

From Fear to Faith

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[0:00] Good morning. I wasn't very nervous about this until I heard there was going to be a Canadian in our midst! But usually they're not too hostile. Actually, I've seen some long parades in my life, but I think Tuesday night takes the cake for me.

But anyways, after the parade, Paul was talking with my daughter Hannah and I, and she was talking about friends, and Paul just said, Well, you know, you ought to pray. Just pray about friends. And when we moved to Canada, Susan prayed, and shortly thereafter she had friends. And so the next day, Wednesday the 4th, I'm home, and Hannah's got this little electric battery-operated car she can drive up and down the driveway, but we couldn't find the battery charger. So I said, You know, Pastor Paul said yesterday, Let's just pray about it and see if you can find that charger.

We just moved, and who knows where everything is. So she prayed, and shortly thereafter I was able to say, Well, why don't you look here and there? And she found it. She was very thankful, plugged in her car, and later on that afternoon, she's tooling up and down the driveway in that car, and she's humming, God is so good.

And here's faith in action. Paul believes that faith, or Paul believes in prayer, that there's a God in heaven who answers prayer. Amen to that. And he tells somebody else about it, and Hannah prays about it, and her heart is encouraged in faith.

[1:23] And so, we want to talk about faith this morning. We're going to talk about Psalm 56. We're going to focus on verses 3 and 4, where David says, When I am afraid, I will trust in you, in God, whose word I praise, in God I trust.

I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me? So I just tell you straight up, I haven't taught Sunday school since the last time I was here in front of you five or six years ago.

So, I don't really know how long my material is going to last, if it's going to go too long or too short. And so, partly for that reason, I'm just going to go right to the conclusion to make sure I get that out of the way.

And then I'm going to start over in the beginning. And that meshes nicely with being Dutch, too. We like to do things backwards. So, my conclusion is two-part.

Part one is a question that I hope will become part of your vocabulary, if it isn't there already. And the question is simply, what would the response of faith look like? You're in a hardship. You're in a difficulty.

[2:38] Your spouse is. Your child is. Challenge one another. Challenge me. What would the response of faith look like in this situation? And the second part of my conclusion is simply a list of anxieties that we may face.

And then I'm going to read some appropriate promises out of the Scripture. We're not going to turn to them. I'm just going to read this. And I hope that just the number of verses, the number of promises that you hear all in a row, all about life situations, will be an encouragement to you as to how many promises there are in the Scripture to help us through life.

And back up and say, you know, Jesus, of course, is our teacher. And in Matthew 6, in the Sermon on the Mount, He tells us, He talks to us about anxieties. He tells us not to be anxious.

And He gives us a promise. Your Father in Heaven knows. He knows that you need these things. And Paul follows Jesus' example in Philippians 4, which Pastor John has recently finished.

In 4.6, Paul says, just like Jesus, have no anxiety about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known to God.

[3:59] And in 4.19, he gives the promise, again, like Jesus, my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in Christ Jesus. So here's a pattern.

You have an anxiety, you pray about it. And there's a promise. My God will supply all your needs in Christ Jesus. And so, I've got some hardships, difficulties, challenges here.

And the answer is to pray and to consider the promises of God and to believe those by faith. Are you about to start a new job or a new business or homeschooling or college or some other new venture in life?

Battle unbelief with the promise. Fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will help you. I will strengthen you. I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

Isaiah 41.10. Are you anxious that your family devotions aren't going well? Or that some other ministry that you've been called to is useless and empty? Fight unbelief with the promise.

[5:04] So my word that goes forth from my mouth, it will not come back to me empty, but accomplish that which I purpose and prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

Isaiah 55. Are you anxious that you don't have enough strength to accomplish the work that God has called you to, whether it be in the workplace or in school or in the home?

My grace is sufficient for you. My power is made perfect in weakness. 2 Corinthians 12. And as your days, so shall your strength be.

Deuteronomy 33. Are you anxious about decisions you have to make about the future? Battle unbelief with the promise. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go.

I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Psalm 32.8. When I'm anxious about facing opponents, spiritual or otherwise, I battle unbelief with the promise. If God be for us, who can be against us?

[6:04] Romans 8. Are you anxious about being sick or weak? Battle unbelief with this promise.

More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that our suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Romans 5. Are you anxious about getting old or the difficulties of old age? Battle unbelief with a promise even to your old age. I am he, and to gray hairs I will carry you.

