

3 - MOTIVATED BY FEAR OR LOVE

FEAR IS NORMAL WHEN THERE IS DANGER

While jogging together one late, dark, night in Texas, a group of guys decided to leave the road and jog across some fields. As we explored the unfamiliar territory, we came to an area that dropped down about five feet into another field. After jumping down, we continued jogging. Then one person yelled, “A bull?!”

Immediately, terror filled our hearts. We ran as fast as we could, scared as can be. We reached the edge of the field and tried to hide amid some bushes. My heart was pounding as I tried to listen for the bull. After awhile, we concluded there was no bull chasing us. Even though the bull was imaginary, the fear and adrenalin were real. We actually should have been just as afraid of snakes in the bushes we were hiding in.

Fear is a natural emotion that we experience when we believe our lives are in danger. The first mention of fear is when Adam and Eve hid from God after they had sinned (Genesis 3:8).

In this sinful world, we all face the fear of death, pain, rejection, loneliness, failure, and meaningless living. Understanding our natural fears, people use fear and reward in order to motivate others to behave a certain way or to perform better.

- When children are young, parents use various kinds of punishments and rewards to help their kids learn right behavior and to protect them from activities and ideas that would injure them.
- Peer pressure leads many people to conform to group practices in order to gain acceptance.
- Businesses evaluate the performance of their employees and reward those who do well.
- Criminals are sentenced to prison or death in order to protect society and prevent further crime.

Fear and reward are the basic motivations in all of these situations. In a world of selfishness, it has its proper place to keep evil in check and to help us avoid pain. However, fear motivation can also be used improperly.

- Parents have at times abused their children, hurting them rather than training them.
- Adults have used manipulation to try to get what they want from others, regardless of how it makes others feel.
- Governments and armies have tortured people to learn information.
- Some religious people have persecuted and killed those who disagree with them.

SECURITY PREPARES THE WAY FOR MATURITY

All of us begin life with the motivations of fear and reward. Every parent longs for their children to grow up into maturity and show kindness, respect, and appreciation that is motivated by love.

God understands our natural fears and insecurities. He meets us where we are. He then tries to help us experience the security that we need that we may grow into maturity and love one another as He has loved us.

1. Read 2 Timothy 1:7

A. What does Paul say that God does not give us? _____

B. What are the qualities that He wants to give us?

Note:

The Greek word that is translated fear is *deilia*. It has the meaning of fear, being timid, and cowardice. Those who hold onto this fear are also described as unbelieving and will be lost in the end (Revelation 21:8). Through faith in His salvation, promises, and power, God wants us to live with confidence, security and a healthy, balanced outlook on life.

Power - We can accomplish whatever God asks us to do when we rely upon His strength, no matter what circumstances we are faced with. (See Philippians 4:13,19; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9.)

Love - We are to love one another as Jesus has loved us. John 13 makes it clear that Jesus was able to be focused on serving others because of the security He had from knowing where He came from, where He was going and why He was here (John 13:1-3, 13-15, 34,35).

Sound mind - Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid (deliao)” John 14:27. The fruit of the Spirit includes all the qualities that make up a balanced, healthy mind (Galatians 5:22,23).

WHEN GOD ACTS, SATAN REACTS

2. Read Mark 4:35-41

A. Why were the disciples afraid? (37,40)

B. What did their fear lead them to ask? (38)

C. What were they expecting Jesus to do? (Thought Question)

D. What did Jesus do? What did He ask? (39,40)

After a long day of teaching and helping people, Jesus and His disciples crossed the Sea of Galilee in a boat. Jesus was very tired and decided to rest in the back. But then a terrible storm came up that overwhelmed the disciples, even the ones who were experienced fishermen. They were terrified and cried out for help.

Satan would have been happy to destroy Jesus in this storm. When God is doing something positive, Satan tries to disrupt His work (Job 1:12,19).

