

## *Faith Versus Fear Seminar: II Timothy 1:7*

- I. The Fall of Man – Genesis 3:1-19
  - A. The deception of human deification through one’s own mind, emotions, and efforts.
  - B. The inception of ‘fear’ as a guiding principle in man’s life, versus faith and trust in God through a living and vital relationship with Him.
  - C. The codification of human divinity through polytheistic ‘gods’ (Genesis 3:5; 11:1-4).
    - 1. Jesus is the source of all creation (Col. 1:13-17)
    - 2. Satan was cast from heaven because of his desire to deify himself above God (Is. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:11-17).
  
- II. The Total Corruption of Man
  - A. Genesis 6:5
    - 1. The word “intent” also means ‘form’.
    - 2. Thus, before our thoughts are recognizable to us as thoughts, their very inception in our minds comes out of an evil and corrupt base.
  - B. Psalm 14:1-3
    - 1. “there is no God” – the word for “no” is *’ain*, and it means ‘non-existence’.
    - 2. Thus, God responds by saying, “there *’ain’t* no one doing good, there *’ain’t* even one.”
  - C. Isaiah 64:6
    - 1. The words translated “filthy garment” in Hebrew are *beged ’idim*.
    - 2. This literally means a ‘used menstrual cloth’.
    - 3. According to Levitical Law, when a woman was in her period, that was the apex of uncleanness for her (Leviticus 15:19-30).
    - 4. Thus, our righteousness is comparable to a ‘used menstrual cloth’.
  - D. Jeremiah 17:9
    - 1. Our heart (i.e., our mind and the thoughts and emotions emitting from our mind) is “evil above all other things.”
    - 2. Our heart (i.e., our mind and the thoughts and emotions emitting from our mind) is also “sick/weak above all other things.”

3. No one is fully able to understand the depth of its evil and sickness.

### III. The Source of Fear

- A. Our minds have become alienated from God as a result of our sin (Colossians. 1:21-23).
- B. Consequently, our unregenerate minds are under the domination, influence, and control of the “god of this world” (II Corinthians 4:1-4).
- C. When we are saved, we are then delivered from the domination and control of our minds by the “god of this world,” but we are still quite susceptible to his constant influence (Colossians 1:13-14).
  1. Romans 7:14-25
  2. Romans 12:1-2
- D. Fear is an emotion incited by thoughts of doubt and uncertainty with regard to our security or survival in all aspects of life.
  1. There is the healthy fear of warning when danger is approaching, and there is a need for an immediate or long-term response.
    - a. Under this category would come the “fear of the Lord” that we are encouraged to have in Proverbs 1:7: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.”
    - b. The “fear of the Lord” is described in Proverbs 8:13: “The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way, And the perverted mouth, I hate.”
  2. There is also the unhealthy fear that produces a paranoia, which enslaves and controls our emotions in a very debilitating and destructive way.
    - a. This is the fear that is incited by Satan as he assaults our minds and emotions with doubt and uncertainty concerning God’s promises.
    - b. II Timothy 1:7 is addressing this very fear: “For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”
      - (1) If God has not given us “a spirit of fear,” then there can only be one other source – Satan!
      - (2) Satan’s tactic is to challenge God’s promises and His integrity to keep His Word.

3. The single most oft repeated command in the Bible is ‘do not fear’, or its numerous corollaries (e.g., don’t be anxious, do not worry, etc.), and the second single most oft repeated command is “trust in the Lord.”
  - a. The actual number of times “do not fear”, or one of its corollaries is repeated is some 68 times (Ps. 23:4).
  - b. The actual number of times “trust in the Lord”, or one of its corollaries (e.g., trust God, have faith in God, etc.) is repeated is some 25 times (Ps. 37:3).
4. Thus, the spiritual dimension of this struggle between ‘fear and faith’ is very real and encompasses every aspect of our lives because all of God’s promises address every aspect of our lives.

#### IV. Biblical Examples of ‘Faith vs. Fear’

##### A. Abraham & Sarah – Genesis 15-22

1. Through Abraham’s many failures in succumbing to the fear that God would not, or could not keep His Word, he learned to trust the Lord completely (Genesis 22; Acts 16:22-34).
2. In Hebrews 11:8-19, no mention is made of his failures, but only his ultimate maturity in trusting the Lord (Genesis 16; Romans 8:37).

