

# Fear

by Leonard Ravenhill

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*Leonard Ravenhill's sermon 'Fear' explores the pervasive nature of fear as a spiritual enemy and encourages believers to overcome it through faith and the Holy Spirit.*

**Duration:** 1:00:33

**Scripture:** Proverbs 1:7, Isaiah 41:10, Matthew 25:25, Acts 1:8, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 6:4, 2 Timothy 1:7, 2 Timothy 4:7, Hebrews 11:7, 1 John 4:18

**Topics:** "Fear", "Overcoming Fear", "Faith and Courage"

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## Description

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes that fear is the true public enemy number one, overshadowing sin, ignorance, and poverty. He draws from historical and biblical examples to illustrate how fear can paralyze individuals and communities, contrasting it with the spirit of power, love, and a sound mind that God provides. Ravenhill highlights the importance of recognizing fear's reality while also understanding that it can be overcome through faith and the teachings of Scripture. He encourages believers to stir up the gifts within them and to stand firm in their faith, especially in perilous times, as Paul advised Timothy. Ultimately, he calls for a return to a deep, abiding trust in God to combat the fears that plague humanity.

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## Transcript

If somebody was to ask you a simple question, and ask you to answer it in a simple way, either in a sentence or in a word, and this was the question, how would you answer it? What or who is public enemy number one? And I'll give you the whole scope of history right back to the days of Adam to find an answer in it. I'm sure that some would come up with a single word and say sin, some might come along and say ignorance, some might even say poverty, and yet it's not one of those things. This thing is invisible, so nobody's ever seen it, they couldn't photograph it, they couldn't paint it.

It has no shape, it's a tyrant, it's a troublemaker, it strengthens the weak, it weakens the strong. It was known to the ancients and known to the moderns. If I'd said tell me public enemy number one in the days of Israel, you'd say no doubt, well Pharaoh was their great enemy.

If you wanted more recent history, you might say of course that Hitler was the great enemy of the whole world, he wanted to pull it down anyhow. But again this monster, if I can use that word, this tremendous thing, was not originally in the Garden of Eden though it did get in. It certainly wasn't in the Garden of Gethsemane and it isn't in the Garden of Paradise of God.

But as I say again, it's known to the ancients and it's known to the moderns. And we've done a thousand things about it but we can't destroy it. I think of a ship that was riding on the bosom of the Atlantic in World War II.

It was guarded more closely than the crown jewels and it was watched more intensely than a newborn prince. On board of that ship were some of the greatest men in the world of the day. Amongst them Winston Churchill, F.D. Roosevelt.

When they came off that ship they forged what became known, though we never mention it now, the Atlantic Treaty. And in the Atlantic Treaty they guaranteed the rest of mankind four freedoms, we don't have one of them. And one of them was the freedom from fear.

And I believe that public enemy number one is fear. And in writing in his last epistle, and usually the last words of people are very sacred, the last words of Jesus get more profound. We listen more closely to people who are dying when they want to whisper secrets.

The last epistle that Paul wrote was written to a young man by the name of Timothy. And in his second epistle and the first chapter, Paul says to this young man, for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but the spirit of love, and of sound, and a spirit of love, and of power, and of a sound mind. I think it was Winston Churchill, one of the wisest men that ever lived, being English, but I think it was Winston Churchill who said that there are just three kinds of people in the world.

Those who are afraid, those who don't know enough to be afraid, and those who know their Bibles. That's a tremendous classification I think. Those who are afraid, those who don't know enough to be afraid, and those again who know the Word of God.

Now there are many approaches to this subject of fear. One writer just says that fear is the product of a diseased imagination. Fear is imaginary, it's unreal.

But I remember one night going into a hospital, I was called out about 11 o'clock at night, and as I went to see a little fellow who had suffered injury, a little boy that came to a Sunday school where I was a pastor. As I came out from the ward, I saw a woman crouched over a tiny cot. Well it was dark, I say it was nearly midnight, and there was just a little light shining onto that cot, and I went up very quietly, and the lady sensed I was there, and I said, excuse me, I wonder if I could help you.

And her eyes were all red with weeping, and her face was swollen, and she said, no sir you, you can't do anything for me. I said, well is the little fellow badly injured? Yes she said, it's, it's, it's very serious. I said, well is he the only child you have? Oh no, no, no, she said, I've got six more, but I can't spare one of them, she said, with the love of a mother.

This one's injured, but I can't spare one of them, and I'm afraid he's going to die. Do you think that woman's fear was the product of a diseased imagination? Fear is very real. I think fear is an inbuilt monitor, until we destroy it.

Because there's many a man that does not commit sin, or many a person does not commit sin, not because they wouldn't like to, but because they're afraid of the consequences. Not only just because they might be caught. We've been teaching the children some of these wonderful Proverbs.

I notice that wisdom is mentioned, I counted today about 54 times in the, in the Proverbs. And you remember that one of the Proverbs is that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. I read again in Hebrews 11 about Noah.

