

Coach House Church

BEACONS

FEAR

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What are you scared of ?

Growing up most of my friends were big fans of scary films. I didn't want them to believe that I was not tough enough to watch them so I would watch them, but when the scary bit came on I used to hide my face in a cushion or behind my hands. I was too scared. Even now I'm not able to watch scary films. The only difference is that now I'm ok with it. I don't mind people thinking that I'm chicken.

What is fear?

Fear is essentially an emotion. Interestingly enough fear creates, in our bodies, the same chemical response as happiness, and it can be perceived as fun by some people, like my childhood friends who watched scary movies.

Fear is defined as a "natural emotion and a survival mechanism" by the writer and editor Lisa Fletcher In an article about fear and phobias. She continues by saying the following: "Fear alerts us to the presence of danger or the threat of harm, whether that danger is physical or psychological."

Some physical symptoms of fear include: dry mouth, sweaty palms, upset stomach, fast heartbeat, chest pains, trembling and so on. There are also psychological symptoms that people may experience when they are afraid and these include: Being overwhelmed, feeling upset, out of control, impending death even. Our bodies respond the same way to a real threat as to an imaginary one. When we think we're in danger, but we really are not, that's when we need to go and see the doctor. Our mind is playing tricks on us.

Fear as a survival mechanism is healthy. It boosts our awareness and makes us more able to react to whatever danger we are facing. However, when the threat that we are perceiving, is one that we create by anticipating what could happen that is not healthy. "What if's " are more damaging than we think.

Moses, in the bible, when God sent him to the Israelites to lead them out of Egypt, had a "what if" .. "what if they don't believe you sent me" this is in the book of Exodus chapter 4. When Peter walked on the water to Jesus he got afraid and

started sinking because he anticipated that the waves are going to drown him. He was in no real danger as Jesus was right beside him but Peter did not look at Jesus he looked at the waves and he became afraid.

So, What does fear do?

When the Israelites were just about to enter the promised land and sent spies to spy on the land and its people, they were intimidated by the size of these people and were too afraid to go against them. So they didn't even though God told them to. The same thing happened to Peter when he tried to walk on water. In both situations fear kept people from utilising God's power.

If the Israelites would have been brave enough to listen and believe that God gave them the land they would've been spared from walking through the desert for 40 years. In Peter's case, what would have happened if he kept his eyes on Jesus and carried on walking on water ?

Fear can paralyse us, it can also make us ineffective for God. Fear can also keep us from opportunities in our personal lives as well as in our spiritual lives. If we are to think about situations in which we missed opportunities because we were too afraid, I'm sure we can find a few. Personally, surrendering situations over to God is particularly difficult. I am afraid to loose control.

What do we do with our fears?

When Nehemiah, who was the cup bearer to the king of Babylon, and needed permission to go back to Israel to rebuild the wall, was asked by the king why was he upset, he was very afraid. Whoever spoke to the king back then without permission lost his head. Still he faced this fear and spoke to the king asking for time off his duties and for the resources he needed to rebuild Jerusalem's wall.

Some Fears have to be faced and others have to be handed over to Jesus.

Some weeks ago I went to the prayer meeting on a Thursday evening. I was just going through the motions and just wanted it to finish so I could go home. All that day I was worried about a situation that was out of my control . It was like I mentioned before about anticipating, that's what I was doing and therefore I was really scared and worried.

Normally what happens On Thursday evening is that whoever leads the meeting - normally Andy - presents the prayer list and then we just pray. When we started praying, I said to God "you deal with this worry, I can't think about it any more" and then I carried on praying for the needs that were presented to us. By the end of the prayer meeting my fear was gone; my worries disappeared. I was glad that I came out that evening and that I hadn't stayed at home worrying. I was amazed and grateful how quickly the Lord answered my prayer how quickly he took the

burden away from me. And then I realised that I had lost the day, if I would have done it straight away, If I would have given it to the Lord, I could've enjoyed the day and not been worried and miserable.

Folks please don't be like me, don't keep your fears and your worries to yourself for days on end; bring them to the cross straight away so you can have peace and joy. In the presence of our Lord, fear and darkness dissipate. 1 John 4:18 "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear.... " God is Love

My go to verse when I feel scared is Psalms 56:3-4

"When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise— in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"

Fear amplifies problems and difficulties. The only antidote to fear is God; in his presence fear cannot stand. When you are afraid call upon the Lord and hand it over to him.

In the end i'll read to you Psalms 23.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."



Coach House Church

222 Wellington Road North, Stockport, SK4 2QN
leadership@coachhousechurch.org // 0161 432 5604
Registered charity in England and Wales - 1194822



Alina Adshead
Safeguarding Lead // Trustee
alinaa@coachhousechurch.org