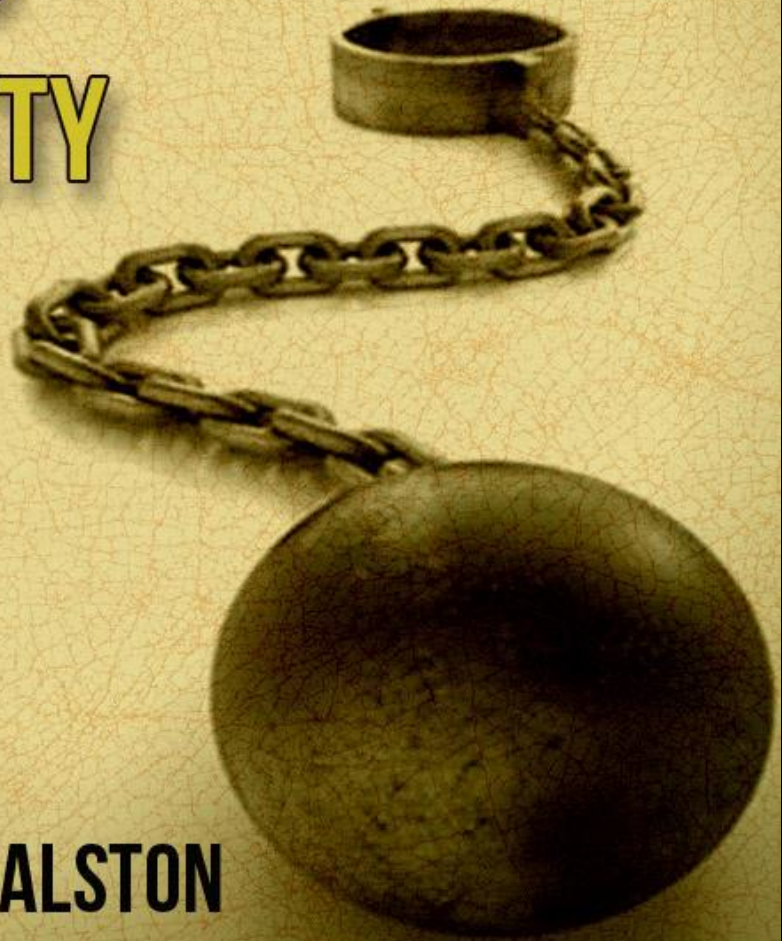


**OVERCOMING  
FEAR  
AND  
ANXIETY**



**KYLE ALSTON**

## Chapter 4



Recognize What  
God Has  
and Has Not  
Given Us

2 Timothy 1:7 says, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

If God has not given us the spirit of fear, where does it come from? That fear comes from our enemy, Satan. He is always trying to get the believer to feel discouraged about what he or she ought to be doing for God. Or if he can't do that, he'll at least try to cause our faith to be ineffective. So when you pray, for example, the enemy will try to say something to you that may cause you to start doubting God. When the enemy comes, you have to rebuke him right away in the name of Jesus. Don't try to argue back at the devil. That will not work. Just rebuke him and if you do talk back at the devil, you better be using the word of God.

After Jesus' forty days of fasting, when He was being tempted in the wilderness, He told Satan each time, "It is written."<sup>1</sup> When we get tempted by the enemy we need not go into a long exchange of discourses, lest we get caught up in concepts and ideas that are not Biblically sound. Some of us get caught up in talking to the devil too much and then wonder why we're in trouble as often as we are. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). Yes, *resist* him, the Word says. How many of us are not resisting enough? Instead of resisting the enemy, some of us are actually making accommodations for him, without realizing it. Every time we let something in our atmosphere that is not of God, we are giving the enemy room to work. What are you entertaining that is hindering you from focusing on how to resist the devil?

The Apostle Paul told the Galatians in Chapter 5, verse 7, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?"

