

Freedom From Life's Tormenting Fears

© 1991-2004 Chris N. Simpson, Houston, Texas; All rights reserved.

Presented by <http://www.newwineonline.com>

Few things are as exciting as finding new revelation in the Word! In fact, I've discovered that new revelation brings fresh faith! And fresh faith means greater freedom from the things that keep you in bondage.

If you struggle with any level of anxiety in your life, there's a certain Greek word that you really need to know about. It's only used only five times in the New Testament. Let's look at one of the places where it's found, in a fairly familiar verse in the Gospel of John:

"Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you. Not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27)

Phobias – The Most Common Sort of Fear

Every believer knows this wonderfully comforting verse. However, unless you research it in the Greek, you can't know what's really being said. There you'll find something very fascinating. Let me explain. The Greek word for 'fear or afraid,' most frequently used by the New Testament writers, is the word 'phobos.' Phobos basically means to be frightened or intimidated by something. It's from phobos that we get the word 'phobia' - the state of anxiety or fear. In fact, the Greek word phobos is found 46 times, most often translated 'fear.' This is the fear you experience when you've been startled or scared.

Now, in this particular passage in John's gospel, the word 'afraid' is translated from a completely different Greek word. That word is 'deiliao,' or the derivation 'deilos.'

Deilos – A Deadly Kind of Fear

This Greek word is found only five times in all of the New Testament. It literally means to be cowardly and timid; to have a shameful lack of courage or endurance. It's very different than 'phobos.' In fact, this type of fear is severely condemned in the Bible. Consider the following verse:

"But the fearful and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and whoremongers and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars will have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." (Revelations 21:8)

This verse lists all of the awful, evil things that will send a person to the lake of fire. What's amazing, though, is that the first thing mentioned, alongside murder, sorcery and idolatry, is 'fear.' This is another place (of a total of five) where we find the Greek word 'deilos.' Apparently, the attitude of moral cowardice is so great that it ranks along with such heinous sins as murder, sorcery and idolatry.

God Has Not Given A Spirit of "Deilos"

'Deilos' is translated another time in the New Testament in a verse popular with most believers:

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power, of love and sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:7)

In other words, God has not given us a spirit of moral cowardice, timidity, or a shameful lack of endurance or courage. That's what this verse really means. Knowing the Greek term adds new depth to a familiar verse.

Let's consider for a moment what Paul is saying. He calls the fear of moral cowardice a 'spirit,' not your typical 'phobia' fear, but a fear stemming from demonic influence. Now we need to understand that fear, the tendency to be afraid, is a human emotion. Everyone experiences fear at times. Anyone who drives a car on a busy expressway knows what I'm talking about. There is a certain level of healthy, normal fear. It can keep you sensible.

But there's another type of fear, one filled with dread and anxiety of things to come. When you yield to such emotions, you open yourself to the influences of a demonic spirit of fear - specifically, a spirit of 'deilos' fear: attitudes of moral cowardice and timidity. In this verse we're told that the spirit of fear has three specific objectives. What are they?

Fear Strips You of Power

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power...."

The word 'power' here is the Greek word 'dunamis,' which means 'might, miraculous force.' We get the terms 'dynamic' and 'dynamite' from this Greek word.

So, this verse tells us that the spirit of fear wants to strip and weaken the 'dunamis' power in your life. Once you listen to and yield to a spirit of fear, it will rob you of power and cause you to walk around weak, discouraged and defeated. Does that describe the week you've just been through? Did you feel discouraged, defeated and devoid of power? If so, you may have been under the influence of a spirit of fear.

Fear Perverts Real Love

The second thing the spirit of fear does is seek to pervert any real love in your life.

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power, of love...."

The Greek word for love in this verse is 'agape' -- which means unconditional love. It's an unselfish love that always puts others first. This is the love that God has for His people and that He's called them to have for one another.

Unfortunately, many have a distorted notion of love. They live their lives emotionally addicted to 'conditional' love. We all know people like that. In fact, you, the reader, may be caught in such an emotional trap: tossed about by fears of rejection that keep you from giving (or receiving) true 'agape' love from others.

This distortion of true love is often the work of a spirit of fear. Yet, ironically, it is 'agape' love that overcomes the fears in your life, for we're told that,

"Perfect love casts out fear." (1 John 4:18)

Fear Brings Chaos to the Mind

The third thing the spirit of fear seeks in a believer's life is to bring chaos and confusion to the thought life.