I have made, and I will bear. I will carry, and will save. Isaiah 46. Are you afraid to die? Battle unbelief with a promise that none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself.

If we live to the Lord, and if we die, if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end, Christ died and rose again, that he might be the Lord, both of the dead and of the living.

Romans 14. When I'm anxious that I may make shipwreck of my faith and fall away from God, I battle unbelief with this promise. He who began a good work in you will complete it unto the day of Christ.

[7:22] Philippians 1. And he who calls you as faithful, he will do it. 1 Thessalonians 5. He's able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

Hebrews 7. Are you anxious about the future, all the unknowns, all the details? Battle unbelief with this promise. And the Lord is the one who goes ahead of you.

He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. Quite a list of promises.

Quite a bit of food for thought for us. Any hardship in life that we face, there's a word in the Bible. That's meant to encourage us. Okay, so that's the conclusion.

Ask yourself the question, what would the response of faith look like? Encourage yourself through the promises. Do the same for your brothers and sisters. So we're at Psalm 56.

[8:25] Psalm 56 is a psalm that David wrote shortly or directly after he had been to Gath. He was trying to escape Saul and had thought, I'll go to the Philistines and maybe I'll find some relief there.

So let's look a little bit at the historical context of this psalm. The account of David in Gath is found in 1 Samuel 21.

You recall that at first, David was a golden boy. He had killed Goliath. He had great favor with Saul. He was promoted in the army. But then what happened?

All of a sudden, Saul's ego was touched. The women began to sing, Saul has killed his thousands and David his tens of thousands. And his nose was bent and from there on, he began to try to get rid of David.

First, there was some veiled attempts. Why don't you go out and I'll give you my daughter if you kill these 100 Philistines, hoping that David would be killed. And later on, there was spear throwing when David would be playing the guitar to calm Saul's spirit.

[9 : 30] And then there was just an out-and-out order that David was to be killed. At that point, David and Jonathan, they cement their friendship. You remember with the boy and the arrow. He shoots the arrow and so on.

They vowed to one another that they will take care of one another's family regardless of who becomes king. And so that's the event that happens and directly after that, David begins his flight. He's not yet the leader of the band of 400. In the next chapter, in chapter 22, we read that many of the discontent, the troubled, those who were evading or in distress, they gathered to him and he had a band of 400 men.

But at this point, he's still alone. And that's where we find him. Starting at 1 Samuel 21, verse 18. Or sorry, verse 10. Speaking of aging.

That day, David fled from Saul and went to Achish, king of Gath. But the servants of Achish said to him, Isn't this David, the king of the land? Isn't he the one they sing about in their dances?

[10 : 34] Saul has slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands. David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of Achish, the king of Gath. So he feigned insanity in their presence and while he was in their hands, he acted like a madman, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting saliva run down his beard.

Achish said to his servants, Look at the man. He's insane. Why bring him to me? Am I so short of madmen that you have to bring this fellow here to carry on like this in front of me?

Must this man come into my house? Let's make sure that we notice that David was very much afraid in verse 12. He took these words to heart and was very much afraid of Achish.

The author of our book, Richard Phillips, tells us that the Philistines were afraid of madmen or insane people and believing that anyone who held a madman would be cursed.

And hence, the outward, anyways, the outward success of David's ruse. And I ask you, can you relate to David? Have you wanted to leave your present circumstances to find rest elsewhere?

[11 : 45] Probably David thought that leaving the land of Israel would give him some rest from Saul's relentless pursuit, but the opposite has happened. Now he's really tired physically, mentally, emotionally.

He's drained. He's just come 20 miles through desert terrain, fleeing out of Israel, going into Gath. Then this event with the king and now 10 miles back into Israel and hiding out in the caves of Adullam.

And then he writes this psalm. So remember, in conclusion, I was encouraging you to ask the question, what does the response of faith look like?

So let's say, let's ask that question of David. What does his response of faith look like? He writes a psalm as he often did. I'm going to take a minute and scan through some psalms.

As you know, a number of the psalms have headings that give us some historical context. So we look at Psalm 3, for instance, a psalm of David when he fled from his son Absalom.

[12 : 48] Verse 2, many are saying of me, God will not deliver him. And verse 8, from the Lord comes deliverance. May your blessing be on your people.

Psalm 34, another psalm about his time of trial with Absalom. In verse 4, David says, I sought the Lord and he answered me.