##### B. Moses – Exodus 2:11-4:31

1. Moses went from being utterly self-confident in killing the Egyptian, to not thinking he could do anything confrontational (Exodus 2:14-4:31).
2. In each instance of confronting Pharaoh, Moses faced the onslaught of fear as He trusted the Lord to do what He said He would do (Ex. 14:13-14).
3. Once again, in Hebrews 11:23-29 we see no mention of Moses’ doubting and fear, only of the result of his trusting in the Lord in the face of the fears that he went through.

##### C. Jehoshaphat – II Chronicles 20:1-30

1. Jehoshaphat “was afraid” upon hearing of the tripartite, military alliance that was coming against him (II Chronicles 20:3).
2. However, in the face of his fear, he prayed, fasted, and trusted in the Lord (II Chronicles 20:6-13).
3. God spoke to Jehoshaphat and told him, “Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's” (II Chronicles 20:14-19).

4. Thus, in the face of their fear surrounding and pummeling their minds and emotions, they trusted the promises of God and praised and exalted Him, seeing and feeling nothing, but having only the promise of His faithfulness (II Chronicles 20:20-21).
5. God, in turn, sovereignly brought about a supernatural deliverance for the people of Judah in a manner they could never have conceived of, let alone brought about in their own efforts (II Chronicles 20:22-30).

D. Paul – II Corinthians 1:1-11

1. Paul describes in verses 8-9 the intensity of the spiritual, emotional, and physical trauma and struggle he and others with him went through while in Asia, but the purpose was that “we had the sentence of death within ourselves in order that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead” (Luke 1:37).
2. In II Corinthians 7:5-7, Paul describes even more fully the inner struggle he went through:

For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within. <sup>6</sup> But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus; <sup>7</sup> and not only by his coming, but also by the comfort with which he was comforted in you, as he reported to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced even more.

3. Thus, we see even with Paul that he too struggled with fear in his spiritual and emotional battles, even to the point of leading to depression. However, as he says in II Corinthians 1:9, “we had the sentence of death within ourselves in order that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead” (Luke 9:23-24).

V. The Biblical Means of Faith Overcoming the Tyranny of Fear

- A. II Timothy 1:7 – Cringing, debilitating fear, or nagging, doubting fear that focuses on the fact that I cannot or had better not trust God and His promises is not from God, but from the ‘pit of hell’.

1. That being the case, I then know that whatever is the focus of that fear is not true because Satan is a liar (John

8:44), and God would never tell me to not trust Him, but instead be consumed with doubt and fear and do things my own way.

2. Thus, whatever attitude or action said fear is attempting to implant in my mind and have me in turn act upon it, I will do just the opposite, which is the attitude or action that trusting God and His promise would lead me to carry through with.
  3. I will also do a teleological analysis of the fear and the attitude and action it is leading me to carry out; i.e., I will take mental steps backwards from the attitude or action I am contemplating pursuing and get to the root of that attitude or action, which always turns out to be, “I simply can’t trust God to do what He says He will do in His Word, or I do not think He is able to do what He says He will do, so I better take the situation into my own hands and do what I think should be done and the way I think it should be done, based on my motivating fear that I cannot trust God because of His inability to carry through with His Word of promise!”
    - a. Therefore, when I stop and do this, I begin to see how very foolish my actions are based on my thinking that God is incapable of working in this particular situation.
    - b. However, the thought of God’s inability to do something is NEVER from God, but right from ‘the pit’, and its aim is to get me to take matters into my own hands and actually exacerbate the situation, versus seeing it resolved through God’s means of deliverance (Proverbs 3:5-6).
  4. On the other hand, the absolute antithesis of “fear” is “power, love, and a sound/disciplined mind.”
- B. I Thessalonians 5:16-18
1. I have discovered that praise and thanksgiving to God is the antithesis of ‘self-pity’ and ‘depression’, which God NEVER leads me into, but rather Satan does.
    - a. The Bible is both a book of ‘psychology’ and ‘philosophy’.
      - (1) The word for ‘psychology’ actually comes from two Greek words: *psuchē*, which means ‘inner

man', and *logia*, which means 'study'; thus, 'the study of the inner man', which is what the Bible is all about.