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power, of love and sound mind."

The phrase 'sound mind' in the Greek is 'sofonismos:' a disciplined, self-controlled mind. If this spirit can't emasculate your power, or pervert your love, then it will seek to invade your mind with chaos and confusion by constant interjections of anxiety, worry, and apprehension.

Few things are as frustrating as a chaotic thought life. When you try to get still before the Lord, your thought life is continually interrupted with worries and anxieties. This is what the spirit of 'deilos' wants to do. It's a demonic power ready to attack anyone who consistently yields to the voices of fear in their life.

To sum up what's just been said, the spirit of fear will sap you of power, pervert your ability to love, and cause you to lose control of your thoughts. But the good news is that God has not given us a spirit of fear! It's very possible to be totally liberated from this spirit!

As I said before, there are five references in the New Testament where the Greek word 'deilos' is located. We've just looked at three. There are still two other places where it can be found. One of them is in Matthew 8:26. Since it refers to the exact same story as found in Mark, we'll just focus on the story in Mark. Let's consider the following:

"When the evening was come, Jesus said to His disciples, "Let us pass over to the other side."
(Mark 4:35)

Promises On the Sea Shore

Here we see Jesus, standing by the Sea of Galilee, inviting His disciples to get in a boat and cross to the other side. Although this verse seems simple enough, a close examination reveals a powerful truth. Jesus says, "Let's pass over to the other side." In saying this, He is, in effect, making a promise to His disciples. Standing on one side of the lake, He's telling them that they are going to go to the other side. That's a promise. It's also interesting that He uses the words 'pass over.'

What does all this mean to us? First, in considering this story allegorically, we're told that the Lord has a particular 'Passover' that He wants His followers to experience.

If you recall, the first 'Passover' recounts the time God gloriously delivered Israel from the 'angel of death' when it passed through the land. We're going to find an amazing allegory of deliverance in this story as well.

Second, even as Jesus promised His disciples that they'd end up on the other side of the lake, so He's given many promises to us as well. However, most believers have a hard time taking Him at His word. Many find it hard to believe the Lord when He says something to them. Why is that? It's usually because they haven't experienced His faithfulness, and thus find it hard to trust. That's why we have to go through life's 'Passovers' - to learn over and over that all that He's said will always come to pass. Let's look at the next verse:

"After they sent away the multitude, they took Jesus as He was in the ship. And there arose a great storm of wind and the waves beat at the ship until it was full." (Mark 4:36-37)

The Inevitable Opposition

Anytime you try to overcome things in your life, the devil will be there to oppose you. If the enemy is frightened by anything, it's a believer walking in boldness, confidence and godly courage. And so, with everything at his disposal, Satan will attempt to keep you bound in passivity, fear and moral cowardice. That 'great storm of wind' was sent to hinder them on their journey across the lake.

Notice, the wind drove the waves. The waves had no power of themselves to sink the ship. It took the blowing of the wind for the waves to be threatening. It says the waves 'beat' at the ship. The word 'beat' in the Greek means pummeled or punished. The waves, driven by the wind, punished, smashed, and hammered at the boat out in the middle of the lake.

When Fear Attacks

This is a clear picture of the emotional devastations fear can bring upon a person. The Apostle John tells us that

"Fear has torment." (1 John 4:18)

Few things torment your thought life like a "battering" anxiety.

What's really agonizing, though, is when fear travels from your mind into your emotions. It may start with an anxious thought. Then, as you give heed to the thought and fail to resist it, the thought becomes a heavy dread. Before you know it, anxiety goes to the pit of your stomach and you're miserable.

This is what this passage reveals. The wind speaks of the spirit of fear. The waves speak of your emotions. The wind pushes the waves. It's a spirit of fear that often stirs up those deep, gut level pangs of worry and anxiety.

This passage also illustrates how demonic spirits work through your flesh. Satan works through the 'old man'. You'd be just as wrong to say the devil is totally responsible for things that happen as you would to say it's all your own doing. No, the truth is - it's a cooperative effort. When you yield to the flesh (by listening to voices of fear), you give the devil a place to operate in your soul. Then, having opened the door to him, your emotions are agitated by the invading spirits of fear. So what should you do then? Let's read on:

"And He was in the back part of the ship asleep on a pillow. And they woke Him and they said, 'Master, don't you care that we're perishing?'" (Mark 4:38)

Why In the World Was Jesus Asleep

Have you ever noticed that when a really big storm comes along in your life, Jesus often seems to be asleep in the back of the boat? Why is that? What's the message here?