He delivered me from all my fears. That's faith. Verse 5 through 8, those who look to him are radiant. Their faces are never covered with shame.

This poor man called and the Lord heard him. He saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him and he delivers them. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. If you know anything about this event, you know that it's pretty ugly.

[13 : 49] His own son is chasing after him, seeking to kill his own father, take over the kingdom. And yet we hear words like this. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. Next is Psalm 56, which we're going to talk about in more detail. And then the psalm directly after that, Psalm 57, was when he had fled Saul and hid in the cave.

In verse 1, we read there, Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in you my soul takes refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed.

I expect that few of us fear for our lives on a daily basis. The most scary thing I've done this week is stand up in front of you and hear David is having, humanly speaking, a mistake.

He's dead. And not, you know, a clean bullet through the head. We're talking hacked up with a sword and other brutal ways of killing people in those days. And yet he says very clearly how he is taking comfort and refuge in God.

[15:05] In Psalm 59, Saul had sent men to trap David in his house. And in verses 16 and 17, he says, I will sing of your strength.

In the morning, I will sing of your love. For you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble. All my strength I sing praise to you. You, O God, are my fortress, my loving God.

So then, we are faced then with how the man after God's own heart, as he is referred to in Acts 13, this is how he dealt with trouble and hardship.

And so we ask ourselves then, we who follow the God of David, how do our typical responses stack up to David's? What does my response to hardship look like? Am I responding in faith?

Are you responding in faith? So after all this fear, all this adrenaline, all this physical exertion, David, the shepherd, turned warrior, turned fugitive, sits down to write a psalm.

[16:13] Let's read Psalm 56. Be merciful to me, O God, for men hotly pursue me all day long.

They press their attack. My slanderers pursue me all day long. Many are attacking me in their pride. When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust, I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me? All day long, they twist my words. They're always plotting to harm me. They conspire. They lurk. They watch my steps, eager to take my life. On no account, let them escape.

In your anger, O God, bring down the nations. Record my lament. List my tears on your scroll. Are they not in your record? Then my enemies will turn back when I call for help.

By this, I will know that God is for me. In God, whose word I praise. In the Lord, whose word I praise. In God, I trust. I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

[17:15] I am under vows to you, O God. I will present my thank offerings to you. For you have delivered my soul from death and my feet from stumbling that I may walk before God in the light of life.

Verses 3 and 4 are essentially duplicated, repeated in verses 10 and 11 are the centerpiece, I think, of this psalm where David says, when I am afraid, I will trust in you.

Notice what he does not say here. He doesn't say, I was afraid until I trust in you or I never struggle with fear. 1 Peter 4, we read that we are to cast all our anxieties on him for he cares for us.

You've got to have them to cast them. It's not wrong to have anxieties. It's not wrong to have fears. Philip says, it takes fear and failure to spur us on to faith. God places us in situations we don't want to be in where we are frightened and unsettled.

He does this to provoke this response of faith. Fear is often our entry point into having dealings with God. And, not only are we instructed that trials are for our good, but we're also warned in Hebrews 11, 6 that if we don't experience God's discipline, we are not sons.

[18:41] Because the Lord disciplines those He loves and He punishes everyone He accepts as a son. It's what we do with that fear that matters just like temptation. It's not wrong to be tempted.

It's not sinful. The question is simply what will my response be? That's where I sin or I don't. So again, what does faith look like on David's part?

What does David do when fear threatens to displace faith and confidence in his heart? He says, when I am afraid, when I am afraid, I do something.

I trust God. When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. I write psalms. I remind myself of who God is. I preach to myself. But ultimately and most importantly, he says, I trust in God.

When I am afraid, I will trust in you. Let's explore that trust a little bit. Last Sunday morning, we were wonderfully reminded about how saving faith is like falling from a burning building into the arms, the strong arms of a willing and capable and good Savior.

[19:48] And so it is. But there's not two faiths. There's not a saving faith and then a sanctifying or living faith. It's all by faith. The same faith. Romans 1.17 tells us that in the gospel the righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written, the just will live by faith.

What I'm trying to say here is that David's faith displayed here is not the faith of initial salvation. David's faith, his choice to place his trust or confidence in God is no different from that saving faith we heard of last Sunday.

It is simply exercised as a believer further down the road, months or years rather in his case, from his salvation. It's the words of a believer struggling with fear.