Noah moved with fear, built an ark to the saving of his soul. I read that when Abraham was going to bring his hand down and destroy that precious boy that he had, that he was commanded that his hand should stay. And the word that came to him was this, I know that thou fearest God.

Now that's a fear of a different kind. You see that there's moral fear. There's a cowardly fear.

In the 25th chapter of the wonderful Gospel of Matthew, it says there that some men have been given gifts, or talents as they're called. And one man fought because he'd only won, there wasn't very much in it. The man went and traded with his five and he profited from it, another man went and traded with ten.

But this man only had one, and because he had won, he said I was afraid and I went and hid my talent. He was afraid of what? Well he was afraid that he couldn't develop it I suppose. And yet that fear wasn't strong enough to be deterrent to cause him not to waste that talent that he had.

So there is a cowardly fear. I have seen men, I used to go to an air force base in England in World War II, and talk to hundreds and hundreds of men. The condition was that I spoke to them for 40 minutes and then they, they battered me for the next 40.

We had some very interesting duels I'll tell you that. And I remember one night particularly when one man was pretty arrogant about his sin. He didn't want anything to do with the Bible and everything else.

He said wait a minute buddy, some of the men I talked to last week went over in formation over Germany and they're scraps tonight. They're blasted to smithereens. They never came back.

Oh the man says I have no fear. There is a godly fear. But you see there are different kinds of There is a godly fear.

There is a fear that there is a godly fear. There is a fear that caused Noah to go build an ark. There is a cowardly fear that makes a man high.

There is a fear that I'll fight you. And I said to some of those men listen, I've, and I said to some of those men listen, I've watched you in the sky. They used to come over England there and they used to swirl around in the sky in their, what were they, spitfires fighting against the Messerschmitts and the Heinkels and other things.

And you could see them in daytime having dogfights. They were very interesting. And I said to those men I, I'm amazed at your courage.

You have no fear in that sense. But when it comes to temptation, when it comes to fact that, well you should stand up some of you for Christ, there's a fear that comes in and it destroys your courage. You see there's physical fear.

There is a natural courage. There are some men who are born, they, they rush into anything. They don't care about consequences.

But when it comes to a moral issue, it's a very different thing. I remember one of those young fellows, he was ferrying planes from England over to, to North Africa. And when he got to the base, well there wasn't much room for seven or eight men that had come in this big bomber.

And he was separated from his other buddy, his Christian friend. And so he was put into a room, a bunks. And when they told him to go, you know, whatever the room was, A1 and find room 23 something and, and number four dead, he, he went in and turned on the light.

There was nobody in, but the walls were covered with girly pictures that weren't very good. He thought, this is a fine kettle of fish. What will I do here? Well, I, shall I wait for these fellows to come in? Or then he thought, no, I've flown a long way, and I guess when they come in, they'll do the usual things, salute the girls, or kiss the pictures, or do some other things.

I guess I'll be asleep when they come in. And, and in his wallet, he had a picture of Christ. And so he moved some of the pictures over, and he, he stuck the picture of Jesus right in the middle.

And he took a catnap, and these men came in the early hours. And when they came in, they began to get ready for bed. And one of them said, well let me kiss my sweet.

But what's that picture doing there? Who put that there? Must be this guy down here. Listen, wait, wait a minute. One of the men said, wait a minute, what's wrong with it? Well, there's nothing wrong with a picture of Christ, but he doesn't, doesn't fit in with a, with a bunch of nude girls around him anyhow.

So the fellow said, take your choice. Either pull his pictures down, or pull their pictures down. Well, the fellow said, I, I, I wouldn't take the picture of Christ down.

My, after all, my mother is a good Christian at home, and I didn't usually go to Sunday school. So hey, come on boys. The RAF fellow was turning over his bed, giggling and smiling to himself.

And when he got up in the morning, every picture had gone. Now that man had courage. They could have beaten him up.

They could have retaliated in some cruel way. But you see, he dared to do what we sing about so often, dared to be a Daniel, and dared to stand alone, and dared to have a purpose firm, and dared to make it known. Now again, I remind you here, that Paul is writing to this young man, and no mother ever loved a child like the Apostle Paul loved Timothy.

And again, I remind you that this second epistle is the last thing that Paul ever wrote. Wrote it from prison. Wrote it with strong desire to see this young man not fail in the race.

He has to run a long journey yet. He has to fight a big fight. And again, I'm, I'm, I'm impressed, and I'm very thrilled that, that in this last thing that Paul ever wrote, and he wrote 14 epistles if you include Hebrews.

After all, he doesn't say, Timothy look I want to tell you something. I want to be fair with you, because you know what I, I would do if I were your age. I mean you're a young man, you're full of life, you have a godly background, your mother and your grandmother were spiritual, and you have a marvelous inheritance, and you have a great future, and you have a lot of ability.

So listen, don't run as fast as I've run, don't fight as I've fought, don't suffer all I've suffered. I mean think it over. There's an easier way to live the Christian life.

I've got a lot of regrets. I rather wish I'd preserved my life a little bit more. I, I really wish I hadn't as many prison sentences as I have instead of that.