This passage describes the dark night of the soul that every believer must at one time or another face. There will be times when Jesus seems asleep and oblivious to what is happening in your life. Your boat is steadily filling with water and God seems a thousand miles off. The familiar sense of His presence is gone. The inner comfort of knowing He's near has disappeared. Has that happened to you? Have you ever felt abandoned by the Lord? Have you felt like you were being attacked by every demon in hell? And when you cried out in desperation, you couldn't find God anywhere?

Then you try to remember, "What was it He said on the shore? Something about getting to the other side. He must not have known about this storm! Why isn't He helping me? I'm going to drown! Doesn't He care?"

In the Storm, The Truth Comes Out

Do you see what's happening here? It was in the storm that all that was hidden in His followers' hearts came to the surface. All their fears and doubts were exposed. Listen to what they said to Jesus, "Master, don't you care that we're perishing?" Jesus said that from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. In other words, by considering what someone says, you can usually get a good idea of what's hidden in their heart. So, in considering what these disciples are saying, one thing stands out more than any other. In fact, it's the root of all of their fears. What is it?

They didn't believe the Master cared for them! That was their basic problem. Their greatest fear was that when the chips were down, Jesus would fail them and reject them. Over the years, I've found the same to be true in most everyone I've ministered to. The deepest root of everyone's life tends to be rejection: a fear that when times really get rough, God won't come through for them. Most folks won't admit this, or may not even realize it. But in the height of the storm, it often comes rushing out.

Rooting Out Deep Hurts and Rejections

The verses we've just looked at contain powerful truths that can set you free! God wants to root out those hidden rejections and hurts in your soul. He knows that those rejections may be why a spirit of fear has a hold in your life. So He has to pull back at times and allow all hell to break loose in your life. Why does He do that?

He pulls back so that the old wounds and deep hurts of the past will come up. Then, once you see the things that have been hidden inside, you can confess them and He can heal them. Deliverance is not automatic. You must first acknowledge those areas in your life that give ground to the enemy. Then, you must bring those things to Jesus. At that point, He takes over. It then becomes His problem and not your own!

Remember the verse:

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse our hearts from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

If you'll notice, the first five words of that verse are something you must do, “If we confess our sins.” Then, the sixth word is “He!” He takes it from there. After you do the confessing, it then becomes His job to forgive, cleanse and deliver. Let's go on in our story:

“And He arose and He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace be still.” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.” (Mark 4:39)

Instant Peace

This verse describes one of the most remarkable things Jesus ever did. In the middle of a raging storm, with the wind and waves battering the ship, Jesus stood and rebuked the wind! Then, He simply spoke to the sea and it was instantly calm! As far as you could see, the water was smooth and quiet, covered with foam from the suddenly stilled waves.

Did that sober the disciples? You bet it did! They said, “Just who is this man?” They still didn't understand because their hearts were hardened by unbelief.

And that's often our problem. We just don't understand who He is or why He does the things He does! Do you really believe that Jesus can bring "instant" perfect peace into your life? You may say, "Yes, I believe He can. But I rarely actually experience it. Why is that?"

It's usually because He's waiting for something. He's waiting for you to own and confess the real problem. He allows the storm to rage until you can honestly see the deep hurts and rejections that feed a spirit of fear in your life. Then, when you've seen them and have brought them to Jesus, He'll stop the storm right then and there. There's no more need for the storm. Why? Because the purpose of the storm is to bring out what's hidden in your heart.

Rebuking the Source, Speaking to the Symptom

Let's consider for a moment. Just what exactly did Jesus do to instantly stop the wind and waves? It said He first rebuked the wind and then second, He spoke to the waves. Pay close attention, for in these words we find the secret to dealing once and for all with the spirit of fear. Notice, He rebuked the source and spoke to the symptom. Most folks usually get it backwards. They rebuke the symptoms and ignore the source! As a result, they rarely experience any lasting healing or deliverance. You see, it's the wind that drives the waves. The wind represents the spirit of the enemy. Interestingly, the word 'wind' in the Greek (pneuma) can be translated either 'wind' or 'spirit.' So, the real problem in the storm was not the waves, even though the waves were all that the disciples could see. No, the real problem was something they could not see – the wind!