In other words, David is demonstrating for us exactly what our words, what our attitude, what our response should be when we are afraid. So we're talking about fear versus faith or fear versus trust here.

David says that trust is his chosen response to fear. Jesus, too, contrasted fear and faith. He said in Matthew 6, But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you?

[21 : 18] O you of little faith, therefore do not be anxious, saying, What shall we eat or what shall we drink or what shall we wear? For the Gentiles seek after these things and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

Jesus is simply telling us that faith and fear or faith and anxiety are inversely related. Just like the seesaw from your great school days.

When one end is up, the other end is down. When faith is high, anxiety is low. When anxiety is big, faith is little. When Pastor John preached on Philippians 4 a few weeks ago, he said, The more we live by faith upon the free grace of Jesus, the more our God is glorified.

So I want to ask, what is it about trust that honors God? How does trusting God honor God? Or, if I could say it differently, how is it that trusting God makes our invisible God look good?

Martin Luther said, Faith honors him whom it trusts with the most reverent and highest regard since it considers him truthful and trustworthy.

[22 : 36] There is no other honor equal to the estimate of truthfulness and righteousness with which we honor him whom we trust. On the other hand, there is no way in which we can show greater contempt for a man than to regard him as false and wicked and to be suspicious of him as we do when we do not trust him.

So we've read some texts. We've heard a quote from Martin Luther. And now I just want to give you an opportunity to put it in your own words. Don't be afraid. What is the connection between trusting God and honoring God?

How are those two things connected? How is it that when I trust God, I honor God? Or conversely, how is it that when I don't or won't trust God, how is it that I'm bringing dishonor to him?

Roger. Putting into practice what you say. Putting into practice and that honors God. Putting into practice what we say we believe about God. Good. Anyone else?

How is it that when we honor God or when we trust God, we honor God? If we don't trust God, then we're basically not believing to be God.

[23 : 56] So if we don't trust God, we're saying we don't believe he's capable of doing as he's promised. Good. Others?

Not taking the Lord at his word? Not taking him at his word. We know the promises in here are true but we don't take them and use them as we should. Yeah. Others?

It reflects on God's character. Indeed. Isn't it so that trust is really a measure of our favorable assessment of the knowledge and abilities of the one in whom we're trusting?

If we look around in society, I mean, this is what we see, right? We have this thing called expert witnesses, right? In a trial, someone who's considered to be an expert, someone whose judgment we can defer to comes in and their testimony, their witness is trusted because we believe that they have the knowledge and the experience necessary to weigh in on this and that gives them the right to sway what we think or just think about the professional class we've created whether it's doctors, lawyers, ministers, engineers, whatever.

We have people we call professionals, people we go to in case we have medical problems or other problems and we trust their judgment and so we pay them money to tell us what we should think about our problems.

[25 : 23] Here's what John Piper says in answer to that question. He says, trusting God's promises is the most fundamental way you can consciously glorify God. When you believe a promise of God, you honor God's ability to do what He has promised and His willingness to do what He's promised and His wisdom to know how to do it.

So three key things we're doing when we trust God is we're saying, God, you're able. God, you're willing. God, you're wise enough to do it in a way that's best.

God's for us. And so you can see if we don't trust God, we're just saying the opposite, right? You're not willing. You're not for me.

I know your word says you're for me, but I'm not going to believe that. Or we're saying, you know, I know you'd do it if you could, but you're not able to. And so I just can't trust you with this.

Or, I know you can do something, but you're going to botch it. You're not wise enough to bring it about in a way that's best for me. That's what we're saying when we don't trust God. Psalm 119.68 says, of God, you are good and what you do is good.

[26 : 38] So it's just, that's a perspective issue that I'd say. I mean, you can look at your life situation and say, this isn't good.

As David could say, right? He's being pursued to the death. This isn't good. Or we can say, you know what? It is happening. God is good and what He does is good.

Whose word is going to prevail? Had David not been promised that he would be king? I doubt if he felt very kingly when he was clawing the gate and letting the drool dribble down his beard.

He probably didn't feel like a king. Or he probably felt kind of stupid. I just killed Goliath and here I am with Goliath's sword in his hometown. What was I thinking? What about Joseph?

Joseph had a promise, a dream, right? He saw his brothers and his father bowing down to him. He knew one day he was going to be in a position of power. Yet, where was he? He was in a prison in Egypt or he was a slave.