Here is a man who's gone through a thousand tribulations. He's been whipped, he's been starved, he's been in the Mediterranean for 36 hours on a piece of wood, a night and a day I was in the deep. And yet he says to this young man, listen Timothy, I want to tell you something.

I have a great desire to see you, and he said, I'm mindful of your tears. I put me in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. Oh, oh, oh, would you like the Apostle Paul to have put his hands on you? Rather I give my shoes off my feet.

You, I got one candidate, there's two of us then Herb, the others aren't too interested maybe right now. But I'd love that man to have put his hands on me. What an excitement if Jesus put his hands on anybody.

He touched them and life came. He touched their ears and the plugs came out. He could touch water and turn it into wine.

And Paul says, listen you remember, I communicated the very life of God that's in me. You see there is a place, I've not done this more than three or four times in my life. But I've done it sometimes, where I felt compelled to go lay my hands on somebody.

A man wrote to me this week, he's a very well-known man in, in the business world, in the world of intellectuals. And he said I'm longing to come and I want you to lay hands on me. Well I've really no desire to do that, if he wants it I'll do it.

But I wouldn't push anything like that on a person. But Paul says, listen I want to tell you, look at your inheritance, your mother, your grandmother, extremely spiritual people. And then on top of that I laid my hands upon you.

That he says, you've got to stir up the gift of God which is in you. You see if I lit a number of fires outside, say we were camping, I might light a dozen fires. But all those fires wouldn't maintain their glow, and wouldn't maintain their, their fire, unless they were constantly replenished.

Now the Apostle Paul says, you've got to stir up the gift of God that's in you. God doesn't stir it up. For some reason I thought today of my sister when she was, well I don't think she was even courting at the time.

But she's a very fine needlewoman. She, she liked to make these lovely cloths and, and put lovely designs. And she'd stitch for hours, and hours, and hours, and hours, there in a corner and make beautiful, beautiful embroidery.

And then when she'd finish it, she'd lay it on one side, and she'd put it there in a chest, where she kept all these things for the great day when she was going to be married. And you know unconsciously we're doing the same thing. You see Paul is very severe to this young man.

He doesn't say that bodily exercise is no good, but he says watch it. Because a man likes to develop his body and show off. Show his physical strength.

He doesn't say bodily exercise is no good, but he says you exercise yourself to godliness. Don't just want to flex your muscles, but see what burdens you can carry for him. And don't get enchanted with the world outside.

Oh brother does he come down the line. Do you know what he says? This is, this is, you know you don't look at your new automobile when you read this. He says having food and clothing, having food and raiment, let us be content.

Hey we must be off base a lot of us. Come on now don't be hiding your heads and pretending to read your Bible. Look at me right now, even if you do blush.

Hmm. How far have we got from there? Having food and clothing. Do you know I'm so old I can remember when people wore clothes just to keep warm, not to show off.

I can remember when if a man had two shirts, he was considered wealthy. I lived through a depression period. You know now luxuries have become necessities to us.

Do you know God may have to strangle the economy of America to bring the church to its senses. Never mind unsaved millions of people. Paul is writing to a young man.

He says listen I want to tell you something. In these last days perilous times shall come. Oh I've read this, let me read it to you.

In his first letter and chapter 3, reading it from Phillips, in which he says, you must realize in the last days that the times will be full of danger. Listen, men will become utterly self-centered, greedy for money, full of big words. They'll be proud and contemptuous without any regard for what their parents taught them.

They will be utterly lacking gratitude and purity and normal human affections. They will be men of unscrupulous speech and have no control over themselves. They will be passionate and unprincipled, treacherous, self-willed and conceited, loving all the time what gives them pleasure.

Instead of loving God, they will maintain a facade of religion that their conduct will deny its validity. You must keep fear of people like this. That sounds like today's newspaper doesn't it? And then he says a little later on in the same chapter, persecution is inevitable for those who are determined to live the Christian life.

It's the other side of the coin. There is no, there's no escaping from it. Let me read to you a beautiful delicious chapter that isn't quite as severe maybe.

I won't even tell you where it is so then you'll have to listen more and find it when you go home. Listen, hear the word of the Lord ye children of Israel or children of God. For the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land because there is no truth, no mercy, no knowledge of God in the land.

Now by swearing and lying and killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break out and blood touches blood. If that isn't where we live now, then where in God's name are we living? I read again, by swearing and lying and killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break out and blood touches blood. Therefore shall the land mourn and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish with the beasts of the field and with the fowls of heaven and the fishes of the sea.

These shall be taken away. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge because thou hast rejected knowledge. I will also reject thee that thou should be no priest to me seeing that thou hast forgotten the law of thy God.

I will also forget thy children. I say that's severe. This is why poor Paul, remember he's writing to a young man and Paul himself is heading for the chopping block.

And he hasn't a single ounce, he hasn't a tear for himself, he hasn't a heartbeat of sorrow. He's heading for one of the devil's strongest children that ever lived, a king by the name of Nero, who had neither conscience nor any other compunction. He destroyed everybody he wanted to destroy.