- (2) The word for 'philosophy' also comes from two Greek words: *philo*, which means to 'have affection for', and *sophia*, which means 'wisdom'; thus, 'love of wisdom', which is what we are enjoined to pursue in Proverbs 2:1-6.
- (3) However, the 'psychology' and 'philosophy' of the Bible can be quite different from that of the world because biblical 'psychology' and 'philosophy' are based on the foundational truth of man's utter corruption and his inextricable need for Jesus as His Savior, versus worldly 'psychology' and 'philosophy', which is based on the premise of man's goodness and that he can be his own savior.

- b. The act of praising God and rejoicing in His faithfulness when you cannot see anything materially concerning your deliverance, nor can you feel anything emotionally with regard to the assurance of His presence and deliverance, is the very essence of faith and trust in God and His means of deliverance based on His Word of promise (Hebrews 11:1; II Chronicles 20:20-23).

#### C. Matthew 4:1-11

1. In this passage, we see Jesus being confronted with the same three areas of temptation we are also confronted with: the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, and the lust of the eyes.
  - a. These are the same three things that Eve was confronted with in the Garden (Genesis 3:6; Col. 3:23-24).
  - b. We are also warned about these very three areas in I John 2:16).
  - c. In all three of these areas, the element of fear arises and infers that somehow we are missing out on something good for us if we don't pursue these areas, versus obeying God and not pursuing them.

- (1) This is Satan’s implication when he says in Genesis 3:5, “For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”
  - (2) He is in essence saying, God is holding something good back from you because He doesn’t want you to truly be fulfilled or happy, thus, inciting ‘fear’ that you are somehow missing out on something that will really be good for you.
2. In each temptation, therefore, Satan was attempting to incite ‘fear’ in Jesus that He was somehow missing out on the best for Himself by not following through with Satan’s offers, versus obeying God in faith and trusting in the promises of His Word for His best.
  3. In each instance, however, Jesus responded with, “it is written.”
    - a. Matthew 4:3-4 – Bread vs. Word
    - b. Matthew 4:5-7 – False significance vs. True significance
      - (1) In this temptation, Satan even quotes Scripture to support the validity of the thought he is trying to get Jesus to succumb to.
        - (a) However, he doesn’t quote the passage correctly, thereby giving a twisted view that would tend to support his lie and misrepresentation of God’s true will.
          - [1] Psalm 91:11-12: “For He will give His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways. <sup>12</sup> They will bear you up in their hands, lest you strike your foot against a stone.” This is a direct representation of the verse from the Hebrew text in the NAS.
          - [2] Psalm 91:11-12 (LXX): “For he shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. <sup>12</sup> They shall bear thee up on their hands, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.” Here you can clearly see that the LXX (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament – the Septuagint) is completely in line with the Hebrew itself.

[3] Matthew 4:6: “and said to Him, ‘If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'He will give His angels charge concerning You'; and 'On their hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone’”. Here in Matthew’s Gospel, Satan is quoted as leaving out entirely the phrase, “to guard you in all your ways,” thus implying that Jesus can do whatever He wants to do and God will take care of Him.

[4] Luke 4:9-11:

And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here; <sup>10</sup> for it is written, 'He will give His angels charge concerning You to guard You,' <sup>11</sup> and, 'On their hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone.'"

In Luke’s account, Satan is quoted as saying, “to guard you,” but he doesn’t include, “in all your ways,” and once again, the reason for that is so that he may present a twisted and skewed view of this passage in order to support his lie that Jesus can do whatever He may want to do, and God will bless it.

(b) Jesus responds by correctly quoting Scripture from Deuteronomy 6:16: “You shall not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah.”

[1] The situation that occurred at Massah is recorded in Exodus 17:1-7 when the Israelites complained against Moses that they didn’t have any water.