So it is with us. While it's easy to focus on the symptoms, that is, all that you can see about a problem: a troubled mind, a sickness in the body, or a broken relationship - the source of the problem is usually something you can't see: a spirit of fear, infirmity or jealousy. So what to do?

How To Practically Do It Yourself

First, you need to rebuke the spirits that are behind the scene, driving the symptoms. Then, and only then, can you speak peace to the emotions, or the situation.

Since this may be a new concept for many readers, let's consider how this works practically. When you find yourself going through a storm - that is - under attack emotionally, intellectually or spiritually, spend some time worshipping the Lord.

Then, after you've entered His presence, ask Him to reveal things about yourself that you're either not seeing or not wanting to see. By the way, this is really the key to the whole thing.

"God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble." (1 Peter 5:5)

You must come to Him in humility if you hope to see an end to the storm.

After spending quality time with the Lord, ask Him to send His Spirit to help you fight and resist the enemy. It's the anointing that breaks the yoke of bondage in your life. You must be cloaked with the Spirit's anointing to successfully restrain and resist the powers of darkness.

Once you sense the Lord's peace and power resting upon you, begin to calmly rebuke the spirit or spirits that are the driving force behind the scene. Then, speak peace and rest to the symptoms or situation. You'll be amazed at how quickly things change! Now let's read on in our story:

"And Jesus said unto them, 'Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?'" (Mark 4:40)

Why Are You So "Deilos"

After calming the raging sea, Jesus then turned to His astonished disciples and asked them why they were so full of fear. The word 'fear' here is the term 'deilos' in the Greek. It's that same term referred to earlier that means to be cowardly and timid; to have a shameful lack of courage or endurance.

Jesus wasn't just asking them why they were so frightened. To simply be frightened while sitting in a boat during a raging storm is quite understandable. No, what Jesus really asked was, "Why are you men so timid and acting like cowards?" In other words, He was asking them why they'd allowed a spirit of fear to come into their lives.

He could very well be asking you the same question: "Why do you at times respond so timidly to the things that occur in your life? Why do you allow a spirit of fear to take hold of your mind and emotions?" In other words, "Where's your fight?" If you find yourself a victim to the periodic oppression of such 'deilos' fears, let's consider three practical things that you can do to rid your life once and for all from those tormenting anxieties.

Three Steps To Defeating the "Deilos" Fears In Your Life

1st) Confess to the Lord the sins of fear, spiritual timidity and of doubting His faithfulness.

2nd) Resist and rebuke the spirit of fear in all of the ways it manifests in your life. Stand firm against it, forbidding it to operate in your mind and emotions. It may be that you'll need some ministry of deliverance from others at first, to help you overcome a deeply entrenched spirit.

3rd) Maintain your freedom through disciplined, consistent times of praise (praise breaks).

Consider the following:

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And God's peace, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

Praise Breaks and Peace Breaks

These verses hold the key to freedom from 'deilos' fear. Verse six describes the 'PRAISE BREAK.' Stop often throughout the day, if only for three minutes or so, to worship the Father in spirit and truth. Once you develop this discipline, you'll be delighted to see how it will reduce the anxieties that rob your life of joy.

Verse seven then shows us the Lord's 'PEACE BREAK.' If you can, simply spend a few minutes in quiet stillness after you've had a praise break. In the Psalms, we're told we must "Be still and know He is God,"

and that, "He leads us by the still waters." As you learn to be quiet before the Lord, His still small voice will become clearer - thus freeing you more and more from those tormenting voices of fear and discouragement.

Just As He Said, They Passed Over to the Other Side!

If you recall, Jesus made a promise to His disciples as they stood on the shore. He said, "Let's pass over to the other side." Let's see how the story concludes - in the first verse of the next chapter:

"And they came over unto the other side of the lake, into the country of the Gadarenes."
(Mark 5:1)

Exactly as Jesus had said - they came over to the other side of the lake. Interestingly enough, we're told this in a new chapter. Yet, isn't that how life really is? God's promises always do come to pass. It's just that they generally do so only after you've moved into a 'new chapter' in life. Usually, however, we hardly ever realize it. What you so fretted about back there in those howling winds and waves, Jesus ultimately brings to pass. But by then, you're usually focused on something new that you're learning to trust Him to do.

In either case, know assuredly that God is faithful, and will always watch over His word to perform it!

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1)

www.newwineonline.com