

FEAR

1. To be willing to do anything to get rid of fear is to encourage fear. You must be willing to say, "I'll do anything God wants me to do." The thing is, you can't move far enough away to escape fear, or build a wall big enough to keep it out. But there is something you can do.
2. God wants you to seek to please Him first and think about the problem of fear second. That is why Jesus said, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:33). If you put anything else first - even the desire to rid yourself of fear - you will fail to achieve either goal.
3. Only God who made you can drive out all illegitimate fear; yet you cannot turn to Him merely to be rid of fear. You must first seek a place in His kingdom and His righteousness.
4. Salvation does not automatically free you from fear, but it is the first prerequisite (see Appendix 3: "You Can Change").
5. After you have trusted in Jesus Christ, what must you do?
6. You must do the loving thing that God commands, despite your fear.
7. How? First, list the responsibilities toward God and your neighbor that you are not fulfilling because of your fear. Write them out. Non-biblical fear is sin, and it must be rooted out.
8. the first step is to identify the sinful failure(s) to love God and your neighbor because of fear. The answer to your fear problem lies in identifying your neglect of this loving responsibility.
9. God assures us that there is one force greater than fear - love ("Perfect love casts out fear" - 1 John 4:18). The secret lies in the fact that love is stronger than fear. Love is the force that overpowers fear.
10. Examples of love that conquers fear can be seen in a mother's reaction to seeing her child in danger, or a soldier's reaction to seeing his buddy wounded.
11. If fear is a result of the imperfect manifestation of human love, how much more will the Holy Spirit enable you to overcome fear through God's love? "God has not given us a spirit of fear; but a spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).
12. Look at the contrast between love and fear:
 - a) Love looks for opportunities to give;
Fear keeps a wary eye on the possible consequences of involvement.
 - b) Love thinks no evil;
Fear thinks of little else.

- c) Love believes all things;
Fear is highly suspicious.
- d) Love, busy with today's tasks, does not worry about tomorrow;
Fear always worries about tomorrow and fails to undertake today's responsibilities.
- e) Love leads to greater love and achieves satisfaction
Fear creates greater fear and results in failure to assume responsibilities, which brings more fear of consequences for acting irresponsibly.

13. The enemy of all sinful fear is love - love for God, and love for others.

14. The way to put off fear is to put on love.

15. Fear is not an external force. You are the one who produces fear. You are responsible for fearing, just as you are responsible for loving.

16. Begin to anticipate what you can do to please God and others. Do not think or speak of it as a fearful experience. Rather, focus on loving thoughts and the benefits you can bring to someone else.

17. Love never looks to itself. It always has the welfare of another in view (1 Corinthians 12:5-7).

18. Fear is a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy. In other words, fear produces fear.

19. In summary, here is how to stop fearing fear:

- a) Determine to love others as the scriptures direct. Then, your life will be dominated by love rather than fear.
- b) Trying not to be afraid makes you become afraid of fear. Stop trying to stop being afraid.
- c) Learn to commit yourself prayerfully to do what God requires of you, whether or not you will experience fear by doing so.
- d) Pray in such a way that if you are going to have another fear experience, you'll just have to have it (1 Peter 5:7).
- e) Go ahead and do whatever God holds you responsible for doing.
- f) Fill your mind with concern for others toward whom you express love in the thing that you must do.
- g) Focus on the loving activities you are to do, not on the fear experience you are trying to avoid.
- h) Think about serving God and about using your gifts to help others.
- i) When your mind wanders back to fear - and it will - do not allow it to form thoughts in your mind.
- j) Immediately ask God to help you refocus on the things listed in Philippians 4:8-9.
- k) Develop the attitude, "If I have a fear experience, so what? I'll live through it." Then, follow biblical directions to do loving things, rather than following feelings of fear that lead to shirking your responsibilities..