

OUT OF THE DARK SURVIVING A KINGDOM OF FEAR

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In the Garden of Eden are many trees, but two of them order the steps of spiritual life.

"And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (Genesis 2:9)

Our relationship with God, over the whole story of humanity, has been held in tension between Fear and Love.

However, and this is important, in the middle of the story there a profound change in that relationship.
What is that change?

*There have been names that I love to hear, oh, yes
But never has there been a name so dear
To this heart of mine, as this name divine
This precious, precious name of Jesus*

*You know there is no name in earth or heaven above
That we should give such honor and such love
As the blessed name
Let us all acclaim that wondrous, glorious name of Jesus, Jesus*

*Jesus is the sweetest name I'll ever, ever know
And He's just the same as his holy name
And that's the reason why I love Him so
Jesus is the sweetest name I know*

YOU MUST PERCEIVE THE GIFT OF GOD. JESUS CHANGED EVERYTHING!

If you grew up in a certain kind of church, you had a LOT of OT scripture quoted to you. You were given the gift of Fear of the Lord. The scripture was right, but may NOT have been rightfully divided.

We fear the Lord because He is the infinite God beyond knowledge or understanding – The Lion of the tribe of Judah!

We love the Lord because He came to us as The Lamb of God for sinners slain.

In others words, we are not under the Law. The Law can be wrongly applied to recipients of Grace. You can't handle the law. It condemns. It kills. But Jesus kept the Law in your stead, and offers you Grace. Which, having received, enables NOT a relationship of fear, but a relationship of Love!

Celebrating grace is not the Rejection of Law. It is the fulfillment of Law. Law was never intended to save anyone. It was intended to teach you that you needed a Savior.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11

The unbeliever says, "I have learned that I am not enough!" And feels fear.
The unbeliever says, "I have learned that I am not in control!" And feels fear.
The unbeliever says, "I have learned that I am not strong! I am fragile!" And feels fear.
The unbeliever says, "I have learned that I will die! And that death may be painful." And feels fear.
The unbeliever says, "I have learned that I cannot escape pain and loss!" And feels fear.

They live with this fear. It circles above them on their best days, and roils within on their worst days.
It is never far away. Why?

Because life reminds us, everyday, that we are weak, despite how strong we pretend to be!
No matter how healthy you feel, tomorrow you'll have a sniffle.

The believer says, "I have learned that I am not enough. But I know Who is!" And feels hope.
The believer says, "I have learned that I am not in control. But I know Who is!" And feels hope.
The believer says, "I have learned that I am not strong, but fragile. But I know Who is Strong!" And feels hope.
The believer says, "I have learned that I will die. But I know in Whom is eternal life!" And feels hope.
The believer says, "I have learned that I cannot escape pain and loss. But I know Who will be with me until every tear is wiped away!" And feels hope.

But this is not the only lived reality. There is a more complicated scenario. It is of the believer who claims the hope of Jesus Christ, and sometimes even feels it, but lives with crushing fear. They are not bad people, not by our experience. BUT they are wandering in a spiritually confused wilderness.

They have failed to perceive that surrendering their fears to God is just as much a part of Christian life, as going to church.
... surrendering fear and anxiety to God is just as much a part of faith as singing with the praise band, or rejoicing with them that rejoice.



To serve the Lord is not to escape trouble, but to ORDER YOUR SOUL!

What are the greatest sources of Fear in your life?

Death?
Loss of health?
Losing your job?
Losing your spouse?
Losing your kids?

*God has not given us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, love, and self-discipline (2 Timothy 1:7).
Those who fear are not made perfect in love, for perfect love casts out all fear (1 John 4:18).*

So what does this have to do with fear holding us back? Maybe we don't know what it feels like to truly love or perhaps we don't love others and God strongly enough to be obedient to His will.

When it comes to living out your calling, what is it that you fear? Rejection? Failure? Not being good enough? Criticism? Do you fear that people will judge you?

I personally have fear of all of these. But then I remember that God is BIGGER than all of my fears and He will always sustain me.

In health or the lack of health.
With money or broke.
In this life or next.

To live by faith is NOT to say we do not have fear! To live by faith is to choose PROMISE OVER FEAR.