And Paul is heading straight for the chopping block and he has no word of sympathy, he doesn't even ask for prayer. He does say to him, I say it would be nice if you'd call round to see me, you know I'm an old man, I'd like to hear how you young men are getting on. I was quite thrilled tonight when these boys asked for the hymns they asked for.

And obviously they didn't even ask for the butterfly song, but don't mention it to anybody. They asked for some good substantial hymns. Maybe they're the young Timothy's of the next generation of Jesus Tarek.

And Paul is writing to this young man and he says listen, perilous times are coming. And therefore he says to him in in verse 20 of the previous chapter, that's the last chapter of the of the first epistle, O Timothy keep that which is committed to thy trust. He says in verse 22 of the fifth chapter in the first epistle, lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partake of other men's sins, keep thyself pure.

So here he is admonishing him, keep thyself pure. Verse 20 of the last chapter, keep that which is committed to thy trust. Verse 14 of this first chapter in the second epistle, that good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

Now again I remind you that this man, this young man, he's going to head up into trouble and the Apostle Paul knows it. And therefore he says listen, God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but the spirit of love, the spirit of power, and of a sound mind. The spirit of power.

But wasn't that the promise that that God gave to, that Jesus gave in Acts 1a, ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you. Where do we see the power anymore? The church languishes. Well all he has to do anyhow is come to church about once on the Lord's day and give a dollar to keep the kingdom of God going and you're through.

Live for the world after that, promote your own interests, get as much of the visible as you can, stuff you can stick your names on. The great day when we stand before God, I think we're all going to be embarrassed, that professing to have eternal life. You see he says over and over to this, this young man, lay hold of eternal life.

You say that eternal life laid hold of me, no he says you lay hold of eternal life. He says it more than once. How do you lay hold of eternal life? Well as soon as we become spiritual, every antagonizing force is going to try to deteriorate my spiritual life.

And if you don't believe it, how much time have you spent in prayer today? Oh you've talked for hours. Well we had friends visiting us, I've had long conversations, all right, all right, tell it to the Lord, not me, you don't owe me anything. You just justify your actions before God, that's all you have to do to be happy.

Trust and obey, there's no other way. But how often do I shortchange God? Timothy, he says lay hold of eternal life, because Satan is going to try and make that spiritual life deteriorate. You know as I've told you so often, we do not all live on the same level.

Jesus had 12 disciples, but they did not all go into the Garden of Gethsemane, they did not all go on to the Mount of Transfiguration. We all have available to us the same resources. After all nobody has more hours in the day than you have, or I have.

Some of us don't have to punch in to a clerk, we are not on the same demand as others, that's true enough. But the thing is, you see, you can always do what you want to do. If this had been a real red hot blistering day, you know what, some of us would have been at the swimming hole today, wouldn't we? Honest to goodness, wouldn't we? Wouldn't we have made it there? Or if there'd been a bargain down the road, wouldn't we have put something on one side, and gone to the place so we could get it? In other words, you see, unless we're careful, the subtleties of this life, it's not the evil things, we do not do the evil things, it's the good things that are the enemy of the best.

Now the Apostle Paul is concerned that this young man, he says, listen you're heading for trouble. And I want you to know that there is one thing that will keep you on centre, there are three things he mentions here. God has not given us the spirit of fear.

I remind you again, there are three classes of people in the world tonight. Those who are afraid, and if you're intelligent, you're afraid. If a man says, I'm not afraid in this hour, well I think he's neither of brains nor conscience.

Now you may disagree, and if you do, you're wrong. But anyhow, if you're not afraid of the hour in which you'll live, your eyes are not open to the past satanic powers in the world. Did you hear the news tonight? Did you hear that they exploded an atom bomb, or a hydrogen bomb in China, a few days ago.

And the fallout came to Pennsylvania, but it's not too serious. But we can't do anything about it, because we have no treaty with them. All right tell me this, what if they intensify the fallout, what do we do? Hmm? Did you hear where one of the men in in Russia, a letter came out saying that Reznov, or whatever his name is, has a state in Russia which is far more cruel than any period that the Tsars had, and that Russia is armed to the teeth, because America is armed, and China says before long, America and Russia are going to clash, in another war.

Oh yes, the news was very, very, very heavy tonight. And there is an instinctive, a natural fear. It isn't a moral cowardly fear, it doesn't lack spirituality, that you see that we're living in a world where men are not truly intelligent, and they're not certainly not spiritual.

We're heading for trouble. Paul says, Timothy I want to tell you that monster there Nero, he won't pull any punches. He's going to cast you something, if you're going to endure to the end that you might be saved.

But he says, I'll tell you what will do, what God will do. He'll give you the spirit of power. Who was it promised to? It was the promise to men that ran away.

One when a girl put her finger up and said, hey you belong that man. He said, no I don't. You do, you do.

I don't. I know you belong to that man, and Peter of all men cursed. Do you know where it all happened? In the garden of Gethsemane, because he'd sworn allegiance to Jesus, and you know what happened? In

the most critical hour in the life of Jesus, I think the most precious thing that was ever, ever offered to men, was the chance that Peter, James and John had to pray with Jesus in the garden, and they fell asleep.

