to not be afraid, and in many there is a common theme.

Joshua had just taken over for Moses as the leader of Israel. He was about to go into a land where he was outnumbered, God appears to him and says in Joshua chapter 1.

Joshua 1:9 (NIV)

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

The reason Joshua could face leading into difficult circumstances was not that he ‘believed’ there was a creator, or that God is powerful, or that there are rules for life (all of which are true), but God told him would give him courage was the knowledge that God would be with him.

¹ Kate Bowler, *Everything Happens for a Reason*, Random House: 2019. Page 84.

Facing The Darkest Valley

Psalm 23:4 (NKJV)

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.

When the sheep walks with the shepherd, it is not afraid.

- It does not feel like a stronger sheep.
- It doesn't feel more capable.
- It doesn't feel secure because it understands everything.
- The sheep feels secure and protected, because someone who is strong and trustworthy is with them.

STORY – WHEN VIOLET (MY 5 YEAR OLD DAUGHTER)

HAD A BAD DREAM, SHE WANTED ME TO LIE DOWN BESIDE HER.

SHE STILL MAY HAVE A BAD DREAM, THE ROOM IS JUST AS DARK, BUT ONE THING IS DIFFERENT. I WAS THERE, AND BECAUSE OF THAT SHE COULD FACE GOING TO SLEEP AGAIN.

Do we Cry out to God and listen to know God Is With Us

Often we busy ourselves with our coping mechanisms

- Activity
- Distraction
- Anger
- Blame

Do we cry out to God and simply pray, be near me. Help me to see you with me.

Last Sunday I ended my message with the question, “When were you overwhelmed by God?”

Someone asked me later this week, “Chad, when have you been overwhelmed by God?”

- Easter Piano Story – when I survey the wonderful cross
- When we catch a glimpse of the greatness of God, when we see Jesus, we not only are awestruck by who God is, but also the promise of who Jesus is.

Matthew 1:23 (NIV)

“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

God wants to be with you, will you trust your life to Jesus, the one who brings and reveals who God is to us and follow him.