When God acts, Satan reacts. Through the trials and temptations he brings, Satan hopes we will get discouraged, question God's love, get angry, and give up. The question the disciples asked reveals they were responding to his suggestions: "Don't You care that we are perishing?"

What were they expecting Jesus to do? Did they want Him to help bail water out of the boat? What Jesus did do was far beyond what they expected. They were totally shocked and amazed when He said, "Peace, be still!" and the wind and waves calmed down.

Paul reminds us that God is still "able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think" Ephesians 3:20. Trying to convince God to do what we want Him to do is like asking Him to help bail water, when He is able to calm the storm.

This story is incredible! The disciples thought they were dying and Jesus had the boldness to ask, "Why were you so afraid?" (The Greek word Jesus used was *deilos*, a form of the word Paul used in 2 Timothy 1:7.)

Fear is a natural reaction to danger. Fear motivates us to react quickly to protect ourselves. The disciples were trying to save themselves, but they were feeling hopeless in the midst of the storm. Their fear of dying led them to question Jesus' love and care for them.

Jesus, however, was at peace. He was secure in the knowledge that:

- Nothing can happen to those who trust God and place their lives in His hands, except what He allows (John 10:27-29; 1 Cor. 10:13).
- God will bring good out of the trials He does allow (Romans 8:28).
- Nothing can separate us from God's love (Romans 8:31-38).
- God's grace will always be sufficient to provide the strength and help we need in every situation (2 Cor. 12:7-10; Phil. 4:11-13, 19).

3. Read Mark 5:1-20

A. What did Jesus encounter when He got out of the boat? (1-7)

B. What does Jesus command the “unclean spirit” to do? (8)

C. What happened when the demons asked to enter the swine? (12-13)

D. What was the man like after he was healed? (15)

E. What did the people ask Jesus to do after the swine drowned? (17)

F. After Jesus left, what did the man do who had been healed? (18-20)

After Jesus calmed the storm, Satan reacted by trying to scare or hurt Jesus and his disciples. When they got out of the boat they were met by a man possessed by demons. Matthew 8:28 says two came “out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way.” Mark and Luke apparently focus on the worst one. Luke 8:27 says he “had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes.” (Each gospel writer provides details that give a fuller picture to the stories they told.)

While the demons controlled the words the man said, his inner desire for deliverance was manifested by an act of worship (Mark 5:6). Looking beyond the faults and seeing the need, Jesus commanded the demons to leave. They begged for permission to go into a herd of pigs. When Jesus said yes, they “entered the swine . . . and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea.” Mark 5:13.

When the people saw what happened, they begged Jesus to leave. This was what Satan was hoping for. But God had a plan. Jesus told the healed man, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things

the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.” The testimony of the healed man prepared the way for people to listen to Jesus. Several months later, Jesus came back to the region of Decapolis and that is where He fed four thousand people (Mark 7:31-8:9).

When God acts, Satan reacts; but God always has a plan. When we remember this, we can see every difficulty as a call to prayer and every trial as an opportunity to see God work. This story illustrates that:

- Satan and his angels are subject to the authority of Jesus.
- They are limited in what they can do on earth.
- They can control only those people who give them permission.
- Even when humans fail, God can bring healing and restoration.
- God will bring good out of evil when people give Him permission.

SATISFYING THIRST WITH AN EMPTY CUP

4. How does God summarize all the evil Israel did? Jeremiah 2:13

God uses a word picture to describe the foolishness of anyone turning away from God to satisfy their inner thirst. God alone can bring healing and meet our basic need for security, acceptance, and significance.

Satan has a counterfeit plan to meet our needs. Through combining truth with error, he convinces many people that his plan is best. When our needs in life are threatened, Satan tries to get us to react out of fear. To overcome our fears, we will try to satisfy our needs in whatever way we think is best. Our needs are too great to ignore.

For example, when people are drowning, they have a desperate need to breathe. They can only hold their breath for so long. If they are still in the water when they finally gasp for air, their lungs fill up with water. Unless they get help right away, they will die.