And Jesus went back again, and they'd fallen asleep. And Jesus went back again, and they were asleep. Sleep on, forget it, you've had your chance.

Do you remember the man that said, the farmer said, you see I put the very best seed in that field, and now I, I noticed that the weeds are strong, and boy I got the best crop of corn, but I happened to have the best crop of weeds as well. How did it happen? Did you mix the seed? No sir, no sir, I was coming home late one night, and I saw a man jump over the fence there, and he was scattering seed for all he was worth. And I didn't tell you, because I thought you might ask me why I was out so late.

So what did he say? He said, why are men slept? Don't you think the church is doing exactly that, like that in this crisis hour? Not what is it going to take to stir the world, what in God's name is it going to take to disturb the church? He shall receive power. They needed physical power, because their bodies were going to suffer. They needed moral power, they were going to stand up against governments.

They needed spiritual power, they were going to wrestle with principalities and powers. They needed power to live with each other under the conditions they were going to live with. And the Apostle says, we need exactly the same power.

We're heading for trouble no doubt, but God hath not given us the spirit of fear. We don't bow down like that, we're realists. The only, there's only one alternative, if we don't take Christ, we take Antichrist.

We're living in an Antichrist system. I don't know why everybody suddenly got upset that Mr. Sun Moon has started, what has he bought, two hotels on 8th Avenue, and he's getting our children. Well why in the world have we been troubled about Jehovah's Witnesses? They've been there for years damning people.

What about the Mormons? What about the others? Sun Moon only has a third of a million followers, they've got multiplied millions. These whining, screaming, begging, broadcasting preachers send us some money, we need more help. And I noticed the Mormon president interviewed on TV the other day.

And when they said, well you're a big church aren't you? Yes, yes affluent, well yes affluent. We, we, we handle three million dollars a day. The interviewer said a day? Uh-huh.

Three million dollars a day. Thousand million dollars a year, a billion dollars a year. So next time you're traveling, be sure to stay at the Marriott Hotel and give them a bit more money, because they own that chain.

And I don't know how many other things they don't own. You know we may as well try and swim up Niagara Falls the way the church is right now. We've no more chance of winning than we have of flying the Atlantic without a plane.

This same spirit that came upon the early church, and came upon this man, must come upon us. The spirit of, the spirit of love. What are we talking about? He says God hath not given us the spirit of fear.

Do you remember what it says in 1 John 4, 18 is it? God, no, there is no fear in love. Perfect love casteth out fear. You know in England, when folk get married, it's, it's, if you can't get there, the least thing you do is send a telegram.

I was told about this couple who were married, and somebody came in as they turned from the altar, were going down the aisle, and somebody said, a telegram. Oh, let's open it. No, wait, wait, wait.

No, she said, I want to read. I wonder, I think I know where it's from. And she slid it open, and it said there, you know, some nice greetings.

And then it said underneath, 1 John, no, it said John 4, 18. And she grabbed the Bible quickly and opened it to John 4, 18. Thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband.

That's no joke is it? You wait, you wait, you wait till the wedding breakfast's over. I'll, I'll phone. And they discovered a very little thing had happened at the post office.

They left, just left the one off the front. She put on the telegram, 1 John 4, 18. Folk at the post office didn't think the one meant anything, so they dropped it off.

But a difference between thou hast had five husbands, and John, 1 John 4, 18, where it says there is no fear in love. Perfect love cast without fear. Oh, that lovely hymn says, hidden in the hollow of his blessed hand.

Do you know what I want you to do? Do it tonight, do it tomorrow. Will you, will you go home and read slowly through Isaiah chapter 40? Will you get a new concept of the majesty of the God that you and I serve? He can measure the sea in the hollow of his hand. Don't read it now, read it when you go home.

If you read it, I'll be after you soon. I don't usually mention names, but anyhow, read it when you go home. That 40th chapter, it's just, just magnificent with the majesty of God.

And sometimes I feel when I read a thing like that, I'm like a little worm in a corner. I'm scared to death to go and face a rotten, vile, vicious world like this. That militates against God in every sense of the word.

No, no, no, no. He said that he's, he's put his arms round about us. That those who put their trust in him shall never be confounded.

And when you've read the 43rd into the 41st, I will not forsake thee. It's full of I wills. I will strengthen thee, I will help thee, I will uphold thee.

You see, immediately we come into the family of God. There's nobody else, let me put it, how can I put it? We're all equal in shareholders, you know. It isn't that this man has fifty thousand dollars worth of shares, and you only have five dollars.

Immediately you come in the family, you get all the fullness of God, if you want it. You get all the riches that there are. You have, as the Apostle says, that God hath with him freely given us all things.

No, God hasn't given us the spirit of fear. I don't care how you measure the length, and the breadth, and the depth, and the height of all the devilry ahead of us. I've repeated this before, and I'll say it again, that the most severe days are still ahead of us.

And yet the only people that will hold together, are those who have a complete trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who have just handed over, not only their sins, but themselves, and their wills, and their desires toward him. God hath not given us a spirit of fear, but he has given us a spirit of love, and of power, and of a sound mind.

