

How to win over stress, fear and worries

It was alarming for me to discover that suicide is the second-leading cause of death in 2022 among people aged 10 to 34 years old. This is staggering! Nowadays, People are gripped with fear, worry and depression. The apostle Paul warned us that in the last days we would face troubled times and that people would cry out for peace and safety.

“But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you....For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman (...)” 1 Thess. 5:1+3

It is evident that things are getting darker and darker, but yet it is an opportunity for us to rise and stand out of the crowd. We are called to shine and to change the very atmosphere we live in. To do so we must be vigilant, unaffected by the culture of fear and insecurity around us.

“But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.” 1 Thess. 5:4-6

FEAR can feel so real but yet it is not

We have heard it said that **FEAR** is the acronym for “**False Evidence Appearing Real**”. It appears real but yet we must realize that it is false because fear comes from the devil who is the father of lies. In the book of Matthieu alone Jesus gave six times the stark command to NEVER worry or fear.

“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life (...)” or “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow (...)” Matt. 6:25, 34

In the world, worry and fear has become so common and familiar that if someone is facing a difficult situation but yet refuses to worry, they are perceived as irresponsible or even worse, uncaring.

Why is Jesus so opposed to it?

- ❖ Worry is completely unproductive. Jesus said *“Can any of you by worrying add a single hour to his life?” CJB Version*
- ❖ Worse yet, fear & worry are counterproductive by making one feel worse which can lead to physical sickness. Medical studies have proven that the leading cause of sickness is stress. We are not physically created to carry cares and stress.

- ❖ Worry and fear have the potential to paralyze and stop faith.
Remember that faith comes from the Word of God (*Rom. 10:17*). Worry and fear will choke that Word making it unfruitful (*Mark 4:19*). Remember Peter who had faith and walked on the water, but when he yielded to fear, he started to sink. Yielding to fear and worry will rob one of the blessings of God that are accessed by faith and to be brutally honest, fear is putting faith in the devil. Who wants that?
- ❖ Worry and fear will distract you from God's purpose and plan for your life.
"But keep watch on yourselves, or your hearts will become dulled by carousing, drunkenness and the worries of everyday living, and that Day will be sprung upon you suddenly like a trap!" Luke 21:34 CBJ Version
It is sobering to read that worry and fear is like drunkenness, making one numb, asleep and unaware of surroundings. Worry and fear will even cloud one's vision.

So what do we do if we cannot worry?

- ❖ Share your problem with God. Give it to Him in prayer.
"Don't worry about anything; on the contrary, make your requests known to God by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving" Phil. 4:6 CJB
- ❖ Trust Him to solve the problem.
"Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act." Ps. 37:5-7 ESV
"Trust GOD from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own." Prov. 3:5 MSG
To put it simply, stop trying to figure it all out because God has His own ways and timing. Just trust Him!
- ❖ We must leave the problem to Him once and for all. Do not start worrying about it when things don't happen immediately.
"Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved." Ps. 55:22
"Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully." 1 Pet. 5:7 AMP
Think about it, God wants to make you His care, His #1 priority, you are His personal concern. The verb **"to cast"** in Greek is *EPIRRHIPTŌ*, which gives the idea of unloading something on someone but also throwing something as far as possible. Imagine a baseball player trying to throw a ball as far as possible. You get the picture!
God wants you to unload your problem over onto Him, but as far as possible so that you won't pick it back up again because of course the devil will do his best to remind you of it everyday.

You must be vigilant and watchful

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith... 1 Pet. 5:8-9

- ❖ How & where will the devil attack us? In our thought life! The Word tells us to be vigilant and wise because it is easy to lay down all defense by simply thinking that those thoughts are just our own. No, they come from the enemy and we must stop them. I remember Kenneth E Hagin saying that "one cannot keep a bird from flying over their head but they can keep him from building a nest in their hair!"

- ❖ We must resist the devil by stopping these thoughts from taking roots in your head and your heart.

