

Fear Not

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- [0 : 0 0] A pastor's reflections, fear not. Genesis 32, 7. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. Isaiah 59, 19.
- So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.
- 1 John 4, 18. There is no fear in love. But perfect love casts out fear, because fear has torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love.
- When Jacob heard that the brother he had not seen in twenty years was coming to meet him, the same brother who at one time had threatened to kill Jacob, Jacob was terrified.
- Surely, if Esau was coming all of this way to meet him, it wasn't just to give Jacob a high five. Jacob, now with nowhere to turn, and nowhere to run, does something very remarkable.
- [1 : 0 3] He turns to God. Jacob, the can-do man, turns in desperation to God. Fear is a funny thing.
- No one fears unnecessarily. And yet, very often, the reason for the fear or anxiety that we see as so necessary turns out to be something completely different than what we had anticipated, than what we had feared.
- As fear grips our hearts and consumes our minds, we, like Jacob, begin to tailspin into desperation and very often despair.
- The anticipation of the reason for our fear grows until we become consumed with either inaction or overaction. We either retreat into the paralysis of fear, or we begin to take whatever actions we can to possibly forestall the doom that we are so certain awaits us.
- However, how often has that fear paid off? How often has the thing we feared ever been as bad as the fear that preceded it?
- [2 : 1 7] Even when a tragic or fearful event does come to pass, is it really worth all of the fear that was associated with it? Like Jacob, we are not left to ourselves to deal with fearful situations that arise.
- We too have somewhere to turn. Luke 12, 32 Fear not, little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.
- Not only are we not left alone, but we have someone who has gone before us into every situation for the express purpose of removing all fear. 1 John 4, 18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.
- The love of God expressed in the gospel is a love that removes fear from any and all situations. How? Because fear has no place in love, and God is love.
- That love, that is God, was made freely available to us when Jesus, in love, took upon himself every cause for fear. In place of fear, he now gives us every cause for faith.
- [3 : 3 2] When fear overwhelms us, and it will, we can now turn to God and his eternal and perfect love, a love that casts out fear and fills us with faith.

That feeling of desperation? That's simply the moment right before God's love removes the fear. Father, thank you that I never need to fear, but unfortunately I still do fear.

Help me in those moments to rely upon your word instead of my worry. Thank you that all fear has forever been overcome by love, and thank you, Jesus, for being the fulfillment of all fear and of all love.

Amen.