

BENT BUT NOT BROKEN BY FEAR

1 John 4:18 (NCV)

- **Fear is the most common of negative emotions, and it brings great harm to our lives.**
 - “The oldest and strongest and most terrible emotion is fear.” (H.P. Lovecraft)
 - “Fear is a tyrant, more terrible than the rack, more potent than any poisonous snake.” (Edgar Wallace)
 - “Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little death that brings total obliteration.” (Frank Herbert)
- **Question – “What ‘fears’ have I struggled with in my life, and how have they affected me?”**
- **Some “fears” are not necessarily bad for us.**
 - “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” (Proverbs 1:7 NKJV)
- **Most “fears” are actually a work of the Devil against our lives.**
 - “God has not given us a spirit of fearfulness, but one of power, love, and sound judgment.” (2 Timothy 1:7 HCSB)
- **Failing to overcome fear will rob us of our joy, peace and purpose in life.**
 - Jesus – “The thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy.” (John 10:10 NLT)
- **Question – “What are the major areas of fear that discourage and defeat most people, and how can we overcome those ‘fears’?”**

WE BECOME DISCOURAGED AND DEFEATED WHEN:

WE GIVE IN TO THE FEAR OF CALAMITY

- Many people are paralyzed by fear and unable to fulfill God’s will for their life because of their ongoing anticipation that some disaster, tragedy or misfortune is going to happen.

- **Question – “What’s the worst thing that could happen to me or my family members, and what could God do to protect me/us from that or preserve me/us through that?”**
- *“The LORD is my light and my salvation— so why should I be afraid? The LORD protects me from danger— so why should I tremble?” (Psalm 27:1 NLT)*
- **Sometimes the Lord allows us to go through danger and/or hurt in order to make us more like Him and to enable us to better minister to others.**
 - *“We know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them. For God knew His people in advance, and He chose them to become like his Son.” (Romans 8:28-29 NLT)*
- **The Lord often uses calamity to develop in us the character of Jesus.**
 - *“We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us—they help us learn to endure. And endurance develops strength of character in us . . .” (Romans 5:3-4 NLT)*
- **No matter what trials we’ve been through or may go through, if Jesus is our Savior we can trust in the fact that we are God’s children and that He will bring us “through the fire.”**
 - *“You should not be like cowering, fearful slaves. You should behave instead like God’s very own children, adopted into His family—calling him ‘Father, dear Father.’” (Romans 8:15 NLT)*

WE BECOME DISCOURAGED AND DEFEATED WHEN:

WE GIVE IN TO THE FEAR OF COMMUNITY

- **We all need to surround ourselves with good and godly relationships.**
- **Oftentimes people are fearful of forging new and/or intimate relationships because of the rejection or hurt they’ve experienced from others in their lives.**
 - King Saul to Samuel - *“I have sinned. I have disobeyed your instructions and the LORD’s command, for I was afraid of the people . . .” (1 Samuel 15:24 NLT)*

- **Question – “Who has hurt me the most in my life, and how has that hurt or fear of future hurt kept me from establishing good and godly relationships in my life?”**
- *“Don't be afraid of anyone, because I am with you to protect you,” says the Lord.* (Jeremiah 1:8 NCV)
- **The Lord has always intended for His people to have good relationships with others.**
- The Lord – *“It is not good for man to be alone . . .”* (Genesis 2:18 NKJV)
- **One way of overcoming fear in the context of relationships is by taking the safe step of getting connected to other Christians through a *Life Group* at Celebration.**
- *“They joined with the other believers and devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship.”* (Acts 2:42 NLT)

WE BECOME DISCOURAGED AND DEFEATED WHEN:

WE GIVE IN TO THE FEAR OF CHANGE

- **Question – “Why are people so afraid of change?”**
- *“Fear makes the wolf bigger than he is.”* (German proverb)
- **Experiencing “change” is uncomfortable especially when, regardless if the situation is good or bad, we are “fine” with the way things are.**
- **The Lord has purposed to bring us through a process of many “changes” in order to make us more and more like Jesus.**
- *“When someone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. He is not the same anymore. A new life has begun!”* (2 Corinthians 5:17 LB)
- *“We are being changed into His (Jesus') image with ever-increasing glory.”* (2 Corinthians 3:18 GW)
- *“As the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like Him (Jesus) and reflect His glory even more.”* (2 Corinthians 3:18 NLT)
- **“The process of true change takes place as we are weaned from our love and worship of self, pleasure and this world, and our hearts become wholly devoted to Christ and His will for our lives.”** (Craig Ratliff)

- **Giving in to fear is a tragic mistake because fear brings frailty, forgetfulness and failure to our lives.**
(2 Timothy 1:6-8)
- **We can conquer our fears because of the presence and power of the Lord in our lives.**
 - *“The LORD is my light and my salvation— so why should I be afraid? The LORD protects me from danger— so why should I tremble?”* (Psalm 27:1 NLT)
 - *“Little children, you are from God . . . for the one who is in you (Christ) is greater than the one who (Satan) is in the world.”* (1 John 4:4 RSV)
 - *“Where God's love is, there is no fear, because God's perfect love drives out fear.”* (1 John 4:18 NCV)
- **Question – “What ‘fears’ do I need to overcome in my life?”**

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