And Paul says, I want you to remember this. Keep it before you all the time. You see a man is sensible if he knows there's danger there.

If he knows there's a high voltage, it's not clever to go and fool around with it. Again there is a natural fear. One of the problems of the day in which we live, is as the scripture says, there is no fear of God before men and women.

No fear of God. They salute him, they go to church, they do the respectable thing. But as for fearing him, fearing him with godly fear, fearing to grieve him.

Well if you love people, you don't hurt them. If you love people, you want to do the very best you can for them. If you love people, you'll obey them as implicitly as it's possible.

And the Apostle says in writing there in the, in the fifth chapter of Romans, that the, if we're really born of God, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. He has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. You know there's a, there's a lovely phrase there in, in Romans 12, 1 and 2, where it says, I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice.

And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. I remember a very famous personality in America, came to see us when we were at Teen Challenge. And David Wilkerson called me in his office, and he said, hey I've got so-and-so coming, would you come in? And I went in, and listened to these men discuss for a while.

And he said, you know, I don't believe that all these claims of yours, to get people changed from drug addiction, prostitution, everything else, I don't believe your records very good. You've exaggerated it, you can't prove the statistics. And so we said, well you can think of it that way.

Well he said, it's not possible. He said you claim so-and-so, now he's been on drugs, his mind is blown. The police gave up with him.

And now you say he's here? No he's not here. You send him to Bible school, you shipped him out, because he's a, he's a valid case. Can't do a thing with him, you know that.

The thing between his ears has evaporated. Never concentrate. You won't teach him.

I remember David turned to me, he said Len, what do you say to so-and-so? I said, well the scripture just leapt into my mind. In Romans 12, 1 and 2, where it says, be not conformed to this world. Don't, don't be, don't be bent by this world.

Don't let this world shape you. It will if you let it. You'll bend to its thinking, you'll bend to its customs, you'll bend to its habits.

Don't let it do you, that to you. Be not conformed, but be transformed. You know it's the same word as transfigured, that Jesus was transfigured on the mount.

Be transfigured by the renewing of your mind. And I said to that man, sir I want to tell you, that when God gets a man, the Apostle says in 1 Corinthians 5 17, if any man be in Christ. That's a big, big scope you know.

Any man, anywhere, anytime, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. And the old things are passed away, and all things have become new. Now if this man is reborn, he is a new personality, and he not only has his sins forgiven, he not only has a new heart, he has a new spirit, he has a new mind, he can think differently.

One of the classic cases was a boy who, I remember him standing at the door, boy I guess about, almost six feet high, maybe a little more. And I, I said to him, can I help you? And he said, well I don't know. But help her.

That's my wife, I got her on drugs, but I can't get her off. Can you help her? I said, no I can't, I believe the Lord can. Well, well, get her off drugs, she's going to die.

I said, all right, you want to stay here? Yes, all right, you go up into the men's section, we'll send the girl in the girl's section. And about three days after that, that girl was in a prayer meeting. And just like that, the Lord came to her.

And she walked out, her teeth were all worn, her nose was worn through, where she'd snuffed drugs. She was a wretched looking character, her hair looked as though she'd, she'd filled it with axle oil out of an automobile. And you could smell her a block away nearly.

But you know, when she came out that afternoon, her face was radiant. And I remember she looked at her boyfriend, Bunny, his nickname was, she said, Bunny, I'm changed, I'm a new person. And he said, well how did it happen? Well, I was just praying, and I did what they said.

I just rolled all my sins on Jesus, and told him I was sorry, and I wanted to give up, and I wanted to be a new person, and so forth and so on. He said, will it last? So I said, sure it'll last. Sure it will last.

If God's done it, it will last. Well, I don't understand it, but I hope it will. About three days afterwards, he went into the men's prayer meeting.

The same thing happened to him. He came out, and he said, I can't explain it, but something happened inside. And I, I, I feel new, and I feel clean, and I, I, I'm just somebody else.

And I said, that's right. You're a child of wrath, and now you're a child of God. You've been born again of the Spirit of God.

A man knows when he believes. This is what the very, the Apostle says in here. He says, I am appointed a preacher, and an Apostle, and a teacher.

For the which cause I also suffer these things. Nevertheless I'm not ashamed, for I know in whom I have believed, and I'm persuaded that he's able to keep that which I've committed to him. Do you know what the figure there is? It's a child going with something that's precious, and saying, Daddy will you look after this while I go to bed? I don't want to let it drop out of bed.

Will you keep it for me? Daddy I know you're so strong, can you keep it? And Paul says, listen, what I had I committed to him against that day, and he's able to keep it. That fellow Donny, became the wonder of Teen Charlotte. I don't think he'd been there three weeks, and he said to me one day, Brother Abel, could I, could I come to your class on Tuesdays and Thursdays? I said, no because it's for the staff.

But I said, I'll ask David Wilkerson, and you can ask David too. He said, all right. On the Thursday he said, I'm coming to your class.