[2] God provided water for the people through Moses striking the rock, but Moses “named the place Massah (from the Hebrew verb *māssâ*, which means ‘to melt/dissolve’, and thus the idea of ‘despair’ as a result of one’s hope dissolving) and Meribah (this comes from the Hebrew verb *rîb*, which means ‘to strive/contend’ [the word “Meribah” being a participle of the Hif’il stem of

the verb, thus, the translation, ‘causing to continuously strive/contend’]) because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel, and because they tested the Lord saying, ‘Is the Lord among us, or not?’ (Exodus 17:7)?

- (c) Thus, based on the above scripture, “testing the Lord” is not believing and trusting in God’s faithfulness to do what He says He will do.
- (d) Thus, Jesus knew that His identity as a man was not going to be achieved in trying to impress others with Himself for his own personal acclaim and recognition, but rather His true significance was as He sought to be insignificant before men as a man and become a servant, doing what He did as unto the Lord (Luke 22:24-27).

(2) Therefore, it is important to know that Satan will use the ‘fear of non-recognition’ to try to get us to compromise with the promise of God’s Word in order to enslave us in the pursuit of fame and recognition for the sake of ‘self-deification’.

c. Matthew 4:8-11 – False power and wealth vs. True power and wealth

D. Mark 4:18-19; Luke 8:15

1. These two passages are part of the ‘parable of the sower’, and the passage in Mark is referring to the third soil, in which the seed that is sown grows into a plant, and the plant doesn’t die, but it never reaches its full maturity due to the weeds that choke out the nutrients from getting to its roots.
  - a. Of the person who is represented by this soil, Jesus says that “the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful” (Mark 4:18).
  - b. The word for “worries” is *merimnai*, and it comes from the Greek verb *merimnaō*, which also means ‘to be anxious’, and this is another synonym for ‘to fear’.
  - c. Thus, these “worries” are nothing less than various types of ‘fear’ and ‘foreboding’ that consume one’s mind and emotions.

- d. The other interesting thing about verse 19 is that Jesus says “the worries (i.e., ‘fears’) of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things *continually* enter in and *continually* choke the word, and it *continually* becomes unfruitful.”
    - (1) These thoughts are unrelenting, and they are aimed at our emotional vulnerabilities where we can most easily be exploited and enslaved through various forms of fear.
    - (2) If these thoughts are not addressed, they will utterly enslave and retard a believer’s spiritual, mental, and emotional growth, leading to maturity and stability.
  - 2. However, Luke 8:15 describes just how these thoughts can and must be addressed, and that is through the Word of God.
    - a. If these thoughts are addressed by and through God’s Word, then the believer will experience victory over the enslaving lies associated with fear, which in turn will lead to spiritual, mental, and emotional health and wholeness.
    - b. Jesus clearly describes in Luke 8:15 just how this works in a believer’s life: “And the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.”
      - (1) “An honest and good heart” is referring to someone who is truly broken over his or her sin and desires only to walk with Jesus’ in the truth (Gal. 2:20).
      - (2) “Hold it fast” is referring to a *continuous, ongoing holding onto and retention* of the Word, with great tenacity, in the face of relentless spiritual and emotional opposition, through discouragement, disappointment, persecution, personal failure, etc.
      - (3) “Bear fruit with perseverance” is referring to a *continuous, ongoing bearing of spiritual, mental, and emotional fruit* with a persevering faith that recognizes oneself as being dead to himself and his own selfish survival, but alive in the power of Christ (Luke 9:23-24).
- E. II Corinthians 10:3-6
- 1. This passage is key to the victory we can have in Christ over the ‘fears’ and ‘anxieties’ that assault our mind and emotions in an unrelenting fashion, through various forms and levels of intensity.