[27 : 43] 17 years. I think 17 minutes is a long time for me to have a problem. I can't imagine 17 years. And yet, he endured through faith. So we come back to the conclusion.

What does the response of faith look like? For David and Joseph, they persevered. I just want to say, too, when we ask one another this question, it's not a mechanical question.

It's not a box on your check-off list. It's not an accusation. We need to mourn with those who mourn even as we rejoice with those who rejoice. It's a question we ask sympathetically.

We struggle with faith. We know what it is to struggle with faith. And to fight against unbelief, we should ask that question in the same manner. Here's a small example from my life which occurred this past week.

As you know, we just bought a house here in Bremen. So, inevitably, the tax man gets a hold of you and I got a letter in the mail.

[28 : 53] You know, how much do you pay for the house? Does it have a garage? And all this other stuff. They want to know the value. How much personal property? How much did you really pay for it? So, obviously, what I write down is going to impact my tax bill.

Maybe I didn't budget for enough taxes. Maybe I just don't like taxes. Anyone else in here like that? So, what's the response of faith? I get a letter like that.

I mean, I guess the purchase price is probably public knowledge. I don't know. But I mean, I could fill in the other things to sway it my way. I wouldn't be right. What did Jesus say? Jesus said, render unto Caesar what is Caesar's.

I need to believe that what Jesus says is best, whether it hurts or not. And then, I just need to believe the promise we read earlier in Matthew 6 that God knows what I need.

If I botch my budget, He can still take care of me. I still need to put my confidence in Him. So, we spend some time now thinking about faith and trust and how trust honors God.

[30 : 04] I think we've seen that the appropriate response to fear is action. The girding up the loins of your mind kind of action where we choose to trust in God. We've seen that fear and faith are opposite ends of the seesaw and that Jesus wants us to live free of anxiety or fear.

Which, of course, is different than living free from trouble. But He wants us to live free of anxiety and fear and full of faith and trust. We've seen that the faith that honors God or faith honors God because it shows that He is willing and able and wise and that we consider Him those things and we'll place our trust in Him and let Him control the outcome rather than trying to control it ourselves. to God. But David goes on in verse 4 he says, In God whose word I praise in God I trust I will not be afraid what can mortal man do to me?

We see that David not only consciously chooses to trust God in times of trouble but he also links this trust to God's word.

Who is this God of David and what word of His was David trusting? When you and I think back 400 years we might think back to Jamestown the settlers in Jamestown or we might think about the pilgrims still in Europe and Holland and England before they came over to the United States or we might think about Plymouth Rock.

[31 : 41] When David looked back 400 years his history at that point was the plagues and the exodus and manna and the pillar of cloud and the parting of the Red Sea and the miraculous conquering of Jericho and all these things.

And that was all. David had five books of the Bible yet he was a man of faith. We have more Bible. We have more record of God's dealing with His people.

We have more revelation more promises more prophecies fulfilled and most of all we have the record of how in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son whom He appointed heir of all things and through whom He made the universe Hebrews 1.

Doesn't it stand to reason then with a larger body of truth with more evidence of God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises?

that we should have at least the faith that David had if not greater faith. So the word of God that David was trusting in was the Bible of his day.

[32 : 50] But this God was not merely a historical fact for David. You can't read the Psalms and say wow David really thought God was great. Done with that idea.

The Psalms are filled with David's passion for God and there's a whole range of his passions from Psalm 13 where are you Lord to all the Psalms of praise.

David's relationship with God was an intensely personal relationship. Also this God was a God of David's daily experience.

I hope you can see that from this Psalm. we can see that readily in the account where David kills Goliath. If there ever was a time when the fear of man was understandable or excusable certainly it was young David against giant Goliath.

But David with the eye of faith he doesn't just see Goliath he sees a giant God behind Goliath before whom Goliath is just a speck a nothing.

[33 : 59] I find it an inspiring account I'm just going to read a little bit of it to you. David said to the Philistine you come to me with sword and spear and with a javelin but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts the God of the armies of Israel whom you have defied this day the Lord will deliver you into my hand and I will strike you down and cut off your head.

He doesn't even have a sword in his hand and he's saying these things and I will give the dead bodies of the hosts of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel and that all this assembly may know that the Lord saves not with the sword and spear for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hand.

That's faith. That's courage. That's courage based on real faith in a real God. not only did David have the Bible he had a personal promise from God through the prophet Samuel that he would be the next king.