Our physical, emotional and spiritual needs are also great. When we try to satisfy those needs in unhealthy ways, it is like trying to breathe when we are in water or trying to drink water from an empty cup.

The chart on the next page contrasts two basic ways we try to meet our needs and overcome our fears. Satan's plan seems right to us, for we can't get along in the world without money, good behavior, and status symbols. However, God's plan alone will truly satisfy.

GOD'S PERFECT LOVE CASTS OUT FEAR

5. What is cast out of our lives when we experience God's perfect love? 1 John 4:17-19

Fear is related to judgment, torment, and negative consequences. When we experience the security that comes from God's perfect love, we no longer have to be afraid. We can rely upon His power, promises and salvation to provide for us and give us eternal life. We are truly able to move from being motivated by fear to being motivated by love.

- Fear of pain will diminish when we rest in the grace and strength God provides and trust in His ability to bring good out of our trials.
- Fear of death will be conquered when we know Jesus will never leave us or forsake us and remember He has given us eternal life.
- Fear of rejection is overcome when we know God loves and accepts us because we are His children, not because we deserve Him.
- Fear of loneliness will be lessened as we grow in a living relationship with God. He promised, "You shall seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart." Jeremiah 29:13.
- Fear of failure will decrease when we remember that God is patient with us, always faithful to forgive, and promises to help us.
- We will experience meaning and purpose in life when we serve God and let Him use us to be a blessing to others.

LIVING BY FAITH IN GOD’S LOVE AND TRUTH

	PHYSICAL	EMOTIONAL	SPIRITUAL
HUMAN NEEDS	Protection; Security	Acceptance; Belonging	Value; Meaning in Life
NATURAL FEARS	Pain Death	Rejection Loneliness	Failure No Meaning in life
SATAN'S PLAN Focus on these things to satisfy our needs and overcome our fears.	Money to buy: 1. Food 2. Clothing 3. Shelter 4. Healthcare (long life) 5. Entertainment (pleasure)	Good behavior The better we behave, the more we feel God and others should accept us.	Value Based on Performance/Status 1. Important job 2. Higher salary 3. Education 4. Nice home & car 5. Designer clothes 6. Expensive jewelry 7. Accomplishments
PROBLEM Focusing on: ➤ Money, ➤ Behavior, ➤ Status symbols will leave us: ○ Empty, ○ Insecure, ○ Unloving.	1. Greed: never enough 2. Steal time, energy and resources to “get ahead” in life 3. Insecurity remains	1. Hypocrisy 2. Manipulation and abusive relationships 3. Loneliness and rejection remain	1. Condemning others to make ourselves look better 2. Pride if we have done good 3. Jealousy if we have little
GOD'S PLAN Faith in His: ○ Gift of life ○ Love ○ Mission	Gift of Life 1. Eternal Life 2. He provides for our needs 3. He is able to bring good out of evil.	Unconditional Love God takes the initiative to love us because we need it, not because we deserve it.	Mission We all are valuable to God. He has a plan for each of us. True joy comes from being used by Him to love and bless others.

6. What fears do I experience periodically?

7. How have I responded to my fears in unhealthy ways?

8. What truth and promises from God do I need to focus on?

WHY ARE WE TO FEAR THE LORD?

9. What does the Bible say the fear of the Lord is?

A. Proverbs 1:7 “The fear of the Lord is the _____ of _____, but fools despise _____ and instruction.”

B. Proverbs 1:29 “They _____ and did not _____ the _____ of the Lord.”

C. Proverbs 8:13 “The fear of the Lord is to _____.”

D. Proverbs 9:10 “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of _____.”

E. Proverbs 10:27 “The fear of the Lord _____, but the years of the wicked will be _____.”

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. When we understand that God is ultimately the One in control of life, we recognize our need to listen to Him above every other authority.

