

Common Enemy #8: Fear
April 3, 2016
Lynn Haven UMC

Introduction

Everyone is afraid of something. Whether it be snakes, terrorist attacks or heights, fear is a common enemy we all share. These fears can spread into our spiritual lives as well: what will my friends think if I openly share my faith? What if I'm not accepted by God? What might happen if I totally submitted myself to the Lord? Fear is a powerful weapon that our adversary, the Devil, uses to control and manipulate us. Thankfully, God's Word gives us insight into how to overcome fear.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some of your fears?
2. What are *some* benefits to some level of fear?
3. Read Numbers 13:1-3; 25-33. What did the Israelites fear? How did they allow this fear to control them?
4. What are the dangers of making decisions when you are afraid? Think about the Israelites' desire to return to Egypt when they were afraid. See Numbers 14:1-4.
5. Read Numbers 14:6-9. How did Joshua and Caleb take the focus off the Israelites' fear and back onto God and His sufficiency?
6. As a result of fear, we fail to experience all that God has in mind for us. Describe a time when fear kept you from experiencing God's blessing.
7. Fear is defeated through faith that looks backward as we remember how God has worked in our past. Think about a time in your life when you overcame fear by one of God's acts of faithfulness or protection.
8. Fear is defeated through faith that moves forward as we trust and obey the Lord. How do our trust and obedience to the Lord help us defeat fear?

Conclusion

Paul tells his young friend, Timothy, "God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7 NLT). So if we harbor any level of fear, we can be assured it is not from God. It is an enemy that must be faced and conquered.

If you struggle with fear, commit the following verses to memory:

"The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid? For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock." (Psalm 27:1,5 NIV)

