

“ARE WE TORMENTED BY OUR FEARS?”

Today I've been meditating on I John 5:18, "*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*" The Phrase that really captured my attention was "...fear hath torment..." The word for torment in the Greek is Kolasis, the root meaning is punishment. Investigating further we find this word describes a process, not merely an affect. Also, the fear that produces this torment is not the fear of God that produces a holy awe, but a slavish fear. The same fear a slave would experience under the hand of a cruel taskmaster.

With this in mind, let's ask ourselves some questions: Do we fear the future? Do we fear what man can do to us? (Psalm 27:3) Do we fear because we are living with unconfessed sins? Don't let our fears torment and make slaves of us! Allow me to give a recipe for relief from fear:

1. If the fear in our life is caused by presumptuous sin ( sinning on purpose with full knowledge that what we're doing is wrong) confess and desist.

If life deals us a hard blow simultaneously with willful sin in our life (Psalm 19:13), we immediately go into a guilt complex, and rightly so. However, if we are attempting to live before God an honest, open, pure life, we can rest assured that troubles are alone for His glory. Then when life gives us "a lemon", we can make lemonade!

2. If the source of fear in our life is caused by man, remember our source is God!

Proverbs 29:25 says, "*The fear of man bringeth a snare...*" Simply refuse to fear by following the admonition of the rest of verse 25 of Proverbs 19, "*...but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.*" We cannot do both at the same time. So, since we have to choose, let's choose trusting instead of fearing. Allow these words of Psalm 118:6 to comfort you: "*The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what man can do unto me?*"

3. If we are afraid of the future, remember God has already been there.

Exodus 3:14, "*And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM...*" God dwells in the past, present, and future. Why worry about the future when He is there waiting for us? Like the song says, "Many things about tomorrow I don't seem to understand, but I know who holds tomorrow and I know who holds my hand."

In conclusion, when our country was facing recovery from depression and a World War, speechwriter Napoleon Hill gave these words to President Roosevelt, and the truth is most relevant for today, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

- Pastor Pope -

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