

FEARLESS: LIVING HOPE OVERCOMES FEAR

MAY 30, 2021

WORSHIP

Blessed Be Your Name,
Amazing Grace, Never
Once

WELCOME

What childhood fear did
you have that you were
able to overcome as
you grew older? What
helped you overcome
such fear?

WORD

1 PETER 3:15

15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

(READ 1 PETER 3:13-22 FOR FULL CONTEXT)

What do you think is the most prevalent emotion today, especially during this time of lockdown and pandemic? Would you say it is sadness? Is it anger? Is it loneliness? Or is it FEAR? There are many types of fear: fear of losing your job, fear of what will happen to your loved ones, fear for health and of dying. Is there a way to overcome fear? As we continue our study on 1 Peter, let's look at **1 Peter 3:13-22** to learn how **LIVING HOPE OVERCOMES FEAR**. There was a time, the apostle Peter was characterized by fear. He was afraid of the big waves when Jesus asked him to walk on water. He was afraid of the girl who recognized him as a disciple of Christ, prompting Peter to deny knowing Jesus three times (**John 18:17**). This man who was once full of fear was transformed and became one of the bastions of the Christian faith – what caused him to change?

In **1 Peter 3:13-14**, Peter gives a command – do not fear, and do not be troubled, which was a quotation from the book of Isaiah. What he was saying was if you do what God wants you to do, you have no reason to fear! God consistently tells us “Do not be afraid” – a command repeated over 365 times. In **Matthew 6:31-34**, Jesus tells us do not worry, instead, He commands us to PUT HIM FIRST. How? Seek first His kingdom and righteousness. We are to live a Christ-centered life!

There are 3 important qualities we can learn from **1 Peter 3:13-22** to overcome fear:

1. CHRIST-CENTERED

1 Peter 3:15 commands us to “**sanctify (Gk. Hagiazo) Christ as Lord**” – for many of us we think of Christ as our Savior, but if you look at the New Testament, 700 times Jesus was described as Lord – King of kings, Lord of lords, possessing all authority, Almighty, and All-Powerful. We must sanctify Him in our hearts, meaning there's just one throne in our hearts (and lives), and it has to be for Jesus. In **Luke 6:46** Jesus asks, “why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord’ and do not do what I say?” This shows us that if we really call Him LORD, and sanctify Him as such in our lives, there's got to be a clear intention to follow and obey Him through and through. Many so-called Christians will say with their mouths, “Jesus is my Lord”, but they live lives that are not reflective of Jesus' values, and His commands aren't lived out. Instead of running away from Him, the word “**fear Him**” means to give Him the highest respect and adoration. The reason why you must pursue Jesus is because you worship and follow **because of who Jesus is!** Peter was saying that we must be able to explain our faith, with gentleness and respect. Jesus is either Lord of all, or He is not Lord at all. The question is this: have you surrendered everything to Him? Is Jesus Lord over all the areas of your life?

2. CLEAR CONSCIENCE

Peter continues in **vv. 16-17**, reminding his readers to keep on maintaining a **GOOD CONSCIENCE**. For what reason? It helps you maintain an exemplary behavior, living your life in such a way that your conscience brings glory to the Lord. The power of a Christ-centered life creates in us a desire for a clear conscience. If Christ is central, your life and your actions will always be pleasing unto the Lord. Conscience has to do with moral issues of the heart. Even if you debate and argue with your mind in determining what is right and wrong, your conscience tells you what is right. **Romans 2:14-15** gives us a picture of this – Gentiles who don't have the Word of God and the Law, still do instinctively the things of the law. Further, Paul tells us through **1 Timothy 1:5** and **19** that when we disciple,

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or help somebody grow in Christ, the objective is more than knowledge. We are to teach them how to love like Jesus and hold on to good conscience. To neglect your conscience is to experience spiritual shipwreck. When our conscience bothers us, we know we have to do something in order to live at peace. A clear conscience will help us overcome fear as well.

Hebrews 9:14 reminds us to cleanse our conscience through the Spirit and Word of God. Some people's consciences are ultra-sensitive; for example, the Bible tells us in **Acts 10:15**, what God has cleansed, we must no longer consider as unholy – and yet some people live through legalism. The other extreme is a dead and seared conscience – one that makes us say “**my conscience is bothered**” and yet still do what's wrong. How can we make sure we have clear conscience? We must calibrate it by God's Word (what God has to say), and God's Spirit. You cannot just depend on conscience – it has to align to what the Bible says, and the conviction given to us by the Holy Spirit. Clear conscience does not mean absolute perfection. But when our conscience is bothered, we need to pause, confess our sins, and ask for forgiveness.

3. CONFIDENT IN CHRIST

It's one thing to believe in Jesus, but we must be confident in what He has done for us. **1 Peter 3:18-22** focuses on the victory of Jesus Christ – He died for our sins and paid the absolute penalty of our sinful ways (**v.18**). Our confidence in what Christ did for us, dying to take our place – we get to be presented to God as holy, made pure, our sins being paid for and forgiven, washed by the worthy blood of the Lamb. Jesus “made proclamation (**Gk. Keruzo**)” (**v.19**) in between His death and resurrection – an announcement or a declaration of His victory. Who did He make this declaration to? One school of interpretation says that **v.20** points us people who refused to listen to Noah. Jesus made a declaration to them that Noah was right all along, and He declared His victory to them at that point, being the “ark” or vessel that saved humanity. The other school of interpretation believes that this pertains to spiritual beings, pointing to angels who turned their backs on the Lord (**2 Peter 2:4-5**, pertaining to angels imprisoned, as with **Jude 6**). **Genesis 6:1-2** gives us the term “**sons of God**” pertaining to angels (as with **Job 1:6, Gen. 6:4**). The point is this: JESUS has COMPLETE VICTORY over all powers, and He declared His victory. Through His resurrection, Jesus is a picture of a triumphant victor assuring our salvation! When you are in Christ, you have secured victory.

Do you have confidence in this? The example given was NOAH (**Genesis 6:11-15**). Like today, Noah's time featured a world so corrupt and filled with violence. God decided to destroy the entire earth, and nobody could contradict or stop Him. However, He selected Noah to build an ark, and by faith Noah in reverence obeyed (**Heb. 11:7**) despite having no idea of what rain and flood would be like. Noah simply believed, and therefore obeyed. It is one thing to be faithful, but Noah invested 100 years of faithful obedience by building and preaching about God's coming judgment, all because of his confidence in God's command and promises. To overcome the fear of men, you must be Christ-centered, have a clear conscience, and stick with your confidence in Christ. Are you living this out? **Matt. 24:37-39** tells us one day, Jesus will come again and judgment will surely happen, the question is: are you in the Ark? **Jesus is our Ark** – He is our blessed hope (**Titus 2:13**). He saves us from the judgment that is to come!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

Have you truly sanctified Christ as Lord in your life? In what ways do you say this is evident?

2. Setting It Right

Do you usually end up having debates with those you are trying to win for Jesus? Reflect on where you can improve, and draw near to God for strength, grace, and empowerment. How can you avoid this and keep conversations centered on Christ?

3. Living It Out

How will you practice fearless witnessing for Jesus despite the possibility of being shamed and ridiculed?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people to desire for a clear conscience that is aligned with God's Word. Be ready to witness for Christ confidently and effectively to those around you. Take steps to be a fearless witness in your family, among friends and co-workers of the hope that is in you!

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation
- Wisdom and timely, effective response to the pandemic

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends



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