Who is hindering us? Quite frankly, it is not always the enemy. And it is not always other people. Sometimes it's just us being in our flesh. We just watch any old thing on television nowadays. We read some things that people say are related to Christianity, but we don't test it to see if it properly lines up with Scripture, so we could believe in lies

unknowingly. We let people tell us things that sound good to the ear. So we end up seeing, reading, and hearing so much stuff and if we're not careful, we'll get to the point where we don't know what we believe anymore! The Bible says in 1 John 4:1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

Oh! What are we doing? No wonder people are so afraid and fearful. They have not made the Word of God the final authority in their lives which shows us how to get rid of fear, doubt, and instability in our lives. When we are doubtful we are unstable; we are tossed to and fro like it says in James 1:6. Doubt leads to double-mindedness (James 1:8). We don't have a right to be upset about our instability if we are constantly double-minded.

So what are you allowing in your atmosphere? Are you resisting the enemy or are you helping him get to you? We've got to have that doubt and fear loosed away from us and trust in the Lord at all times. As I hinted at in the previous paragraph, James linked doubting in prayer to double-mindedness and instability.

James 1:6-8 says, "6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

"7For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

"8A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

Don't let the enemy rob you of your faith. Don't let the enemy rob you of your spirit of victory. Don't let the enemy rob you of your joy. As a Christian you don't have to accept the things the devil throws at you, and if you really think about it, you shouldn't. You can defeat the enemy by using God's Word as the ultimate weapon. Stop arguing and just speak the Word and for your defense, put "on the whole armour of God" (Eph. 6:11-17).

Look at verse 16: "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

When you have the shield of faith, that shield of faith is able to deflect those fiery darts of doubt that the devil tries to throw at you.

*"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power..." (2 Timothy 1:7)*

So we see what God has *not* given us. He has not given us the spirit of fear. Fear is contrary to faith. God did give us power, however. We must understand that God provides the power to live the Christian life. In John 15:26-27 and in 16:13-14, Jesus promised the coming of the Holy Spirit to help believers in their walk.

Jesus said in Acts 1:8, before His great ascension, to His disciples, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

The events recorded in the Book of Acts, and those that took place after the time frame of the book, confirm the fulfillment of this prophecy. The Spirit indwells all those who have been born again in Christ Jesus and fills all those who ask to be filled (once we've been cleaned out on the inside, because (1) the Holy Ghost will not fill us if we have all this junk on the inside and (2) the Holy Ghost does not force Himself upon us, but He is a gentleman, responding to our full "yes" to Him). When we have the Holy Ghost, we have His power available for use.

However, don't think that just because we have the Holy Spirit guiding us that we can just sit back and do nothing while He does all the work. No, it doesn't work that way. The Christian must still live the Christian life, though he does it by the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup> Know that the Christian who struggles in his own strength to live the

Christian life will fail. Why? It is because they are not depending on the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:13 says, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

Notice that it says, "*...If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body.*" You cannot mortify the fleshly deeds of the body without first yielding to the Spirit's control and having the mind to do God's will so you can properly live your Christian life.

One of the most common excuses for not becoming a Christian is the fear of failure to live the Christian life. Besides overlooking the fact that men cannot be saved on the basis of good works, this objection neglects the truth that God provides the power to live the Christian life. Before Christ was crucified He promised the coming of the Holy Spirit to help believers. The subsequent events in the Book of Acts supply ample evidence of the fulfillment of this prophecy.

The power of the Holy Spirit was not designed solely for the first-century church. Rather, all Christians" who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit "are indwelt by the Spirit and thus have His power available. However, living the Christian life under the Spirit's power must not be thought of as simply allowing the Spirit to take control while the believer does nothing. The believer must still live the Christian life, though he does it through the Spirit's power. Romans 8:13 says, 'If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' It is 'ye' who are to put to death the sinful deeds of the body, but you are to do it through the Spirit's power.

The Christian who struggles in his own strength to live the Christian life will fail. He must by faith appropriate daily the power of the Holy Spirit. Described practically, this means that the believer trusts the Spirit to empower him in specific instances such as sharing his faith with others, resisting temptation, being faithful, etc. There is no *secret formula* that makes the Spirit's power available. It is simply a reliance on the Spirit to help. (The New Open Bible: Study Edition p.1215)<sup>3</sup>

The Holy Spirit, in the Greek, is related to the term "*Paraklētōs*" (our word for "Paraclete"). The word for "Paraclete" is passive in form,

and etymologically (originally) signified one who is called to one's aid or side.<sup>4</sup> "Paraclete" can also signify one who intercedes on our behalf, like an advocate in court would.<sup>5</sup>

The Holy Spirit is there to aid us, to assist us, to be by our side in our individual walks with God. If there is something blocking us from progressing the way we should, sometimes we try to take care of things ourselves. However, it's just like pushing up against something that you know you can't move by yourself. You think you are working out something, but you're really not. Work, according to a law of physics, equals a force multiplied by distance. We put all this force into moving the obstacle, but it is not being moved anywhere. So there is no work being done, and therefore, you're wasting your time and effort for nothing.

