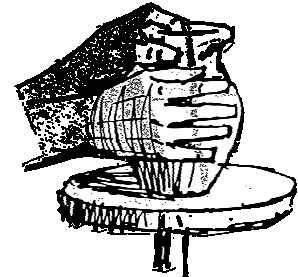


His Workmanship: Westside

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."
—Ephesians 2:10*



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Isaiah 64:8

Fear Factor, 1 Peter 3:13-15, by Larry L. Thompson

"Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. 'Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened.' But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect," 1 Peter 3:13-15.

Black Bart was a professional thief whose very name struck fear as he terrorized the Wells Fargo stage line. From San Francisco to New York, his name became synonymous with the danger of the frontier. Between 1875 and 1883 he robbed 29 different stagecoach crews. Amazingly, he did it all without firing a shot. Because a hood covered his head, no victim ever saw his face. He never took a hostage and was never trailed by a sheriff. Instead, he said he didn't need to fire a shot; all he had to do was to use fear to paralyze his victims. *"Fear, the face of the unknown, was my weapon of choice, my weapon of intimidation."* His sinister presence and his threat of words were enough to overwhelm the toughest stagecoach guard.

We live in a changing world marked by terrorism, wars, and the constant threat of nuclear, biological or chemical extinction. But whatever fearful situation we may face, there are un-

changing Biblical truths that are forever the same: We fight fear by anchoring our lives in truth—Our MASTER never changes, our MESSAGE never changes, and our MISSION never changes.

Fear is a strong emotion, and people face a huge range of fears every day. Fears have even been given psychological names. Peladophobia: fear of baldness or fear of bald people. Aerophobia: fear of drafts. Porphyrophobia: fear of color purple. Chaetophobia: fear of hairy people. Levophobia: fear of objects on the left side of the body. Dextrophia: fear of objects on the right side of the body. Auroraphobia: fear of northern lights. Calyprophobia: fear of obscure meanings. Thalassophobia: fear of being seated. Stabisbasiphobia: fear of standing and walking. Odontophobia: fear of teeth. Graphophobia: fear of writing in public. Phobophobia: fear of being afraid.

In Christ there is no need for fear. Peter tells us that:

- Our Suffering is Inevitable
- Our Situation is Intimidating
- Our Solution is Infallible

Fear is something every one of us will experience. For instance, many peo-

ple fear change. When new situations in family or relationship or surroundings change, then we may be frightened. Experiencing fear is normal; however, to be paralyzed by fear is an indication that we question God's ability to take care of us.

1. Our suffering is inevitable, vs. 13-14. *"And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed."* Peter's question must have hung in the air for a long moment when the Christians who first received this letter heard it. They were no strangers to fear and suffering and indeed had suffered for doing good. Peter was addressing strong believers who were zealous for the Lord; these were people who "burned with zeal" to desire earnestly to obey the Lord! What was it that they were so passionate about? Serving Christ regardless of how scary the consequences! Peter was not dismissing the fear and suffering that was all too real to them. In fact, he was telling them that as a result of their righteous lives and God's care, their blessedness would turn their fear and suffering from themselves to those who were persecuting them, and their suffering would actually result in their joy.

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“The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe,”
—Proverbs 29:25

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Someone asked C.S. Lewis, “Why do the righteous suffer?” “Why not?” he replied. “They’re the only ones who should be able to take it.” There is something about facing our fears that allows our faith, if it a genuine faith, to shine! What good is our faith if it’s never tested? The trying of our faith is more precious than gold, Peter had said in 1:7. Greatness often lies hidden beneath an easy or comfortable life, only to emerge when we are forced to face our fears in Christ.

Suffering and failure tear at our hearts and sap our strength. We may grow weary, afraid of the future, and discouraged because of suffering, suffering we may believe is undeserved and unwelcome. Could it be that while we see suffering as our enemy, God wants to use our fears and pain as a friend? As a friend who will take us by the hand and heart and show us the depths of God’s sufficiency? “*Who is going to harm you if you are zealous to do good? But even if you should endure pain for what is right, you are blessed.*” Friends, suffering is inevitable. Face it in the strength of the Lord! Be passionate about your faith, desire God fervently.

The believer who suffers persecution will be blessed by God. How can a person who is suffering persecution be blessed? If we focus our minds and lives upon the things of this world, we can be stricken in a heartbeat! We can suffer a stroke, have an accident, go through bankruptcy, lose everything we have through an economic slump or stock market crash. A person of the world can suffer such a crushing blow that fear destroys him and leaves him hopeless and helpless in life; but that is not the case of a true believer. The mind and life of the true believer is focused upon Jesus Christ; therefore,

no matter what he fears or suffers, he still has his most cherished possession—Jesus Christ, the very Son of God. He knows that Jesus Christ is going to look after him, protect him from his fears and sufferings, and take care of him—that Christ, by authority of His word, will ultimately work everything out for good. The Christian who possesses Christ and all the promises of Christ will live in victory over fear.

Consider a partial list of God’s promises to us in the face of our worst fears:

- *God will work all things out for good,* Rm 8:28.