Isn't that how God's word comes to us too? God revealed himself to Isaiah Jeremiah Matthew Paul others the prophets recorded the word we have the word through we have the written testimony heard from someone else we have it second hand in other words we don't have very infrequently do we have direct revelation from God but we have God's direct revelation to the prophets who have written it down and recorded it for us for our good.

You might say well no wonder David had such great faith he had a personal word from God I was going to say that might not be so great first of all he didn't have the direct word from God he got it through Samuel and secondly just think about how it is for him in these 12 years he's running from Saul in year probably in month two but let's say year two or year ten when he's thinking back did God really in other words he's got to rely on his own testimony to himself so he still has that human element there we don't have that with a written word we can count on it and it's unchanging it's always the same when we go back to the word of God it's there for our profit and for our good so we've seen that this God of whom David says in God whose word I praise in God I trust I will not be afraid he's the God of the scriptures he's the God of personal relationship the same in David's day today and forever and he's the God of personal experience

[36 : 44] God was with David God is with us God is for us remember when Jesus came they were to call his name Emmanuel God with us finally David asks what can man do to me that question can

be asked in faith or it can be asked in fear I think David is asking it in faith he's saying it almost dismissively what can man do to me or again in verse that's verse 11 and in verse 4 what can mortal man do to me in other words mortal man immortal God he's saying it dismissively what is man before the God of Israel or the question can be asked fearfully what can man do to me well let's see they can fire me from my job they can botch my retirement account my wife could divorce me they could laugh about my Sunday school lesson they could accuse me of incompetence in fathering or husbanding or tending of my property

I mean all kinds of things to be afraid of but the answer we have here in Psalm 56 is what man can do to me is nothing it's nothing beyond the control of God there's nothing that man can do to me outside of the control of the wise God whose word I praise who can and will bring justice who will ultimately bring every single one of his people home what is fears linked to pride I've joked a little bit about being you know kind of nervous about standing in front of you saying things being evaluated by you and so on and that's only half in jest but so but let's just say I mean why why is why would I be afraid of that what's there to be afraid of Sunday school audiences are generally pretty benign I think not hostile like the president's got to face so there's really nothing of substance for me to be afraid of even if

I hope I haven't done been totally ridiculous up here but even if I was I'm sure that I'd be welcome back at the following service surely no impact so where does the fear come from well isn't that just pride I'm worried about what you think and in other words what you think of me is more important than what God thinks of me when at my last company the HR department had a little catch phrase it's all about you and you think about it how can 1500 people say it's all about me but it seems contradictory but anyway so you're supposed to think it's all about me but anyway the Christian life if it's anything it's trying to get us to realize it's not all about you it's not all about me it's all about God isn't this how we close in the Lord's prayer yours Lord is the power yours is the glory it's not mine none of it belongs to me and so the answer isn't

I don't care what you think as if your opinions were insignificant it's just that we're all insignificant before God what he thinks is what matters giving glory to God is what matters and so the thing with fear is a lot of times it's really just tied to my pride I'm worried about what you think of me because I'm worried about me and so I'm focused on the wrong thing I need to be thinking about God and his glory and indeed this is how David closes Psalm 56 in verse 13 we read that he says for you have delivered my soul from death and my feet from stumbling that I may walk before God in the light of life he's walking before God he's not worried about man indeed he says what can mortal man do to me he's free of that fear and so I just want to conclude by saying faith is the battle who you believe is the most fundamental component of your life and I can say with full confidence we are all believers here we all believe in something the relevant question is what or rather who are you believing you're either believing the living

God of the scriptures or you are believing someone else David's faith and trust was in the God of the Bible in Hebrews 3 12 we are told see to it brothers that none of you has a sinful unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God it's remarkable see to it brothers see to it fellow pilgrims that none of you have a sinful unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God Paul says in 2nd Timothy 4 I have kept the faith in 1st Timothy 6 he says fight the good fight of the faith and so we say with David in faith challenging one another what is the response of faith it is when I am afraid I will put my trust in you in God whose word I praise in God I trust I will not be afraid what can mortal man do to me let's pray father

[42:21] God we thank you for your word in which you have communicated to us how trustworthy you are and you've given us many great and precious promises help us by faith to appropriate these promises and to live by faith and so to honor you and to make you look good to those who are around us to make it to show that we trust your willingness and your wisdom and your ability bless your word to us we pray in Christ's name Amen