Lesson: Nothing to Fear

Nothing to Fear Day is observed on May 27; it coincides with the day in 1941 when President F. D. Roosevelt spoke these renown words, “We have nothing to fear but fear itself.” It was during the Great Depression, and the economy was in shambles, and people were concerned about how they were going to make ends meet. World War II was also underway and that created considerable fear around the world; real fear was further magnified by false fear. Today, lots of people in the USA and abroad are experiencing their own crises, mostly economic, while war looms again. But I doubt FDR’s statement would bring any comfort unless one’s trust was in God. FDR was right in this regard: You should be afraid of ungodly fear, for it leads to death and evil. Fear is the tool of Satan, to get people to think he is powerful like God, but he doesn’t come close. If you fear God with a godly fear, you literally will have nothing to fear, including Satan. If you have God’s Spirit living in you, the devils in the world will fear you. And make no mistake, you will become a target for some who loathe Christians and/or God.

We worry endlessly, becoming stressed, anxious, and depressed; but these episodes pass. Sometimes we look back and wonder what all the fuss was about. Examine the things that you fear about life, and you will find that what you thought was going to happen is not inevitable and when it does happen it is not permanent. The only permanency is death; but you needn’t fear death either when you believe that you are saved unto life eternal. For those people who are not committed to Christ there is plenty to fear, because their end is dreadful.

The ways of the world and the demonic is death, no escape. This is why the most common fear is the curse of death. It is also why we fear God, for the world is His and He created it for us; the only thing from this world to fear is our own sin which leads to death. The devil employs ungodly fear to trick and terrify us into sin and submission, using crafty and deceitful methods; he teaches these ways to people who allow evil inside. Evil keeps coming back to trip us up, but we can rebuke the devil himself and he will leave (JAM 4:7), seeing how the demons are no match for the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts. Fear has torment and that is what the demons and all of those who do not fear the Lord are going to get. The verses that follow discuss common human fears. Not that it is easy to dismiss these things because it isn’t; unless you change your focus back to Christ after which you might not feel quite as worried.

* EXO 14:13, 31 ~ Moses told the people, “Do not be afraid of the Egyptians. Stand and watch, and you will see the salvation of the Lord; for after this day you will never see the Egyptians again.” And the people saw what the Lord did to the Egyptians (drowning them in the Red Sea); and the people feared the Lord and believed in God and His servant Moses.
* DEU 1:17 ~ You must not discriminate against others in judgment; permit the testimony of the lowly as well as the great. You should not be afraid when facing man’s judgment for judgment belongs to God. If you have a cause that is too difficult for you, bring it to God and He will hear it.
* PSA 34:4 ~ I sought the Lord and He heard me, and delivered me from my fears.
* PRO 3:25 ~ Do not be afraid of sudden fear or of the desolation of the wicked when it comes.
* PRO 29:25 ~ The fear of humanity brings a snare; but those who put their trust in God will be safe.
* ISA 8:12–13 ~ Do not join in any conspiracies or alliances with people who are afraid; do not fear the things that they fear; do not be afraid at all. Sanctify the Lord of hosts, and let Him be your fear.
* ISA 33:14 ~ Sinners are afraid; fear surprises the hypocrites. Who among you will live in the devouring fire and burn?
* ISA 35:4 ~ Tell those who are afraid not to fear, because God will come with a vengeance and will save them.
* ISA 51:7 ~ God says, “Look for me, you who know righteousness and you who hold my laws in your hearts. Do not be afraid of the accusations of others or their verbal abuse.”
* MAT 6:31–34 ~ Jesus said, “Do not worry about what you will eat or drink, or what you will wear; for your heavenly Father knows that you need these things. Instead, seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and He will provide everything you need in addition.”
* MAT 10:19–20, 26–28 ~ Jesus said, “When you are captured, do not worry about how to act or what to say, for the proper words will be given to you even as you speak them. It will not be you, but the Holy Spirit doing the talking. Do not fear those who hate you, for everything that is hidden now will be revealed later; everything that is unknown will become known. What I tell you in darkness, you will speak in the light. What you hear in private will be preached from the rooftops. Do not worry about those who can kill your body, but cannot reach your soul. Instead, fear Him who is able to destroy both your body and soul in hell.”
* LUK 5:26 ~ Everyone was amazed at Jesus when He cured the man who was stricken with palsy. They were filled with fear, saying, “We have seen strange things today.”
* LUK 12:32 ~ Jesus said, “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give to you the kingdom.”
* ROM 13:4 ~ If you do what is evil, be afraid, for God’s minister will not bear the sword in vain, because he is sent to execute wrath upon those who do evil.
* PHP 4:6 ~ Do not worry about anything, but pray for everything with thanksgiving, humbleness, and eagerness.
* JAM 2:19 ~ If you believe in one God you are smart. Even the demons believe, and tremble.
* 1 JO 4:2–6 ~ Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh is of God. Those spirits that do not confess are not of God, but are spirits of the antichrist, which you have heard about and are in the world. You belong to God and have overcome these spirits of malice. For greater is He that is within you than he that is in the world.
* 1 JO 4:18 ~ There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear has torment. Those who fear are not made perfect in love.
* REV 2:10 ~ Jesus said, “Do not be afraid of any of the things you may suffer. The devil will throw some of you into prison to be tried; you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful unto death and I will give you a crown of life.”
* REV 15:4 ~ Who will not fear you, Lord, and glorify your name? For only you are holy; all nations will come to worship you, for your judgments are clearly obvious.
* REV 21:8 ~ The fearful, the unbelieving, the murderers, prostitutes, sorcerers, idolaters, and liars will take part in the lake of fire which is the second death.