- *God will provide all the necessities of life,* Mt 6:33.

- *God will give us His glory in the face of insults,* 1 Pet 4:14.

- *The life of Christ is best manifested through us in fear and suffering,* 2 Cor 4:11.

- *God provides great rewards for those who stand in fear and suffering,* Mt 5:11-12.

- *God will preserve us and take us to heaven as we stand in Him against our fears and sufferings,* 2 Tim 4:8.

When we stand against our fears and stand firm in our suffering, God has already blessed us with His promises—and His word is true. Nancy Phyllis was diagnosed with cancer in her sinus cavity, and half her face was removed. She made four resolutions and faithfully kept them: 1) I will never complain; 2) I will keep the witness of Christ strong in my life; 3) I will count my blessings; 4) I will use this suffering to bring those I love to Christ. While her suffering was inevitable, her fears were not because of her victory in Christ. II. Our situation is intimidating, v.14.

“Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened.” The Greek word *phobeo*

means to frighten, to be alarmed; to be in awe of, exceedingly fearful. Peter was literally saying, “Do not be intimidated by fear that is attempting to destroy you.” What do Christians fear about being a Christian? We fear many things as it relates to this world’s perception of us. We fear that they will think we are fanatics, that they won’t see us as regular people. We fear being misunderstood, that they will conclude that we think we are better than they are. We should never underestimate the fear that resides in our need to be accepted!

Peter instructed us not to be afraid to assert our love and passion for God! It is worth the risk of being misunderstood to be a person of faith! What it comes down to is this: Am I willing to allow the Lord to direct my life, shape my ethics, and control my conduct, even if it puts me at odds with the culture in which I live? The Christian who lives a godly life is going to face rejection and intimidation in a culture that embraces a philosophy that says, “*There are no moral absolutes and all truth is subjective!*” In such a culture God’s word charges us, “Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened.”

The phrase “Fear not” or “Be not afraid” is found 365 times in the word of God! That’s one for every day of the year! An AA slogan is “Fear is False Evidence Appearing Real!” We often run from the imaginary. There are legitimate fears, fears that cause us to be cautious. Legitimate fear can save us heartache. Jesus said we should fear God: *“do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul*

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God makes my heart clean in 2015 "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." —Ps 51:10

Fear Factor, from p. 2
and body in hell," Mt 10:28. God Himself is called and named "Fear," *pacchad*, or "dread; alarm, terror" in Gen 31:42, 53. His awesome power must be respected by any rational person. But Peter wants us not to be afraid to live for Jesus and instead to let His life dominate ours. Some wrongly conclude that such devotion will eradicate our individuality. On the contrary, we become the true "person" that God destined us to be when we die to self and let Christ live in us, Gal 2:20; Mt 16:24. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." How is that possible? Is there an antidote for spiritual fear? Yes!

III. Our solution is infallible, vs.14-15. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." The solution for fear is infallible, without error, if we "set apart Christ as Lord." Faith always drives out fear.

A. Spirit-Filled Dedication. "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." Believers must make Christ Lord—*kurios*: supreme in authority, controller; God, Lord, master. We recognize Jesus Christ as Lord, the ruler of our lives. Peter in no uncertain terms challenged all believers to give first place to Jesus in obedience. We have no need to fear when Christ is in His proper place in our lives. However, what sounds easy appears to be our

Discipleship Here At Home

greatest problem. In 1999 a Gallup poll showed that 78% of Americans expect to go to heaven when they die. But fewer than 30% ever pray, read the Bible, or attend church (worship together) on a regular basis. And Christians wonder why they are filled with fear. They are not building their faith! The choice we will make every day is our response to this command: "Did you set apart Christ as Lord in your heart?" A.W. Tozer said: "People who have 'set apart Christ as Lord' have three distinct marks:

1. They are facing only one direction;
2. They never turn back in the face of fear;
3. They no longer have plans of their own."

The Spirit-filled Christian can say no to fear. Corrie Ten Boom said, "In my times of fear I don't wrestle, I nestle!" She drew so close to the Lord and Master of her life that she felt His constant shelter and protection. The Biblical solution to fear is first Spirit-filled dedication.

B. Scripture Based Education. "Always be prepared to give an answer..." Listen! The Spirit-filled life prepares us for education, but does not educate us; we must apply our hearts and minds to His word under the Lordship of Christ. Look carefully at the word answer. The Greek word is *apologia*, to make a plea or defense; to give an answer for clearing of self, to make a rational argument. It is where get our word 'apologetics.' Why must we know the Word and have a scripture-based education? Because Satan is a liar and will attempt to use fear to overwhelm us with his lies. It is the Spirit-filled Christian who is filled with scripture—the knowledge of scripture that is able to stand against the schemes of the devil, Eph. 6:11-18.

