



Key Phrase #9 FEAR NOT, FOR I AM WITH YOU

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God.” Isaiah 41:10 (NIV)

Ever since Adam and Eve’s fall in the Garden of Eden, people have had to deal with FEAR: the anxious, gnawing thoughts that the future will present us with a situation, a challenge, something that we will not have the resources to handle success and that we will therefore suffer loss. The loss may be as minor as an unsuccessful attempt to plan a small social gathering or as major as surviving a life-threatening situation like a natural disaster, war, or fatal disease.

Fear is an extremely powerful force. It literally cripples us. Fear takes our eyes off of truth and focuses on what we many times cannot control.

Throughout Scripture, though, we see the command of God to NOT fear. There are literally hundreds of Scriptures in the Bible that record God’s command of, “Fear Not!”, “Do not be afraid!”. The greatest obstacle to faith is fear. Fear is not something to be taken lightly, nor should it be accepted by God’s people. If you wonder what your level of faith or fear is, listen to your own conversation. Jesus said in Matthew 12:34, “... the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.” Do your words speak more about the problem than of the power of God to overcome it?

Courage to face our greatest fears will not come from our self-confidence, but confidence in God’s powerful promises to act on our behalf. We fight sinful fears and anxieties by fighting against unbelief and fighting for faith in God’s ongoing grace toward us. The way we fight this “good fight” is by meditating on God’s many and rich promises to us and by asking for the help of his Spirit. In Christ, God promises to have our back and be with us wherever we go. Therefore, we can quiet our fears, fulfill our callings, and be strong and courageous by his Spirit. “When I am afraid I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?” (Psalm 56:3–4)

He begins by saying, “When I am afraid . . .” He acknowledges that the danger, the trial, the *fear* is real. But for not long. “When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. . . . in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.” I am afraid for the moment, but I know where to turn when I am afraid. And when I cast my fears on him, he removes all my fears. “I shall *not* be afraid.

What you fear most may be exactly where Satan is targeting you most. He preys on insecurity, anxiety, and distress. He pours the gasoline of lies on our fears — trying to persuade us that God is powerless, indifferent, or distant.

When David put his trust in God, he put his trust, even his praise, in God's *word*. He didn't pray vague prayers of hope, but anchored his pain and longing and fear in specific promises of God. When I am afraid, I cling to you *in your Word*. Instead of dwelling on the terrifying mountains in front of me, I set my mind on what you have said to those who love you. Suddenly, the threats no longer seem threatening because they're being drowned out by a louder voice. We have the command to NOT fear, and God tells us to stop looking at circumstances that would feed our fear. Instead we are to exalt Him, to recognize, to really believe that He is not only God, but that He is OUR God.

What does it mean to trust in God? It means to trust what he says. And what does God say in his word? *I am for you*. And if God is for you, who can be against you (Romans 8:31)? When fears come — and they will come, even today — you know where to turn. You know the voice you need to hear, the voice that instills a peace that surpasses all understanding. And he says to you, "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). And because you are in Him, and He lives in you, through faith, you have overcome the world (1 John 5:4–5).

Discussion Outline

- Review the Key Phrase
- Take time to ponder, pray, and answer the following questions.
 - If I really believed this (key phrase) how would it change my life?
 - In what ways am I walking in this truth and in what ways do I struggle?
 - What tensions would this solve? What tensions may it create?
 - Find a Scripture or Biblical Principle that reflects this truth.
- Write down any thoughts you need to change and any steps you can take to walk in this truth?
- Pray for one another.

Additional Questions

What are you fearful of? What effect does fear have on you?

How can we overcome our fears? Write down a Scripture that comes to mind?

What are some practical ways of overcoming fear? Has God helped you overcome fear in your life? Share a testimony with your group.

What are some practical ways of growing in faith?

Read Isaiah chapter 26. How do these words bring you peace?