- a. The word for “war” in verse three is *strateuomai* in the Greek, and it is from *strateuomai* that the English word ‘strategy’ comes from.
  - b. Thus, the emphasis in this verse is that even though we “walk” or live in our fleshly mind and body, we do not ‘strategize’ according to our carnal reasoning and thinking.
  - c. Once again, Proverbs 3:5-6 is the ‘antidote’ for our attempt to figure out our situation according to our own carnal, flawed, and skewed reasoning, apart from relying on the “mind of Christ,” which we now have fully operating within us as believers (I Corinthians 2:1-16).
  - d. Therefore, “the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly,” and here too, the word for “warfare” is *strateia*, which is the derivative for our English word ‘strategy’.
2. The “fortresses” referred to in verse 4 are those areas in our mental and emotional make-up in which we are completely unable, through our own natural reasoning abilities, to harness their destabilizing response to circumstances and the resulting thoughts that incite uncontrollable anxiety and fear.
    - a. The “weapons” employed against these fortresses must be of divine origin and substance, or else we will be utterly debilitated and spiritually, mentally, and emotionally wasted.
    - b. The application and utilization of these weapons, therefore, is laid out in verse 5, and this is of extreme importance because we are now given the ‘divine strategy’ by which we can and will destroy these fortresses through Christ.
      - (1) The word “destroying” in verse 5 literally means ‘continually destroying/taking down/pulling down/overthrowing’; i.e., it is an ongoing, day-by-day, all day battle.
      - (2) The word “speculations” is *logismous*, and it comes from the Greek word *logos*, or word, which also means ‘thought’ or ‘reasoning’, or ‘false argument and reasoning’.
        - (a) Thus, it is precisely these ‘false thoughts and reasoning’ that have their inception in Satan’s lie that we are fighting against every day, all day!

- (b) The methodology by which these ‘false thoughts and reasoning’ incite our carnal mind and emotions is delineated in James 1:13-15:

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.<sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.<sup>15</sup> Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

- (c) In this instance, therefore, ‘abortion’ is called for; i.e., the abortion of these thoughts before they take root and begin to develop a ‘fetus of attitude and action’ that, when finally birthed, can enslave and destroy (Gal. 5:19-21).
- (3) “and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God” is referring to the thoughts of pride that continually come and prompt us to view ourselves as smarter and wiser than Scripture.
- (4) “and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,” means just what it says.
- (a) We now go back to where we began in Genesis 6:5:  
“Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”
- (b) Therefore, if “every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (i.e., all day, every day), then the exhortation that Paul is giving makes perfect sense because our ‘every thought’ contains misinformation and misdirection of some sort, and this is especially true with regard to ‘fear’.
- (c) Three important points need to be seen in this portion of the verse:
- [1] The phrase, “we are taking captive” is one word in Greek, *aichmalōtidzontes*, and it implies an ongoing and continuous action.
- [2] The second point is that the word “captive” may also be translated, ‘to bring under control’; thus, “we are continually bringing under control/taking captive.”

- [3] The final point concerns the word “thought,” which may also be translated as ‘design, purpose, intention, method, and plot’.
- (d) Thus, we may translate, “and we are continually taking captive/bringing under control every thought/design/purpose/intention/method unto the obedience of Christ.”
  - (e) We do this in the same way Jesus did it; we bring these “thoughts” into a direct confrontation with the promises and admonitions of God’s Word, and in turn, we ‘capture them’ and bring them into submission to God’s authority, and **THAT INCLUDES FEAR MOST ESPECIALLY!**
3. Verse 6 is bringing into the big picture all that Paul is saying on an individual basis to each Corinthian believer, as well as every believer since then.
- a. There were in Corinth at that time those who were teaching false and misleading doctrines, resulting in believers being brought into the bondage of fear and uncertainty through such teaching.
  - b. Paul is therefore saying that once they as individuals desire to walk in God’s liberating truth, and they unite as a body of believers to do the same in repudiating the lies of the devil through these false teachers and their teachings, then he and those with him will come and stand with them in repudiating and disavowing the false teachers and their teachings.
  - c. This is a statement of encouragement, support, but also of responsibility, in that Paul wants to encourage the Corinthian believers in the truth of God’s love and victory for them in Christ, but he also wants them to know that they must individually and corporately choose to follow Christ in their own personal relationship with Him because he, Paul, cannot live their life for them, he can only come alongside if they are in submission to Christ and are in agreement to walk in His truth.

## VI. Conclusion

The personal application for us, therefore, is that Satan is coming at us on both a personal and corporate basis, and we need to apply all of the above stated truths in both those areas; the personal first, and then the

corporate. When that is done, then we will see the Church of Christ walk in the power of His indwelling Spirit and the promises of His Word in VICTORY OVER FEAR!