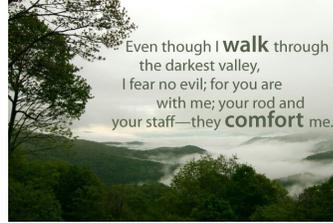




Today's Lesson
The Sum of All Fears
Power Point notes available
at:
www.unityofbakersfield.org

The Sum of All Fears



Someone once said that fear is like a cancer that weaves itself into our lives, our dreams, our hopes, our aspirations.

The Sum of All Fears



Rev. Michael Wiley on fear:
It's dark out, and you're home alone. You're wrapped up in a warm blanket reading your favorite book. You see it and hear it at the same time: The front door suddenly moves.

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Your breathing speeds up--your heart races--Your muscles tighten. A split second later, you realize it's the wind. No one is trying to get into your home. For a split second, you were so afraid that you reacted as if your life were in danger; your body had automatically initiated the fight-or-flight response that is critical to survival. But really, there was no danger at all.

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What happened to cause such an intense reaction? What exactly is fear?

Fear is a chain reaction in the brain that starts with a stressful stimulus and ends with the release of chemicals that cause a racing heart, fast breathing and energized muscles, among other things, also known as the fight-or-flight response.

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Charles Fillmore had this to say about the sum of all our fears:

Fear is one of the most subtle and destructive errors that the carnal mind in man's experiences. Fear is a paralyzer that weakens both mind and body.

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Jesus, the Master Teacher, had what Charles Fillmore called “The God-consciousness.” Because of this consciousness he was able to say: *Fear Not! For it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom!*

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Here is a list of some of the fears that people from all walks of life encounter:
Fear of self, fear of trusting, fear of loving, fear of others, fear of failure, fear of making decisions, fear of intimacy, fear of aging, fear of losing a friend or loved one, and the list could go on.

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From the war in the middle east to the fight on terrorism, fear as a tool is being used by both camps to advance their own agenda.

When this momentum starts rolling in our minds anything that ever looked liked, felt like, seemed liked fear came rushing from our subconscious storehouse of experiences to link up with and affirm: *“They must be right—so I better be afraid.”*

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Fear can be expressed in healthy normal ways. It’s the false fear that is harmful to our self-esteem, injurious to our sense of well-being, and destructive to our overall purpose.

It this type of fear that keeps us in bondage, in our prison cells of despair and is therefore not a psychological problem, but an educational problem! Case in point:

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Jim is raised in a family were all their needs are met: there is plenty of money, food, clothing—the lack of anything is never a concern. However, the family motto is: “Trust no one, keep all you do a secret, look over your shoulder and watch the shadows for anyone that may try to get what you have.”

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Jim enters adulthood capable of taking care of himself but is never able to find and keep a lasting, meaningful relationship because he was taught to fear what other people might do.

In the movie South Pacific the young navy Lt. falls in love with one of the native girls and is torn between her and his family’s belief system. He sings the song “You Got to Be Taught” to hate. The same can be said about our fears.

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We can reeducate ourselves by looking at how we choose to deal with the sum total of the fears in our lives. It starts by really listening to the little non-stop voice of “who do you think you are?” inside of our heads that keeps saying: *You better not change your situation, or; there’s nothing better out there for you, or; you’re not good enough to make it on your own, or; hey, if you take this change, what if you fail—boy will you be sorry!*

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How we deal with the sum of all fears is a choice we make based on the experiences that formed our belief system. For some people, fear causes them to make a choice to do something, and for others it a choice about doing nothing. This is the difference between choosing to live a life as a victor or victim. There is no right or wrong here—only choice.

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Understanding how we handle fear in our lives can help us move to a new level of choice in seeing how it affects our sense of peace and wellbeing so that we can make the changes we need to make.

There are two types of educational fears people are taught and accept for themselves as fact during their lives: those that “Happen” and those that require “Action.”

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Those fears that just happen are: aging; being alone; kids leaving home; natural disasters; loss of financial security; change; dying; war; illness; accidents; rejection; success; failure; being vulnerable.

Those fears that require action are: making decisions; changing careers; ending or beginning a relationship; asserting oneself; public speaking; making a mistake; intimacy; loss of self image; helplessness; being a victim.

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Think for a moment about this question:
If you knew you could handle anything that came your way, what would you possibly have to fear?

NOTHING! This was Jesus’s message to us. What is there to fear when you have God waiting to provide for you all that you will ever need or want? Healing, prosperity, peace of mind, harmony, order, wisdom, justice can be yours.

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One of the best affirmations that I used to help me through the times I felt fearful was:
“Whatever happens to me, God and I will handle it.”

In her book [Feel The Fear and Do It Anyway](#), Dr. Susan Jeffers gives us five basic truths about fear. They are:

- 1) The fear will never go away as long as we continue to grow.

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- 2) The only way to move beyond the feeling of the fear of doing something is to do it.
- 3) The only way to feel better about yourself is to do something you love and enjoy.
- 4) I'm not the only one who feels fear when entering unfamiliar territory.
- 5) Pushing through the fear generates courage and faith creating a sense of victory instead of living under the control of fear as a helpless victim.

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The sum of all fears comes down to this:

F ace it

E xplore it

A ccept it

R espond to it ...

With love, as the writer of 1 John 4:18 said, "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear."