

Psalms – The Emotions

Fear

(Ps 55:1-5)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning,
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of lessons on the "Psalms – The Emotions."
 - a. We last looked at **Ps 136**; a powerful psalm on gratitude.
 - i. We looked at how to have an "attitude of gratitude."
 - b. Today we are going to look at yet another powerful emotional psalm, **Ps 55**.
 - i. This psalm teaches one how to properly handle the emotion of Fear.
3. Fear is something everyone has dealt with.
 - a. From the youngest of children to the oldest of adults fear is ever present.
 - i. Whether it is the fear of being startled or the fear of losing one's life fear grips everyone at some point and usually many times in one's life.
 - ii. On March 19, 2001 the Gallup News Service posted an article titled, "Snakes Top List of Americans' Fears." (<http://goo.gl/Gln8C>)

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|------------------------|-----|
| 1. Snakes | 51% |
| 2. Public Speaking | 40% |
| 3. Heights | 36% |
| 4. Spiders & insects | 27% |
| 5. Going to the Doctor | 9% |
 - iii. "...often fears can't even be named until we face them. Some fears are intense and overwhelming; others simmer inside us for long periods of time. Some fears are rational; others are irrational. But we all struggle with fear." (Psalms: Managing Our Emotions by Peck, Timothy pg. 20)
 - b. Though most do not like to be afraid fear, if in its proper emotional state, is not a bad thing.
 - i. This is what we find when we study **Ps 55**.

I. Dwelling On The Possibilities

- A. Continually dwelling on fear & its possibilities
 1. Notice what David writes...
 - i. **Ps 55:1-5** "Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not yourself from my plea for mercy! 2 Attend to me, and answer me; I am restless in my complaint and I moan, 3 because of the noise of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked. For they drop trouble upon me, and in anger they bear a grudge against me. 4 My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of death have fallen upon me. 5 Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror overwhelms me."¹
 2. Almost every Hebrew word for fear is found in these first five verses.
 - i. Notice what fear was doing to David.
 - a. It was making him have troubling thoughts and obsess over the "what ifs" of fear.

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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- b. Dwelling on the "what ifs" makes one restless always looking over their shoulder, always wondering what is next and how bad it will be.
- B. Dwelling on fear makes one want to "run"
 1. Look at David's response to his dwelling.
 - i. **Ps 55:6-7** "And I say, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest; 7 yes, I would wander far away; I would lodge in the wilderness; Selah"
 2. How many times have you felt this way...wanting to run away from that which made you afraid?
 - i. Illustrations...
 3. "Neurobiologists have identified a "flight or fight" reaction in our brains that prepares us to run or defend ourselves." (Psalms: Managing Our Emotions by Peck Timothy pg. 21)
 - i. This brings us to our next reaction to "dwelling on fear and its possibilities."
- C. Dwelling on fear makes one want to "fight"
 1. Once again look at what David writes, inspired by God.
 - i. **Ps 55:15** " Let death steal over them; let them go down to Sheol alive; for evil is in their dwelling place and in their heart."
 2. This verse is an "imprecatory prayer."
 - i. It is a prayer that calls down a curse or death of one's enemies.
 3. This "flight or fight" reaction of dwelling on the fearful possibilities makes one, if not put in proper perspective, "distrust others."
- D. Dwelling on fear makes one "distrust others"
 1. Notice David's almost irrational mistrust here.
 - i. **Ps 55:9-14** "Destroy, O Lord, divide their tongues; for I see violence and strife in the city. 10 Day and night they go around it on its walls, and iniquity and trouble are within it; 11 ruin is in its midst; oppression and fraud do not depart from its marketplace. 12 For it is not an enemy who taunts me— then I could bear it; it is not an adversary who deals insolently with me— then I could hide from him. 13 But it is you, a man, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend. 14 We used to take sweet counsel together; within God's house we walked in the throng."
 2. David pictures the whole city plotting against him.
 - i. Notice these fears stem from a close companion's betrayal vs 14.
 3. Many times the fear that comes from a few makes one fear the masses and distrust everyone that "seems similar."
 - i. Illustrations:
 - a. 9/11 and the fear of every Arab speaking person that got on a plane.
 - b. World War II when America made Oriental concentration camps, specifically Japanese camps.

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II. Finding Peace When In Fear

- A. We must call to God first
 - 1. David sought help from God.
 - i. **Ps 55:16-18** "But I call to God, and the LORD will save me. 17 Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan, and he hears my voice. 18 He redeems my soul in safety from the battle that I wage, for many are arrayed against me."
 - 2. Often we seek peace with friends and family and then God.
 - i. We call them up immediately yet true peace only comes from God.
 - ii. Family and friends can bring a sort of comfort during times of fear but only God can bring real peace.
- B. We must remember who God is
 - 1. David remembers God is the one on the "throne of old."
 - i. **Ps 55:19** "God will give ear and humble them, he who is enthroned from of old, Selah because they do not change and do not fear God."
 - 2. We must always have a proper fear of God who is on the throne of old.
 - i. **Ec 12:13** "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all." (NKJV)
 - 3. It is this proper fear and awe that is a part of keeping one faithful to God.
 - i. **Mt 10:28** "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."
- C. We must cast our cares on God and trust Him
 - 1. David realized that he must rely on God and give his burdens to Him.
 - i. **Ps 55:22-23** "Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you...23...But I will trust in you."
 - 2. We too, if we want peace when we are afraid, must cast our fears or burdens on God and trust Him.
 - i. **I Pt 5:6-7** "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."
- D. We must focus our energy on what we "can control"
 - 1. David knew God would...
 - i. **Ps 55:22b** "...never permit the righteous to be moved."
 - 2. We control whether or not we allow others to make us stumble or sin.
 - i. **I Co 10:13** "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it."
 - ii. **II Pt 2:9** "...the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials..."
 - 3. Thus we control whether or not we allow other things or people to make us emotionally imbalanced.

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CONCLUSION

1. Brethren God does not always "deliver" us from our trials that bring about fears.
 - a. Example: He does not always take away cancer though we have prayed it would be removed.
2. God does always, if we allow Him too, deliver us from our fearful dwellings.
 - a. Example: He might not take away the cancer but He has given us hope in eternal life and thus peace during even the most difficult.
 - i. **Ph 4:7** "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
3. Question: Do you allow fear to paralyze you or do you find peace even when afraid?
 - a. If you find peace continue therein and grow thereby teaching others the same.
 - b. If not, why not take the necessary steps to learn such a wonderful blessing that we have in Christ.
4. Invitation
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Believe Jesus Is The Christ **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**