I've asked Mr. Wilkerson, it's okay. I said, fine. You know that, that, that young fellow just, well let me say this.

They were not married, so we had a service, and got them married. David Wilkerson's a compassionate man. He gave them twenty dollars, and said go and have a night on town.

There's a certain hotel where you can get a room for the night, and this will get you dinner, and come back tomorrow. And they did exactly that. Never been in a hotel in their lives, except to steal.

They had one night in the hotel. They had breakfast, supper and breakfast, and they came back. Well what do we do now? Well stay around a while.

You know that young fellow and his wife went to a Bible school, not many months after. To cut a long story short, he was there one year, and they asked him to leave the Bible school. You know why they asked him to leave the Bible school? Because he wouldn't go to bed for one thing before two or three in the morning.

He read the Bible, he read it, he read it, he read it, he read it, he read it. I said to his wife one day, when they came back to the office, well how are you getting on? How's James doing? He dropped the bummy title. How's James? All right, all right.

Yeah, he's doing well, good. I said well there's something wrong. Now what's wrong? He won't go to sleep at night.

I wake up at one o'clock. James? All right dear, yeah I won't be long. Wake up at two o'clock? Yeah, nearly, nearly ready.

And you know on top of all the work he had to do, he imposed the task on himself of mastering Greek, and he took up Greek. And he so got into the Greek New Testament, particularly in the, in the latter half of the first year, that when there was a question raised, and somebody said that sir, and the professor said yes, yes what's the question, so and so. And then Bunny's hand would go, he said but sir you just quoted that in the Greek.

But you know the other Greek tense, you quoted it in the, in the Aorist tense, but in the ploop effect or something. And he got these professors so tied up, he embarrassed them, and they said we, we think it would be better if you, if you left the school. I tell you if that isn't the transforming of the mind, I don't know what it is.

You see Paul is concerned about this man Timothy. It's as though he says look, I'm not Elijah, but I want to tell you this, I'd like to put my mantle on you when I die. There's nobody to stand up with strength and might.

Now he says Timothy keep that which is being committed to thy trust. There are all kinds of robbers round. They don't all come up and mug you like they do in Central Park in New York.

They come up with subtlety. They come up with kindness. They kill you with love.

Emotional love. You've got to find the difference between that emotional love and spiritual love. Again the good being the enemy of the best.

He says don't let anybody move you out of this. For in the second chapter verse 19 he says nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure having this seal. The Lord north them that are his and let everyone that name of the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Again he reminds him in the third chapter the perilous time shall come. Men shall be lovers of themselves and in the fourth chapter he says I charge thee therefore before the God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom preach the word be instant in season and out of season reprove rebuke exhort with all long-suffering. And then he ties it up in verse 7 he says I fought a good fight.

I like that. I like that. If any most of us that fought every badly fought did not we to put in I've been a good fighter.

He's too modest to say that. He doesn't say I'm being a good fighter. He says I fought a good fight.

You know what he got scars to prove it. Have you got any? Have I got any? Somebody wrote a poem years ago I think very beautiful about going to heaven without any without any notches in the blade of your sword. You know when men came out of battle when it when it was hand fighting they used to slash at each other and you know you've seen them on movies I mean you hear the clash of the steel and it zigzagged all the edges of the blade and sometimes you couldn't get them all out.

It used to be a custom when a man retired in the army in old days he would say here look I want you to present you and they'd have a family gathering and he'd take his sword and say son I remember fighting in this battle and this and this this sword this sword this sword you see and that's why Jesus when he's retiring from his disciples he doesn't say peace I leave you do he says my peace I leave with you my peace I give unto you not as the world give he doesn't say joy I gift you he says my joy you see tested in every battle and there were notches in it and he he suffered and it's same with the Apostle Paul he says I fought a good fight I finished my course and I've kept the faith henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give

me in that day and not to me only but unto all them also that love is appearing and then he says very sweetly I think in the next verse do thy diligence to come shortly unto me isn't that nice do thy diligence shortly to come unto me and when thou comest he says in verse 13 would you bring that old skin that I used to cover me you know man I've got you know you know like you had a little girl and did a lovely bed for him little pink frills on it and all she wanted was a blanket with a hole in it you couldn't get her to go to bed without that rag doll and that little blanket worth about 50 cents so she was nodding she used to have one and I'll tell you you you get so attached to that beaten up old blanket and Paul says I've a beaten up old skin there it's been in that many prisons it's

part of me would you bring it along when you can so you come and he says bring with you the the bring when thou comest bring the books and especially the parchments and the cloak I left at Troas with carpets isn't that a great bit I think that's thrilling here's an old man in a moldy prison and he says could you send a note round to all those churches and ask them to give me a little offering I'd like a nice you know beauty rest mattress I mean after all the guy should have that in a lousy prison like this it's the least you can do and could you fix up with a local you know one of these nice gourmet restaurants to serve me at least one

good meal a day and it would really be nice if you brought me a few you know delicacies I mean I'm on the last stretch it's the gallows next stop and all

he says bring that old cloak I had and listen there's only three things I need I need a young man to tell me how he's keeping up in the fight and how things are going in the church and I I need just that faded old skin that nobody will want anyhow and you know a fella needs a book or two in here it's a pretty stinking old prison just just bring a few books hmm man you talk about being dead to everything everything the world could give you the thought that Lisa just said boy after all I've done for all the Saints at least that I thought they've had a prayer meeting got me out of prison like they got Peter out because I've done far more than Peter ever did he only wrote two epistles and they're not so great and I've written all these magnificent epistles and and and this is all I get for it