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" 2 Cor. 10:4-5

If you do not resist that thought, it could become an argument - a debate between you and God - that in turn could become a stronghold in your mind and heart. A stronghold is an argument in the mind that holds one captive. This is how atheism, Darwinism, communism and all the "ism" came to be. When thoughts of fear & anxiety come, you must resist them, bring them under captivity, refuse to dwell on them or they will become bigger in your mind. Down the road, these very thoughts could hold you captive, like a fortress.

- ❖ How can you overcome these thoughts?

Would you mind indulging me by doing this small experiment?

For a few seconds, think about what you would like to eat for lunch or dinner... then start speaking out loud your name, your birthdate and place of birth. What happened to your thoughts? They stopped, right? The moral of the story is that thoughts will go, not by commanding them to do so but by replacing them with faith filled words. This is how Jesus resisted the devil. I believe He was tempted just as we are through thoughts. Jesus overcame by opening His mouth.

"(...) It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" Matt. 4:4

"(...) it is written again, you shall not tempt the lord your God." Matt. 4:7

"(...) For it is written, 'you shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve" Matt. 4:10

Paul tells us in *Ephesians 6:17* that the Word of God is our sword against the enemy.

Therefore, it is crucial to protect your heart from all negative talk but rather strengthen your heart with the Word of God. The media are filled with negativity that will feed the fears and worries. *Prov. 4:23* tells us to be careful with what we listen and watch.

Spending time praying in the Holy Spirit is a great way to strengthen your spirit man.

Finally, find scriptures to help you overcome worry, meditate on them, it will fill your quiver with powerful arrows against the enemy. Meditating on God's faithfulness and love, will cast out fear. Here are a few, but I would advise you to find your own:

"God has not given me a spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind." 2 Tim. 1:7

"(...) The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want..." Ps. 23:1

"(...) Greater is He who is in me than he that is in the world." 1 John 4:4

"The Lord is my light & my salvation whom shall I fear, He is the strength of my life of whom shall I be afraid" Ps. 27:1

A testimony - I was bound with fear but now I am free!

Dear Audrey,

I have listened to you for the last few years as you have spoken and taught at Healing is Here conferences. Very powerful, very anointed, and full of His heart and love!

I have received healings and freedom from so many things but had allowed the enemy to bind me with fear bordering on phobia around a number of conditions and diseases related to my immune system. And then covid hit and the doctors insisted that I mask up, avoid people, and pretty much stay home. I allowed my mind to entertain what they, and our government, mandated.

I'd still go pray and minister healing to others but always wore my mask, or do it over zoom or by phone. The Holy Spirit had been nudging me to break free of the fear yet I seemed immobilized by it in my mind. Then, one day, He said to me after I prayed for someone, that I was limiting Him, not surrendering to Him, and blocking many blessings and work that God had for me. I was also not modeling Christ to others related to healing by wearing a mask. After all, what would Jesus have done... This all hit me hard in the gut yet I knew the truth of it. That same day, I received a flyer from Charis Bible College in Phoenix notifying me that you would be coming to Phoenix to teach and minister at their campus and to please join them (I graduated from Charis a few years ago). My first reaction was excitement to be able to see you in person, followed quickly by fear of being exposed to so many people and getting really sick. The Holy Spirit whispered in my ear very clearly that I would get set free if I was obedient and went, NOT to wear a mask, and believed. I promptly reserved a spot for the meeting. Then I went to your website, saw that you had a teaching that dealt with fear and worry, read your blog on it, and also purchased and listened to the download on it. It spoke directly to me in a way that truly moved my spirit. I knew that I knew that I had my victory even before going to the meeting. At Saturday's meeting, I was totally filled with God's peace the whole time. Absolutely no fear. Only love, encouragement and gratitude, and many tears on my part. The teaching was wonderful!

To move my mountain which had seemed so daunting ended up being so easy, and the Lord used you mightily in assisting me with that. I have not worn a mask since that Saturday that you came to town. Even being a Charis Bible Studies leader and having taught on many topics (including God Wants You Well several times and The Believer's Authority) and leading a whole year of the Healing University didn't free me of my own fear. Many others got set free but I had remained in bondage. NOT anymore. I just had to hear the truth in a way that would speak to me personally in my spirit and heart. You did that. Thank you...

Blessings, and much gratitude to you and your work.