How many of us are doing a whole bunch of activities, but are going nowhere? We try to do things to get noticed by *people*, to get their approval, when these people we're trying to impress could care less anyway. We waste our energy, get tired out, and get mad. What's the point of all that?

We need to let the Holy Spirit guide us and help us. We shouldn't think that we can always have *everything* under control all the time. If we had everything truly under control, perhaps we wouldn't be in the various situations we often get ourselves into. What happens when we fear is that we are afraid to let others whom God sends to us actually help us because we don't want whatever they might do to impede on our own plans. Many times our own plans are futile in God's sight. In our flesh, during those hard times, it is difficult for us to accept that God's way is the best way.<sup>6</sup>

We also must realize that we cannot conquer the spirit of fear by human will power. Fear is a supernatural entity. Therefore, you cannot fight a supernatural power with only natural strength. You cannot move spiritual obstacles in your way with your fleshly strength. That's why you need the Holy Ghost, to assist you, for He is from the supernatural realm.



*"...and of love..." (2 Timothy 1:7).*

1 John 4:18 states, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

We cannot embrace the perfection process we are to undergo as we live for Christ if we are in fear. Consider this application of this Scripture. When we love someone, and that person treated us bad in the past, we should forgive that person. We shouldn't fear what he or she might do us now based on what they did in the past. Leave the past behind you. That person could be "a new creature" now, if they have gotten saved. We must learn to forgive those that have hurt us. Every time we think about them, we get upset. "Oh I can't stand so-and-so. They treated me unfairly and this, that, and the other..." So what! Get over it. Our faces get all twisted up and we don't know how to deal with that person. Let the past stay there. Why are you going to bring up past issues to today? It doesn't make any sense.

Applying this to myself, I had to learn to forgive. I've had many people hurt me in the past, as is the story of millions of others, I'm sure. I can say that is not always easy to forgive someone when they hurt you physically or emotionally. It also can be very challenging to forgive someone who hurt someone else for whom you care greatly.

What gets me is that it is so much easier to keep bashing the person we don't want to forgive, but that is not how to go about dealing with him or her. In fear we might say, "I could forgive so-and-so, but what if they hurt me again?" This is a tormenting thought.

Indeed, fear torments people. That's why they will not have perfect peace until they receive ultimate deliverance from fear, which comes from God. Yes we have to receive deliverance. We have to receive the peace of God. I turned the word fear into an acronym: Fear will Endanger your Ability to Receive. If we are operating in fear,



we will be afraid to embrace what God has for us, that thing that can actually bring us to the next level in Him.

Again, *“there is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love”* (1 John 4:18).

*“...and of a sound mind.”* (2 Timothy 1:7).

Having a sound mind does not just mean that you don't belong to a mental hospital, but more than that, it means that our minds are focused on the Word of the living God Almighty. It means our minds are not filled with thoughts of doubt, worry, and anxiety. We have the assurance that trusting in God will reap eternal benefits and we don't have to worry about what will happen tomorrow, for we know Who holds it.

Isaiah 26:3 says, *“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”*

When a storm or bad situation comes your way, when you put your trust in God, you will be in perfect peace. When a storm comes your way and the winds of turmoil, chaos, confusion, worry, doubt, and fear are present all around you, even when you get in the eye of the storm, when you get in the center of the storm, you will be able to stand fast. You can stand fast because you know the God that we serve is able to keep you in perfect peace. When your aim is centered on Jesus, when you focus on putting your trust in Him, you can have that blessed peace. When you have peace, you are not worried about anything. You don't feel confused about what to do. You just know to stand on God's word, for all other ground is sinking sand.

## Chapter 4 Sources

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