



James Neil Hollingworth
(writer)



“Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear.”

The ethical path is not always consensual, certain, or clear for two reasons.

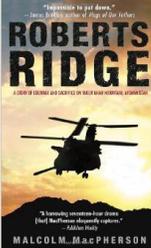
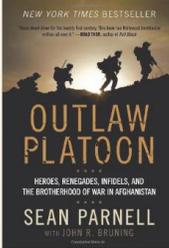
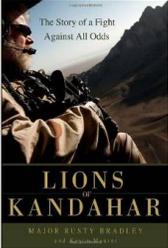
1. We need **wisdom** to manage competing & conflicting Biblical values.
2. We are influenced by competing & conflicting personal values (**fear & love**).

Hate is not the first enemy of love, FEAR is. It destroys our ability to trust.

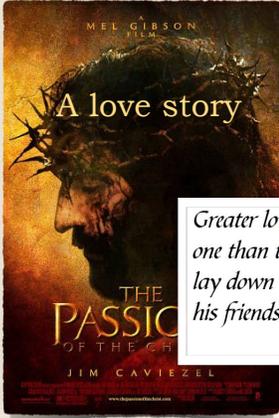
When we love all fear disappears, & when we are afraid all love disappears.

What do these books have in common?
Stories of love that is greater than

FEAR

The Gospel ~ Love that is greater than fear



i always
thought love
was shaped
like a

but
it's
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ally
like a

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13

Do you have a FEAR problem?

- ✓ **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** - organized doom
- ✓ **Low creativity** - avoid risk of failure
- ✓ **Cup is half full** - bad things will happen
- ✓ **Social withdrawal** - depression, illness
- ✓ **Sleep disorders** - poor quality or quantity

1.
The origin and
nature of fear -
Genesis 3:8-13

2.
A Christian
response to fear -
1 John 4:18
Abiding in God's
love



1. The origin & nature of fear

Genesis 3:8-13

Genesis 2

“¹⁶ The Lord God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; ¹⁷ but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”

1. The Fall gave birth to the knowledge of - good & evil



Genesis 3:5

“
from it your eyes
will be opened,
and you will be
like God, knowing
good and evil.

1. The Fall gave birth to the experience of -
life & death



Genesis 2:17
“for in the day
that you eat
from it you
will surely
die

Death is the absence of life.

Sensual

Separation
from body

Social

Separation
from others

Spiritual

Separation
from God

Hell
is isolation from life
(the state of death).

3. The Fall gave birth to the impulses of -
fear & deception



Genesis 3:10
“
because I was
naked; so I
hid myself.

The two primal
impulses in life
as a result of the Fall

**Deception
and Fear.**

**Christian Ethics
are the triumph
of truth over
deception and
love over fear.**

Hebrews 2

“¹⁴ since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, 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.**”

1 John 4:18

“There is no fear in love, but perfect **love casts out fear,**”

***Fear enslaves us
and love sets us free.***

Genesis 3

“¹¹ And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” ¹² The man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.” ¹³ Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” And the woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.””

Our defensive strategies

- don't remove our fears
- but further isolate us from God & others.

Matthew 25

“²⁴ And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed. ²⁵ And **I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent** in the ground; see, you have what is yours.’ ²⁶ But his master answered and said to him, ‘You wicked, lazy slave, . . . ²⁹ For to everyone who has shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.’”

**Fear sabotages
our lives, ministries, & blessings.**

Depression is
the exhaustion
of defensive
strategies to
manage fears.

2. A response to fear

1 John 4:7-21

How do we displace fear with love?

1 John 4

“⁷ Beloved, let us **behave ethically toward** one another, for **ethical behavior** is from God; and everyone who **behaves ethically** is born of God and knows God. ⁸ The one who does not **behave ethically** does not know God, for God is love.”

1. **Cultivate an intimate relationship with God so we can make wise ethical decisions.**
2. **Choose love.** Agape love is often a rational choice not a subjective emotion or impulse.

How do we displace fear with love?

“⁹ By this **Godly ethics** was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is **Godly ethics**, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to **behave ethically toward** one another. ¹² No one has beheld God at any time; if we **behave ethically toward** one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. ”

3. **Embrace the incarnation and passion of Christ as a revelation of God's love for us.**
4. **The incarnation (God with us) comes before the atonement (God fixing things).** Ethics starts with coming along side and extends to doing justice.

17 By this, **ethical behavior** is perfected with us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in **Godly ethics**; but perfect **ethics** casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in **ethics**. 19 We **behave ethically**, because He first loved us. 20 If someone says, "I love God," and **does not behave ethically toward** his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not **behave ethically toward** his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. 21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should **behave ethically toward** his brother also."

5. To the extent that God's love is embraced, we are free (from fear) to behave ethically.

6. Freedom from fear is a process. Keep at it.

Oprah Winfrey



"I believe that every single event in life happens as an opportunity to choose love over fear."

Choosing love starts with choosing to receive God's love in Christ.

Betsie Ten Boom

was imprisoned with her family for hiding Jewish refugees as a part of the Dutch resistance during WWII.

Before her death, she experienced three visions about what she and her sister, Corrie were to do after their release. Her first vision was of a **house for former prisoners**. The second was **to own a concentration camp where they could teach Germans to learn to love again**. The third was that she and Corrie **would travel the world telling what they had learned of God while in the camps**.

Betsie died in prison at age 59. Corrie was released due to a clerical error and went on to tell the story of God's love conquering fear in **THE HIDING PLACE**.



Corrie Ten Boom

"The measure of a life, after all, is not its duration but its donation."

"James . . . earn this. Earn it."



"Tell me I have lived a good life."

