

Fear is an universal experience of humans in every culture.

### Merry Crisis and a Happy New Fear!

### "Fear not"

appears over 360 times in the Bible.

1

#### 1 Peter 3:14

"But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not fear their intimidation (fear), and do not be troubled,"

#### Isaiah 8:12

"... And you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it."

#### 1 Peter 5:7

"6 **humble** yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time. 7 having **cast all your anxiety** on Him, because He cares about you.""

#### Psalm 55:22 (LXX)

"Cast upon the Lord your anxiety and he will sustain you; he will never allow the righteous to stumble."

3

### Fear

is rooted in uncertain expectations based on misplaced hopes.



is perhaps the most powerful negative emotion in effecting spiritual

decisions.



#### The emphasis in Christianity?

#### **Pietist**

**Prophetic** 

private speaking / confessional showing beliefs and truth to disciplines power

Power is spiritual New Testament

(fear free zone)

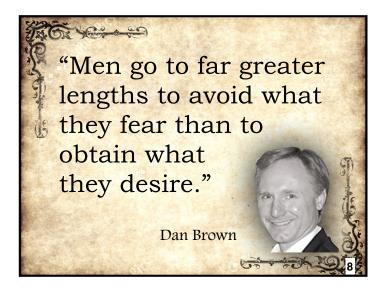
#### **Political**

civic, social, economic, justice & reform

Power is physical







#### What are people afraid of?

- √ Change I do not feel confident in rebuilding control in a new situation.
- √ Failure My respected image is at stake when I take on responsibility.
- ✓ Pain Physical suffering, social rejection, psychological sadness.

۵

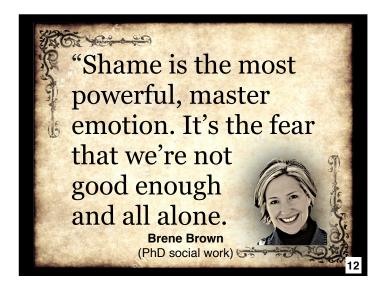
#### Some toxic indications of anxiety / fear

- √ Need to control minimize the unknowns
- √ Need for closure get it settled ASAP
- √ Black and white gray areas are unsettling
- **✓ Resisting change low risk tolerance**
- √ Worry / whine things will or have gone bad
- √ Conspiracies systemic doom
- √ Low creativity avoid risk of failure
- √ Cup is half full bad things will happen
- √ Social withdrawal depression, illness

Fear

Too many things can go wrong for me to feel safe when I am left alone in life.





#### The beginning of Jesus' ministry

#### Matthew 1:23

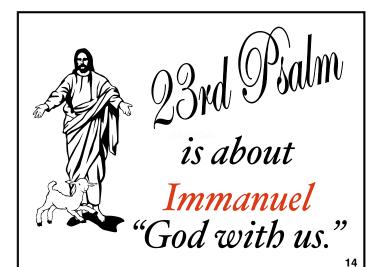
"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which translated means, God with us."

#### The end of Jesus' earthly ministry

#### Matthew 28

"19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

13



#### Psalm 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd,

I shall not want.

 $2\ \mathrm{He}$  makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.

 $3\ \mbox{He}$  restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. I fear no evil.

#### for You are with me;

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

 $5\ \mbox{You prepare}$  a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows.

 $\,$  6 Surely goodness and loving kindness will follow me all the days of my life,

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

15

#### Psalm 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd,

I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.

3 He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil,

for You are with me;

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

▼ 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows.

6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

#### Fear is Satan's tool

- He started by drawing attention away from the "Good Shepherd" and placing attention on the world.
- He convinces us to seek security in temporal, physical treasure that thieves can steal, rust can tarnish, and time can decay.
- · He tempts us to walk by sight not by faith.
- He keeps us in shame and blame.

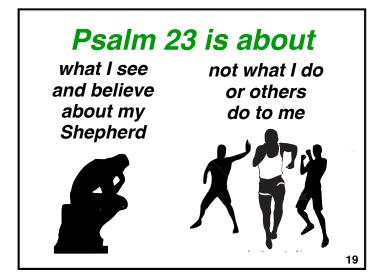
16

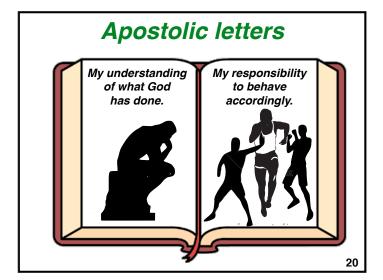
#### Hebrews 2

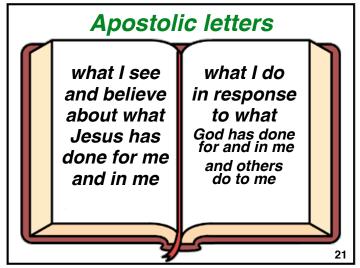
"14 ... He Himself likewise also partook of the same (flesh and blood), that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives."

- The devil uses the uncertainties of this life as a tool to enslave us through fear.
- God addresses the uncertainties of this life with the Word and Way of the Cross.

8







#### Psalm 23:4

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

Matthew 14:27
"Take courage,
it is I;
do not be
afraid."

Sensing the presence of Christ in (with) us is the source of our courage in the face of fear.

## Building a fear killing faith.

What not to do.

Matthew 6

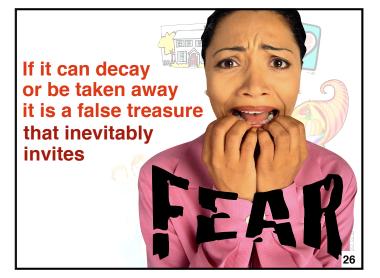
# Mistake #1 Leading with our heart rather than our choices.



#### Matthew 6

"19 Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 21 for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."





Mistake #2
Working hard and / or trusting God
but for the wrong thing.

#### Matthew 6

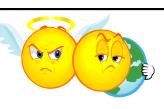
"22 The lamp of the body is the eye; *if* therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!"

27

### The problem is not our lack of faith.

It is that our faith is in something other than God and / or for something other than His kingdom.

# Mistake #3 Believing that we can have it both ways.



#### Matthew 6

"24 **No one can serve two masters**; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. 25 For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?"

# Serving two masters will double your anxiety not your security.

#### Matthew 6

"24 **No one can serve two masters**; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. 25 For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?"

Mistake #4
Neglecting or fretting over

needs.

either."



#### Matthew 6

"31 Do not be anxious then, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?' 32 For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things."

2 Thessalonians 3:10

"For even when we were with you, we used to give you this

order; if anyone is not willing

to work, then he is not to eat,

#### Matthew 4:4

"Man shall not live by bread alone but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."

Godly character does not neglect nor is it anxious about material needs.

Godly character does not neglect nor is it anxious about material needs.

32

22

# Mistake #5 Failing to keep the main thing the main thing



#### Matthew 6:33

"But **seek first His kingdom and His righteousness**; and all these things shall be added to you. "Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.""

## When the good keeps us from the best

it is no longer good.

#### Luke 10

"41 But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; 42 but **only a few things are necessary**, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.""

e taken away nom ner.

#### Take home

- √ Take your baptism seriously and invest your life in things that can't be taken away.
- √ When anxious, ask if you are trying to have it both ways.
- √ Work hard, trust God, and fear not.

36

Worrying

does not take away tomorrow's troubles; it just takes away today's peace.



