

Contrasting Seasons of Faith: Fear and Faith

I. Introduction

A. Events

1. Prayer: The answer is "Wait" / "Go" (take action) / The answer is "No" / "Yes"
2. Surplus / Need
3. Birth / Death
4. Drought / Flood
5. Sowing / Reaping
6. Failure / Success

B. Emotions

7. Mountain top high / Valley low
8. Loneliness / Companionship
9. Anger / Joy
10. Fear / Faith

II. Fear/Worry/Anxiety

A. Sources of Fear: What can fuel our fear?

1. Lack of trust in the Lord
 - a. 29:25 – “The fear of people becomes a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD will be set on high.”
 - b. 28:1 – “The wicked person flees when there is no one pursuing, but the righteous person is as confident as a lion.”
2. Focus on the wicked – 24:19-20 – “**24:19** Do not fret because of evil people or be envious of wicked people, **24:20** for the evil person has no future, and the lamp of the wicked will be extinguished.”
3. Focus on the circumstances of life
 - a. Disciples in the storm on the Sea of Galilee
 1. Focus on the storm rather than the one who capable of calming the storm
 2. After all, the Creator was sleeping in the boat.
 - b. Peter sinking in the water after walking on the water
 1. Fear dragged Peter down as he shifted his focus from Jesus to the waves

B. Results of Fear

1. Physical and emotional (Proverbs 12:25) - “Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, But a good word makes it glad.”
2. Severed fellowship with God – commanded not to worry
3. Nonproductive life – Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-23)

“And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.”

C. Cures for fear: What can starve our fear?

1. Confess Sin (Psalm 38:18) – “For I confess my iniquity;

I am full of anxiety because of my sin.”

2. Consult God’s Word (Psalm 94:19)

“When my anxious thoughts multiply within me,
Your consolations delight my soul.”

3. God’s peace through prayer

a. Philippians 4:6-7

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

b. 1 Peter 5:6-7

“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”

4. Trust God as we continually seek Him (Matthew 6:25-34)

"For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? "And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? "And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' "For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So do not worry about tomorrow;

for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

III. Faith

A. What is faith?

1. **Hebrews 11:1-2**

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval.”

- a. Faith gives reality to the God given dream.
- b. Faith provides vision for the invisible.
- c. Faith provides proof for the unproven.

2. **Hebrews 11:6** – “And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”

B. Obstacles to Faith: What starves faith?

1. Inappropriate concept / understanding of God – Hebrews 11:6

- a. He is God
- b. He rewards those who seek Him

2. Overreliance upon ourselves

John 15:5 – “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.”

3. Lack of reverence / fear for God

Hebrews 11:7 – “By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.”

4. Fear of man rather than God

Hebrews 11:23 – “By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict.”

C. Overcoming Faith Obstacles: What fuels faith?

1. Pray – **Luke 17:5-6**

“[5] The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" [6] And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and be planted in the sea'; and it would obey you. ””

2. Obey

3. Remember God's faithfulness

4. Focus upon who God is rather than what the obstacle is

5. Read Scripture

a. Hebrews 11

b. **Romans 15:4-6**

“[4] For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. [5] Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, [6] so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

6. Desire the things of God – **Hebrews 11:13-16**

“[13] All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. [14] For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. [15] And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. [16] But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.”

IV. Conclusion

A. Individual Prayer

B. Corporate Prayer