

## Freedom From Fear

Written by Mac Hammond

---

Before you read this article, I want you to stop and take a quick inventory of your life. Are there areas of it in which the devil seems to be running rampant? Are there situations that seem to be continually cursed instead of blessed?

If so, the subject I'm about to address is almost surely at the root of those problems. You may not have recognized it yet, but it is there. I'm talking about the *force of fear*.

I believe no other single factor has more impact on our success or failure than our ability to handle the force of fear. Fear is a deadly, deadly, *deadly* thing - and it is much more prevalent than many people realize.

The fact is, we live in a culture that thrives on fear. It permeates every facet of our society.

Think about it. From earliest childhood Satan begins subtly programming us to live in fear. He introduces fear into our relationships. He hounds us with fears of being rejected, scorned, or abandoned. As a result, many of us - Christians included - never talk openly with anyone. Instead, we guard the precious secrets of our hearts, terrified that if we reveal them to someone, they'll laugh at us or trample our feelings underfoot.

Fear also affects our attitude toward material possessions. Take a look at the way we handle our money. All too often, it is fear that shapes the way we invest it, the way we spend it, and the way we treat other people who might need some of it. The fear of poverty is a powerful stronghold in many a life.

There's no doubt about it: fear is a prevalent, powerful and deadly force. It's deadly because it's a perversion of faith. To fear is actually to have faith in negative circumstances rather than faith in God's Word. It's having faith in the devil's power to harm you rather than in God's promise to protect you.

Just as surely as faith moves the hand of God, fear moves the hand of the devil. Just as God must have the vehicle of faith to bring blessings into your life, the enemy must have the vehicle of fear to bring curses into your life.

As a Christian, you cannot afford to be complacent about fear. You must identify it and conquer it, or it will destroy you.

But, be warned. Identifying fear isn't as easy as you might think. Even when you don't feel the least bit afraid, fear may still be operating within you. Fear is a spirit, and it may or may not produce the turbulent, anxious emotions we've come to associate with it.

### **Panic or Paralysis**

How then, can you identify fear? By looking for one or two things: Panic or paralysis. Either one of them will keep you from walking in the promises of God.

The first effect, panic, is by far the most visible and blatant manifestation of the force of fear. Panic is uncontrollable terror, irrational fright, an irresistible desire to run away. It can also be

## Freedom From Fear

Written by Mac Hammond

---

expressed in the form of anger. When panic sets in, we may lash out at someone who is not really part of our problem at all.

Panic is the spirit of fear producing the emotion of fear. And though it may be the most easily recognized manifestation of fear, it is *not* the most dangerous.

The most damaging effect of the force of fear is paralysis. It is far more dangerous because it's so subtle. The devil's goal in producing paralysis is simply to keep you from doing anything. He neutralizes your God-given power to change your life by trapping you in indecision.

Many times, I've seen the force of fear "freeze" people into staying in a destructive situation. I spoke to a lady recently, for instance, who was having tremendous difficulty quitting smoking. She knew she should quit. In her heart, she genuinely wanted to quit. But she couldn't. Why? She feared gaining weight.

Every time she began to muster the resolve to quit, fear jumped in and whispered, "You're going to get fat...No one will like you...Your husband will probably leave you..." and so on. The result was paralysis through indecision.

Think about the absurdity of that. She chose to risk cancer, heart disease, and emphysema (not to mention damaging her witness) rather than run the risk of gaining some weight. That's the kind of paralysis the force of fear can produce.

As in that lady's case, paralyzing fear often seems to present a choice between two undesirable evils - such as the health risks of smoking versus the risk of gaining weight. It never presents your situation as one bad option versus one positive (godly) one. You're always choosing between two negative alternatives.

That in itself is a clear warning sign that the force of fear is at work. If you seem to have only negative options, then you can be sure it's the force of fear - and not the Spirit of God - that is presenting your situation to you.

A man came into my office some time ago. He had been praying and believing for a new and better paying job. He'd worked at his present job for ten years and had advanced as far as he could. Yet he was totally dissatisfied, unchallenged, and unfulfilled. What's more, his family was struggling financially.

Then he heard the Word of faith and decided, "Hey, I'm going to pray and believe God for a new job!" Not surprisingly, he was soon offered a new job opportunity. That's what brought him into my office.

Instead of rejoicing that his faith had worked, he was standing there fretting! "I've been thinking," he said, "If I take this job and it doesn't work out - and there's no guarantee that it will work out - then I'll be worse off than I am now."

What did he do? You guessed it. Nothing! He stayed right where he was, paralyzed by the force of fear. The opportunity from God appeared to him as a choice between two evils.

## Freedom From Fear

Written by Mac Hammond

---

As a believer, you *never* have to choose between two negative options. In Jesus, there's always a positive choice: faith!

You don't have to worry about getting fat or getting cancer. With faith, you can quit smoking, stay thin, and never worry about cancer. You can have it all! When you believe for a new job, you can accept that job with confidence, knowing God will prosper you in all you do, and everything you put your hand to will be blessed.