'Sunday only Christians' will not be equipped to defeat their fears! The Christianity Café is never going to fill the life of the believer with the power

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PRAY FOR healing, protection, help

· **Nell Free**—rehab recovery for broken hip last wk; Arvada Care & Rehab, 6121 W. 60th Ave, Arvada 80003, rm 7, bed A

· **Ed Fink**—prostate cancer; treatment for brain tumors

· **Pat Wilkes**—surgery recovery for torn shoulder tendon

· **Bill Dennis**—moved to Bear Creek Rehab Ctr, 150 Spring St, Morrison 80465, 720-550-4695 following infected knee drainage; pseudo-gout

· **Sandra Perry**—possible kidney failure, may need dialysis or transplant; heart valve issues recently diagnosed; neuropathy from diabetes

· **Kaylee Chavez**—age 10, at St. Jude's in Memphis for brain cancer treatment; donate at www.youcaring.com, type her name at top

· **Judy Strand**—to schedule heart valve surgery; hep C; approved for liver transplant

· **Chris Bennett**, former member—all tools for biz stolen; recovering from fall, fractured pelvis

· **Buford Wrather, Cheryl Reames's** dad—stroke, complicated by Parkinson's; in CO Springs

· **Sylvia Chapman, Brett's** grandmother—third stage pancreatic cancer; chemo

· **Judy Sartin**—cold; rotator cuff injury; spinal stenosis; arthritis

· **Brittany Tope's** mother—breast cancer in spine; pain in broken ribs which tumor has injured; grandmother—on dialysis

· **Kim Howell's** niece **Tonya Robison**—delivered 32-week, 2 lb, 5 oz **Malachi Taylor Robison** 2 wks ago; in NICU in Louisville, KY, at least a month

· **Patty Barber**, friend of Sandra Perry—hematoma

· **Kenny Boyd's** coworker **Kim Phillips**—asks our prayers for heart problems

· **Rick Robbins**, friend of Howells—brain surgery

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Logan Corray; Addison Tope; Christian Harrod; Rocco Jr; Tim Huelsman—asthma

Nell Free—pacemaker, heart; back pain

Autumn Hadders—epilepsy; celiac disease

Jonathan Hadders—RA

Danielle Huelsman—vertigo, CV syndrome

Hannah Huelsman—polycythemia, thickening of blood; heart murmur, acid reflux, chest pain

Kirk Johnson—MS

Menards—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak;

Virginia, macular degeneration; high BP

Cheryl Reames—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia

Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung weakness

Travel Patricia Ward in San Diego this week;

Finks out of town; **Pat Campbell** in AR with her dad; **Campbells** to IL Thurs-Sun

New Baby Amy and **Andy Vanderkooi**

have a new baby girl, **Tavyn**, born Tues

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and knowledge of truth that enables them to give an answer and stand in the midst of an attack designed to cripple their lives with fear. "So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter," 2 Thess. 2:15.

God is looking and waiting for people to seek Him with passion, and to trust him with the faith of a child, and to make Him Lord of their life! If your Bible is neglected and your spiritual passion is low, you won't stand when fear strikes your heart or home! You don't have to be afraid! Our answer to fear is found in trusting God, and the solution to our emotions can be immediate. A life of Spirit-filled dedication committed to scripture-based education is the answer to living in victory over our fears. "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind," 2 Tim 1:7. Fill your minds by memorizing the following scriptures:

- "And Moses said to the people, 'Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.'" Ex 14:13-14.
- "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you." Deut 31:6.
- "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Josh 1:9.
- "You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you." 2 Chr 20:17.
- "Then you will lift up your face without shame; and you will stand firm and without fear." Job 11:15.
- "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong," 1 Cor 16:13.

Ask yourself this question: "What in your life is causing so much fear that you do not stand firm?" Read Psalm 56. David gave us a step-by-step guide to overcome fear. A. Admit your fear to God, 1-2. Do not minimize the power of your enemies. What are your enemies? Selfishness? Besetting sins that you seem to repeat? Not controlling your tongue? Remember, David thoroughly describes his enemies to God. Give your fear a name. That helps bring them down to size. B. Express your anger at your enemies and ask for God's help. Look away from your enemies and to God, 1-4, 9-11. C. Praise God, 3,10. When we praise, we move out into the world instead of cowering and hiding in our caves. God dwells in the praises of His people, Ps 22:3, so praising is an efficient way to get in touch with Him! D. Choose not to continue in fear; replace fear with trust, 3-4, 9-11. E. Remember God's care in the past, 8, 12-13. F. Reconfirm your decision to trust, praise, and turn from fear, 4, 10-13. G. Thank God for freedom from fear, 12-13. Now that you have named your fears, it is time for you to bring them to God by faith, sanctifying Him as your Lord and asking Him to fill you with His Spirit and guard your heart with His truth.



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<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Westside-Church-of-Christ/276475819148309>

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

- **adult Bible class**, Lesson 5, "I Have Become A Christian! Now What?" Jim Reingrover

- **Sermon**, "Peter's Epistle to Westside: 1 Peter 3, Submission," Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon

- Questions answered: "What is our responsibility towards erring brothers?" Larry Campbell

Wednesday night class: Daniel: Determined to Walk with God, chapter 10