

FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT
#1 – FIGHT WHEN FEAR DOMINATES YOU

PSALMS 34:1-9

Intro: *There are many things to fear today: Covid-19 pandemic, civil strife, and government chaos. But we can fight our fear successfully with God's help.*



Background of Psalm 34: David had become popular because of his victory over the Philistines. Out of jealousy, King Saul decided to kill David. Overnight, David went from conqueror to criminal. He tried to find refuge with the Philistine king Achish of Gath. When David's true identity was discovered, he had to fake insanity to escape. He hid in the cave of Andullam and it is believed wrote this Psalm (I Samuel 21:12-15, 22:1).

I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips. My soul will boast in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together. Psalms 34:1-3

I. Fight Fear with the Power of Praise

- ***When we praise God in spite of fear, choose _____ over feelings*** – The fears here are those dreads and horrors that dominate one's mind and terrorize the soul. When we only worship when we feel like it, we allow our fears to control our faith. When we praise in spite of feelings, God's spirit empowers us and breaks the stranglehold of fear.
- ***When we praise God in spite of fear, our focus turns to Him and we merely _____ at our fears*** – When we praise God, we focus on and experience His greatness and holiness, and we remember His previous acts of blessing; our fears soon shrink in significance. As we remember what God has done in the past, we know He's in control of our lives in the now.
- ***When we praise God, we should do it _____*** – When we worship with other believers, our praise is more powerful, and God's presence and blessing is with us in a greater way. We also know we are not alone; we have fellow believers there for support and encouragement. Our worship is a reminder to one another that with God, we can conquer our fear. The afflicted can rejoice!

I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame. Psalms 34:4-5

II. Fight Fear by Seeking the Lord in Prayer

- ***Seek the _____ in prayer*** – We need to actively go to Him. He is waiting to hear from us! When praying, we should give Him our problems and fears, and leave them there. It is no longer our problem to worry about. It is His. Peter tells us to “cast all your anxiety on Him (God)” because He cares for us.
- ***When we seek Him, He will “_____” us*** – His answer may be how to deal with the problem you face. The answer may be to let Him deal with it. Remember, it's His problem now. His answer will always include spiritual peace (Philippians 4:6-7). This may be immediate or take time through continual prayer.
- ***He will deliver us from all our fears, not necessarily all our _____*** – Our problems may not go away, but now they are God's problems with His resources available to deal with them according to His will. We have no more reason to fear!

- **When we give Him our problems and fears, we will “be radiant” with God’s _____**
– We will shine with the joy and peace of God’s spirit. Our “shame” – fear, terror and gloom – will have no place because of our radiance in God’s spirit!

This poor man called, and the Lord heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him; and he delivers them.
Psalms 34:6-7

III. Fight Fear by Counting on the Lord’s Protection

- **The ultimate solution: God saves you from your _____** – We need to call out to the Lord as a “poor man” – humble, recognizing your need, and realizing the lack of your own ability to meet that need. When you have faith in God, in spite of your fears, God will hear. He will “save” you from your troubles. This does not mean your troubles will immediately disappear, but they will not destroy or defeat you. You will have eventual victory. Faith over fear equals victory!
- **The angel of the Lord will “encamp” around _____** – Angels are messengers and representatives of God with His full power and authority. When the angel of the Lord encamps around you, God’s presence and protection surrounds you. You will “be delivered” from lasting damage of the enemy’s attacks and the enemy will eventually be defeated. This is done in God’s way and in His time to accomplish His purposes. Also the angel of the Lord in the Old Testament is often the pre-incarnation Son of God – Jesus! We are promised Jesus’ presence and power in our lives when we call out to God as a “poor man.” The prophet Elisha experienced this in II Kings 6.

Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. Fear the Lord, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing.
Psalms 34:8-9

IV. Fight Fear by Fearing the Lord in His Power

- **To fear the Lord is to show deep respect, honor and humility to Him as the great, mighty and holy _____** – When we fear the Lord, we are not demanding but humbly trusting in Him and His will in our lives. When we “fear,” our faith and commitment to the Lord is not “conditional” on whether He takes care of us based on our expectations, wants or wishes.
- **When we fear the Lord, we will _____ nothing** – All our true needs will be taken care of, not necessarily our selfish wants. Again, this happens in His time and in His way. Often, it isn’t until later that we see and understand His plan. For David, God eventually vindicated him and made him king, but it didn’t happen immediately. When we fear the Lord, we are willing to wait patiently for Him.

Answers: I. Faith; glance; together. II. Lord; answer; problems; presence. III. Troubles; you. IV. God; lack.