"All right, I'm convinced," you're thinking. "I'm ready to rid myself of fear. But how?"

You can do it with these five simple steps found in God's Word.

### Take A Step

The key to step one is found in 2 Kings, chapter seven. There you'll find a story about a group of lepers who lived outside the city walls of Samaria.

The city was under siege by the king of Syria and no food had entered the city for months. As a result, the people were starving. They soon resorted to eating unclean animals. Ultimately, horror gave way to hunger and people began to eat their own children.

One day outside the city gates, these four lepers began discussing their situation. One spoke up and said, "Why sit we here until we die?"

What a profound question, Church! We need to ask of ourselves: "Why sit we here till we die?"

Imagine this situation. The lepers are sitting outside the city with two seemingly bad choices, when it suddenly dawns on them, "If we just sit here, we know we're going to die. But the Syrians have food, and if we go to them maybe they'll have pity on us and spare our lives. Even if they kill us, we'll be no worse off than we are here." So away they went to the Syrian camp.

If you've read the story, you know that when they reached the camp, they found the Syrians had fled. God had caused the army to hear the thundering noise of chariots and horses. The sound had frightened them so badly, they had taken off and left everything behind - and I mean everything!

Not only did those lepers get fed, they also got rich. When they broke out of their paralysis and took a step, they got their needs met.

That brings us to our first key to overcoming the force of fear - take a step. It doesn't even have to be a step of faith. Those lepers weren't stepping out in faith, they were just stepping out.

Taking a step is a prerequisite to overcoming the force of fear. So, take a step toward the closest promise of God. When I say, "Step toward the closest promise of God," I mean step toward the closest thing that would appear to you to be an open door out of your situation. That's what those lepers did.

## Freedom From Fear

Written by Mac Hammond

---

The Bible says God always provides a way of escape. So, if circumstances have you backed into a corner, look for an open door of escape. Then, even if it's open only a crack, begin to move in that direction.

### **Get Mad!**

The second thing you must do to rid yourself of that destructive force of fear is "get mad."

That's what David did in 1 Samuel, chapter 17. Fear had put the whole army of Israel into paralysis. They feared Goliath so much, they couldn't move. Verse ten tells us that he taunted them saying, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together."

"When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine," The Word says, "They were dismayed and greatly afraid." But when David heard about the situation, he didn't faint with fear. He got mad! He became so righteously indignant that he offered to do something about it. He said to King Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of (Goliath); thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

Instead of encouraging David, however, Saul spoke discouraging words. "Thou are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."

You might as well know right now, handling fear is very often something you have to do alone. That's because very often the devil will use godly people, the very people you respect most, to reinforce the fears you're fighting. Don't be looking to someone else to get rid of your fears for you. It is a charge that you alone have to undertake.

David undertook that charge. He refused to let Saul's words discourage him, and he handled the pressure of fear by getting mad at the enemy. That's what you must do when you recognize fear operating inside you. Get righteously outraged that fear would have the nerve to try to occupy your heart and mind.

### **Remember Past Victories**

Then take step three: Build your confidence in God's ability to deliver you by remembering past victories. In verse 34 of 1 Samuel 17, we can see David doing exactly that. When Saul tried to discourage him from going against Goliath, he said, "Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him...and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God."

Confidence in God's ability to deliver is our greatest weapon against the pressure generated by fear. Past victories are easily lost in the fog of fear and pressure, so you must be diligent to dwell on those confidence-building memories of past victories.

Paul said it well in Hebrews 10:32. "Remember the former days in which you endured a great fight of affliction....And cast not away thy 'confidence' for it hath a great recompense of reward."

You should have a long list of things God has done for you in the past. When fear comes in, get

## Freedom From Fear

Written by Mac Hammond

---

out our list. Remind yourself of the faithfulness of God. Build your confidence.

Once you've done that, you're ready to take the fourth step: Talk to your fear. That's right, talk to it. You can be assured it is talking to you! When Goliath taunted David, threatening to kill him and feed him to the birds and the beasts, David wasn't silent. He talked back.

He said, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: But I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel."

When fear talks to you, talk back to it like David did. Speak to it with stout words of faith. Look at that pile of unpaid bills and say, "How dare you defy God's promise of provision in my life!" Look at that bad report from the doctor and shout, "Who do you think you are to defy God's promise of health in my life!"

The final step in conquering fear is to run - not away from your fear but toward it. Once again, that's what David did. Verse 48 says he "...hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine."

David didn't sit back and let himself be paralyzed by fear. He went through these steps we've just covered and then ran to solve the problem. He didn't just edge his way over, he *ran* toward it!

You need to do the same thing. You are the temple of the Holy Spirit. God dwells within you. The solution to your problem lies within you. That means if you're running away from your problems, you're taking away the solution. So move toward the problem. Move toward the source of the fear and take the solution with you!

Copyright © **Mac Hammond Ministries**  
All rights reserved. Used by permission.