Basically, ungodly fear is being afraid for no good reason, and this is the weapon of Satan, the father of lies. But godly fear is incompatible with ungodly fear. What exactly is godly fear? We fear God because He is an awesome God. We fear God because it reminds us of the penalty for disbelief and disobedience. To those who harbor resentment, seek revenge, or hold animosity in their hearts: there is much to fear. Cleanse your heart with the blood of Jesus, forgive others, and you will have that weight lifted from your heart and you will be and feel clean on the inside.

* DEU 5:29 ~ God said, “I wish the people had such a heart that they would fear me and keep my commandments always, so they and their children would be well.”
* DEU 31:6 ~ Be strong and take courage; do not be afraid, for the Lord goes with you. He neither will fail you nor forsake you.
* JOS 24:14 ~ Fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth. Put away false gods.
* 1 SA 12:24 ~ Fear only the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart. Consider the wonderful things He has done for you.
* 1 CH 16:25 ~ Great is the Lord; He is greatly to be praised. He is to be feared above all gods.
* JOB 4:6 ~ Is the fear of God not your confidence, hope, and righteousness?
* JOB 5:21–22 ~ You will be hidden from the scourge of the tongue; you will not be afraid of destruction when it comes. You will laugh at destruction and famine; you will not be afraid of the beasts on earth. You will be at peace.
* JOB 13:11 ~ Does God’s excellency not make you afraid?
* JOB 28:28 ~ The fear of the Lord is wisdom; to depart from evil is understanding.
* PSA 23:3–4 ~ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His namesake. Although I walk through the dark valley of death, I fear no evil, for you oh Lord, are with me; your rod and staff are a comfort to me.
* PSA 27:1–2 ~ The Lord is my light and my salvation. Who should I fear? He is the strength in my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? Even if a whole encampment of my enemies is preparing war against me, I will not be afraid, but confident.
* PSA 33:8, 18 ~ Let all the earth fear the Lord; let inhabitants stand in awe of Him. The eye of the Lord is upon those who fear Him and hope in His mercy.
* PSA 37:7 ~ Find solace in the Lord and wait patiently for Him. Do not worry about evil people who prosper.
* PSA 56:3–4 ~ If I am afraid, I will praise God’s Word and put my trust in Him. I will not be afraid of what flesh can do to me.
* PSA 119:120 ~ My flesh trembles with fear at the Lord for I am afraid of His judgments.
* PRO 1:7, 33 ~ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise knowledge and wisdom. Those who seek God will be safe and sound from the fear of evil.
* PRO 8:13 ~ To fear the Lord is to hate evil, pride, conceit, sin, and verbal abuse.
* PRO 16:6 ~ By mercy and truth, sin is purged; by the fear of the Lord, people can depart from evil.
* ISA 41:10 ~ God says, “Fear not, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen and help you. I will hold you up with the right hand of righteousness.”
* MAT 10:28 ~ Jesus said, “Do not be afraid of those who can kill the body but not the soul. Fear only Him who can destroy both your body and soul in hell.”
* MAR 7:14–19 ~ Jesus said, “Can you see that nothing entering a person from the outside can make him or her unclean? It is what comes out of the person that makes them unclean. Something entering from the outside goes into the stomach (not the heart) and then out of the body. If something evil comes from the heart, it will make that person unclean.”
* JOH 14:27 ~ Jesus said, “Peace I leave you; my peace I give you; I do not give as the world gives, so never let your hearts be troubled or afraid.”
* PHP 1:14 ~ Brothers in Christ are bold enough to speak the Word without fear.
* 2 TI 1:7 ~ God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind.
* HEB 5:7 ~ When you offer prayers and humble requests to God, He will hear you because you fear Him.
* HEB 12:28–29 ~ Since we will receive a kingdom which cannot fall, let us have grace to willingly serve God with reverence and awe, for He is a consuming fire.
* REV 14:6–7 ~ I saw another angel fly through heaven with the everlasting gospel, to preach to those who live on earth, and to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people; saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give Him the glory; for the hour of His judgment has come. Worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water.”

Oh Father, awesome God, you are gracious and merciful, giving us everything we need, so that we need not fear, for you are always with us. We thank and praise you for our lives and livelihood, provisions and prosperity, and for the salvation that we did nothing to deserve. And all that you ask is that we love you. And we do love you, dearly; though we often are not very good at showing it. Help us to show our love for you more sincerely, and help us to love one another more authentically. For you are love, and that great love was shown to us by your Son who loved us so much He gave Himself for us so that we might live. In His precious name we pray, Amen.

By Andrew V. Barber (posted: 05/06/2023)