

REVIEW:

- Emotions were created by God. Sin has broken us. Now, emotions can be used for good or bad.
- Our job is to test our emotions, and not let negative emotions that destroy be the boss in our lives.

This week: Fear Definition: An unpleasant emotion caused by the belief that someone or something is dangerous, likely to cause pain, or a threat.¹

FEAR IS COMPLICATED—THERE ARE DIFFERENT KINDS OF FEAR.

- 1. Paralyzing fear:** a phobia, an extreme or irrational fear. Such as of snakes, spiders, heights, or public speaking.
 - 2. Chronic fear/anxiety caused by medical condition or traumatic experience:** unease, nervousness, feeling of imminent danger.
 - Fear sees a threat while anxiety imagines one.
 - The *Hardwired to Connect*² study reveals the factors for kids who are dealing with mental illness including anxiety.
 - Humans are hardwired to form relationships—ongoing, stable, nurturing relationships. Nurturing relationships and a spiritual connection to the transcendent significantly improve physical and emotional health.
 - 3. Normal, protective fear:** fear of the right things in the right way.
 - Fear can protect us... in a world where danger is a reality.
 - We live in a broken world, and there are things that cause trouble and pain.
 - The limbic system demonstrates that fear can save us.
 - 4. Reverent fear:** awe, respect.
 - This is a healthy fear that God has the power to both judge and punish. (See **Proverbs 1:7**)
 - He will punish those who choose to reject Him and harm others. (See **Matthew 10:28**)
 - To “fear God” is to choose to have an awe for or a respect for God that causes me to obey—or to repent.
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THE EMOTION OF FEAR IN THE NORMAL SENSE (NOT CAUSED BY A MEDICAL ISSUE OR TRAUMA):

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| o A primary emotion (can lead to the anger iceberg) | o Fear of failure |
| o Fear of loss of control | o Fear of rejection |
| o Fear that leads to self-protection | |

REMEMBER, GOD'S WORD TELLS US TO TEST EVERY EMOTION.

2 Corinthians 10:3–5 (NIV) ³For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵We demolish arguments and every pretension (imagination) that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

A LOOK AT DAVID'S CIRCUMSTANCES:

- David was dealing with his son, Absalom, who was taking his kingdom seeking to kill him.
- Psalms is not written in chronological order.
- David has had many situations in his life that have influenced his writing here.
- He fought against animals, Goliath, Saul, wars, and even fought the fear of being found out concerning Bathsheba.

Psalm 23:1–6 (ESV) ¹The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. ²He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. ³He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. ⁴Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. ⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. ⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

1. Notice David makes a decision: the Lord is his boss, not his fear.

- The Lord is my shepherd.
- He has always been my shepherd.

2. He remembers the Lord’s history as a shepherd.

- I will not be in want of what is needed.
- God provides not what I want but what I need.

3. He remembers the Lord is the one Who restores the soul.

- The enemy tells us there is a different way to restore our souls.
 - Run from the problem
 - Be angry at God and take matters into our own hands
- Rather than running away from God, David runs to Him.
- For His name’s sake, He guides us—He has given us grace through Christ.

4. He is reminded that God takes us through good times *and* bad times.

- We live on planet Earth, and there are both peaceful times and the shadow of death.
- God doesn’t always take us away from evil or death, but He walks us through it. He is with each of us.

5. God has good planned for each of us forever—and that gives us hope. (See also Romans 8:14-17)

- A meal prepared before my enemies (v5)
- With the Lord forever (v6)
- This world is temporary, but His love is forever. (v6)

QUESTIONS TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS:

Passages to consider: Psalm 23; Matthew 8:23-27; 2 Timothy 1:7; 1 John 4:18

- Something stood out to you in the sermon—what was it?
 1. What joys or wins did you experience this week, particularly in the area of taking thoughts captive?
 2. Read Psalms 23 and Matthew 8:23-27 **OR** choose a passage from the sermon. Read them twice. A) What do you discover about God in these passages? B) What do you discover about people and life in them? C) What do you discover about fear?
 3. How do you typically respond when you sense fear? B) What kind of patterns do you see in things that can bring fear to you?
 4. What are you discovering or understanding more about trusting God in the midst of feeling fear or other emotions? A) How do you recognize and grow in “the fear of the Lord”?
 5. What are ways that help you recognize when fear might be driving others? Think about family, friends, and co-workers.
 6. What have you discovered about yourself and the beliefs and emotions that could be the boss of you in this series? A) What adjustments are you seeking to make?

Bonus: Read 1 Peter this week.

Passages to prepare for next week’s new marriage and family series, Built to Last: Matthew 7:24-25; 1 Corinthians 3:11; Psalms 127:1

¹Definition of *fear* taken from Google Dictionary.

²Find the entire *Hardwired to Connect* study at americanvalues.org/catalog/pdfs/hwexsumm.pdf or purchase it on Amazon.

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