
12:4-5. While people can harm us physically and emotionally, they cannot destroy our souls. But, God can. So, we must choose to obey God rather than our fears (Hebrews 13:5-6)!

Although you do not always control whether you experience the emotion of fear, you do control how you respond. And, God expects His people to always process their emotions through the lens of full faith in God so as to do whatever He desires. For, we must recognize that the most anything or anyone on earth can do to us is to kill the body. But, if we disobey and do not trust God, He can and will cast the soul into Hell for eternity!

Bible Question & Answer Series

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Bible Question & Answer

How Should Christians Respond To Fear?



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There are many times Christians are in situations that bring about fear. Yet, as you read the Bible, fear is something God's people are often told not to possess (Deuteronomy 31:6; Isaiah 41:10; John 14:27; Romans 8:15; 2 Timothy 1:7; Revelation 21:8). For example, God told Joshua to be strong and courageous and not be afraid because God was with him, as Joshua was about to lead the Israelites into the promised land (Joshua 1:9). So, considering these things can present a great challenge for Christians whenever we encounter situations that bring about fear.

1) Understand fear is an emotion God created us to possess. It can be confusing to consider why God would create people with the emotion of fear – and then tell us not to fear. However, I believe the answer involves distinguishing between the emotion of fear and the actions that are produced through fear. On one hand, the emotion of fear is natural, appropriate, and even

helps us to avoid many dangerous situations that could harm us. Paul even speaks of experiencing the emotion of fear (1 Corinthians 2:3). On the other hand, allowing the emotion of fear to take control of our lives so that we only do whatever we do not feel afraid to do is completely different! For example, notice that even though Paul experienced the emotion of fear, this did not stop him from doing what he needed to do for the Lord!

2) Recognize the danger of uncontrolled fear. When people allow the emotion of fear to control their lives, the result is a handicapped faith. A good example of this is found in Numbers 13 and 14, when the spies who had been sent into the land God had promised to the Israelites came back and gave a report of the land to the people. Ten of the twelve spies reported that although the land was good, the people living in the land were too strong for the Israelites to defeat. So, the Israelites were controlled by fear and refused to take possession of the land – and God punished them for their lack of faith. In the same way, our fear can exacerbate anxiety and lead us to many sinful responses, wherein we choose not to do anything that we feel afraid of doing,

regardless of what God desires from our lives (John 9:22). But, it is this kind of cowardice that will result in people spending eternity in Hell (Revelation 21:8)!

3) Use faith in God to overcome your fear. When people in the Bible were told not to fear, it wasn't that they were sinful anytime the emotion of fear was experienced in their lives. Instead, God expected them to trust in Him and obey Him above doing whatever their fear dictated (Joshua 1:6-9). For, no matter what it is that Christians may fear, we must remember that God is greater! Psalm 46:1-3 pictures how our faith in God can help us overcome fear. For, God is our Refuge, Strength, and Helper who is always found in times of trouble and we do not need to be afraid, no matter what circumstances we experience!

4) Fear God more than anything or anyone else. What the subject of fear ultimately comes down to is this: Who or what will you fear more? If your fear of people or earthly things keeps you from doing God's will, you are allowing your fear of such to be greater than your fear of disobeying God. However, Jesus put these things into perspective in Luke