I'll tell you folks let you down right in the neediest time of your life this man thought that as I told you before Jesus didn't die on the cross Jesus died in Gethsemane you say that man was a martyr no no no no no no burning a man doesn't make him a martyr crucifying a man doesn't make him a martyr he was a martyr before he get there the fire proves he was a martyr the cross proves that he was a he'd already settled it because he'd written previously says well come on come on don't you get worried about these marvelous men these government officials and Nero and all the diabolical but listen I want to I'll give you a recipe you want a recipe for peace and joy write this down you get their ingredients right he says we we well we pray for extra grace just to put up with when folk hurt our

feelings and when money doesn't come in as much as it should another thing no no he says we glory I like that I think the Lord must have got excited because you see this man told the truth not all Christians do but he did he says we glory in tribulations in necessities and reproaches why we run away from them man if you saw them in Main Street tomorrow and you can get round come on be honest would you go ahead on to them and say listen I'm going to show you who's master here but if there were tribulation and distress and famine and peril and a nakedness and sword and we glory in man he says this is I scream to me you scream about everything else but this is I scream to me tribulation necessities reproaches and they put iron in yourself you see that again is the the joy of being dead

nobody can kill you and the joy of having nothing you can't lose anything if you're really nobody in your spirit you'll never get hurt when somebody says you nobody because if you get hurt it shows you somebody there's some area not dead in you but if you're nobody but you you got them late they say boy I I'll tell you what I'll tell him something I will insult so you can't insult nothing you see and this man Apostle Paul great majestic character you can't you can't fault him on any area that I know of you can't tell him he's nobody he says that he knows that himself he got there before you got there so you can't get him there and you say you don't have a thing do you I mean you've served God is this the way God will reward you boys are boys you know sometimes I wish some folk would read

the Bible don't you ever think it would be nice if they did God hath not given us the spirit of fear but of love and of power and of a sound mind look at the next verse be not ashamed therefore of the testimony now of our Lord nor of me in his prisoner that be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God or oh I thought he was gonna give me power so I could strut and go to a banquet and say do you not God did in my life all you folks that paid \$5 to hear me today at this breakfast or this supper no no no he says you'll get power but God only gives you a power to endure the afflictions that's what he gives it for it's not a medal to wear it's not that you might stand a bit taller it's because God says if I invest my power in you listen I'm going to give you

some burdens to bear and the Apostle Paul says you can whip me you can kick me you can brutalize me which they did and he says when you've done I'll turn around and laugh at you anyhow but he says I'll tell you what breaks my heart the care of all the churches they cut me up far more I can understand a devilish wicked world I don't understand the sense of God we were in a church just a few days ago where the pastor said I want to tell you something last Sunday we had an altar service I think the greatest we ever had in the church there were 50 to 60 people at the altar weeping groaning they didn't want to rush home for dinner and they cried to the Lord and they said Lord we'll serve you whatever the cost is we want your will whatever the cost they said you know not one of them has been in

the house of God this week while you've been in this revival here what do you do with people like that I said fire them get rid of them that's the best thing to do isn't it easy to make vows hmm Lord if you do you can't bargain with God forget it you know we're living in a day when we're gonna have to put on the whole armor of God we're gonna have to prove not that we're good fighters but it's the greatest fight in the world to be in and we're not afraid I shall not fear the battle if thou art by my side no wonder from the pathway if thou wilt be my guide I for the good fight there's a hymn in our book maybe we'll learn it one day fight the good fight with all I might Christ is thy strength and Christ I like lay hold of life and it shall be thy joy and crown eternally run the straight

race through God's good grace lift up thine eyes and see his face life with its path before thee lies Christ is thy strength and Christ the prize and then this to tie it all up faint not nor fear his arms are near he change of not and thou art dear only believe and thou shall see that Christ is all in all to thee Paul says goodbye world this is my last work but I'm saying it to the young fella I love and Timothy I don't need folks prayers they can't even pray themselves out so forget it don't ask them to pray for me and don't ask them for an offering and don't ask them for nice things but son bring the faded old cloak and I'm longing for a few minutes fellowship with you and bring the parchment bring the books I think you'll arrive when you don't need any more than that father we thank

you for giving us the privilege of being in this same race and we want to look to Jesus continually the author and the finisher of our faith and we pray that we shall not grow weary in well-doing but we shall do as this dear man of God said hold fast to that which thou hast that no man take thy crown we think of that man on the Isle of Patmos saying that same self same thing we pray that we may endure to the end fight the good fight complete the race and receive the crown of rejoicing in that great day and we'll give you praise in Jesus name

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