

# The Foundation for No-Fear Living

## Fear Factor – 1

Ann Landers, who receives hundreds of letters a day, was once asked, “What is the most common problem that you find in your letters?” She said, “Without a doubt, fear.” We call fear by many names—worry, tension, anxiety, stress. But regardless it’s name, fear has the same crippling and draining effect on our lives. As someone put it, “Fear is the dark room where negatives develop.”

### Welcome

*...Above all, love each other deeply*

*Did you have any recurring fears as a child? Explain.*

### Worship

*...Offer God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that confess His name.*

Read Psalm 123 and explain the imagery of the dependent relationship a servant had with his or her master—always looking to the master for provision, care and direction. As Christians we enjoy a similar relationship with our Heavenly Father—a relationship intended to keep us from unnecessarily worrying about our lives (Matthew 6: 25-34).

Some suggestions for your worship time together: “Seek Ye First” (555), “Be Still and Know” (31), “He Is Able” (213), “It Is Well With My Soul” (490), “How Firm a Foundation” (457), “You Are My All In All” (484)

### Word

*...You have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation.*

**Read Hebrews 2:14-15.** Jesus came to destroy the Devil’s hold on death and to free all who cower through life, scared to death of death.

- 1. What fears do you see evident in the lives of those around you who do not know the Lord? How do these fears manifest themselves?*
- 2. Since becoming a Christian, have you been freed from any particularly crippling fears? Explain.*
- 3. Which of the following fears do you continue to struggle with—fear of failure...loneliness...rejection...inadequacy...God’s provision...commitment ...losing control...being found out...abandonment?*
- 4. If you thought of fear as a warning light, what would it signal?*

## Read 1 Peter 3:13-15

5. *What does it mean to set apart Christ as Lord? How is one's ability to live courageously a result of settling Jesus' lordship?*

God ought to be first in our lives. Anything less (as good as it might be) is idolatry. Idolatry is putting someone or something first in your life, rather than God. And, among other things, idolatry always leads to fear.

If getting people's approval is the most important thing in your life, you'll develop a fear of losing the approval of other's. If making money is the number one goal in your life, you'll develop a fear of losing it all. If getting married is the most important thing in your life, you'll have a fear of never getting married or of losing your marriage. If success is the most important thing in your life, you'll develop a fear of failure. If your reputation is the most important thing in your life, you'll develop a fear of losing it and you'll be compelled to work on it all the time.

Idolatry equals fear. Think about what makes you afraid. ***Is there any possibility that something or someone is competing with God in your life?***

## Works

*...Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.*

Spend time this next week prayerfully asking God to open your eyes to the deeper fears that keep you from living the abundant life He offers (John 10:10). Ask God for the courage to share what you discover with the group next week.

Be sensitive to the conversation you have with others this next week. Listen—beneath the words—for the fear being expressed. Ask God to help you address those fears in a way that would be gracious and redemptive. Remember that “perfect love casts out fear” (1 John 4:18). Living a life free from fear flows out of an intimate knowledge of the heart of God.