Choosing to respect the Creator of life is a wise choice. He has established the physical and moral laws to live by. Evil is a rejection of the moral law of love and will lead to emotional and spiritual pain, just as disregarding physical laws will lead to physical pain. Choosing to disregard God's authority will truly shorten life. Only those who trust God will want to live forever with Him. Those who fear men rather than God are showing their lack of trust in God's love, power, and promises.

10. Who does Jesus say we are to fear? Matthew 10:28

If we are motivated by fear, Jesus says, "Fear God, rather than men." If someone threatens to kill us because we are following God, we can rest in the promise of the resurrection (John 5:24-29; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). If we ultimately reject God out of fear of what people will do to us, God will honor our choice and we will perish in the end (John 3:16,19).

11. What does Jesus say to encourage His followers to move beyond being motivated by fear? Matthew 10:29-31

Jesus assures us that we don't need to live in constant fear, for God really cares for us. Since He cares for the sparrow, we can be sure He will care for us. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, not the end of wisdom. It can get us started on our journey. Then as we grow in our relationship with God and understand more clearly what He is like, we will begin to be motivated by love, rather than by fear.

SERVING GOD WITH REVERENCE AND GODLY FEAR

12. What attitude should we have as we serve God? Hebrews 12:28

The word translated godly fear is *eulabeia*. We should never lose the reverential respect and awe of who God is:

- While He is an intimate God who offers to live within our lives, we must also recognize He is the all powerful Creator and the One who is Holy (Exodus 33:20; Isaiah 6:5; Daniel 10:6-8; Revelation 1:17).
- While He is merciful, gracious, and forgiving, He will honor our choice if we want to cling onto sin. Our guilt will remain (See Exodus 34:6,7).
- While we need not be afraid of God, we will always be afraid in the presence of God if we are clinging onto sin (Revelation 6:14-17; Matthew 10:28-31; Genesis 3).

13. What emotion did the disciples have during and after the storm? Mark 4:40,41

While they were in the midst of the storm, they were terrified. They thought for sure they were going to die. Jesus asked them, “Why are you so fearful (*deilos*)?” After Jesus calmed the storm, “they feared (*phobeo*) exceedingly.”

Their emotion of being afraid of dying changed to an emotion of fearful respect and awe from being in the presence of someone so powerful and amazing. “*Phobos* lies in between *delia*, cowardice, and *eulabeia*, religious reverence” (AMG Complete Word Study Dictionary-NT, commenting on the Greek word, *delia*, #1167).

The Greek word phobos is sometimes used in relationship to being afraid and motivated by fear. Other times it is used in the context of reverential awe. The context usually reveals the meaning that is trying to be conveyed.

14. What leads us to repent and to surrender our lives to God?

- A. Jeremiah 31:3 “I have loved you with an _____ love; therefore with loving-kindness I have _____ you.”
- B. Jeremiah 29:11 “‘I know the thoughts that I think toward you,’ says the Lord, ‘thoughts of _____ and not of _____, to give you a _____ and a _____.’”
- C. Romans 2:4 “Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the _____ of God _____ you to _____?”

The One who knows us best, loves us most!

The One who knows the future, has a plan for our lives!

The One who has all power, is able to fulfill His dream for our lives!

Being afraid of God leads people to feel like they *have to* follow God.

The goodness of God leads people to *want to* follow God.

The Spirit of God empowers people *to* follow God.

PETER’S STORY: MOVING FROM FEAR TO LOVE

15. How did Jesus respond to the question, “Lord, where are you going?” John 13:36

Jesus was going to the cross for the salvation of the world. They didn't need to follow Him to the cross, for their mission was different. God would use them to share the gospel with others after Jesus was resurrected. They also were not capable of following Him at that time, for they had not yet fully understood His mission.

When Jesus tried to tell them that He would die and be raised again, they didn't believe Him. Peter even rebuked Him, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" Matthew 16:22. (For other times Jesus tried to tell them, see Matthew 17:22, 23; 20:17-19; 26:2). As a result of their unbelief, the disciples were devastated when Jesus was crucified.

After He was resurrected, they learned that the mission of the Messiah was to save the world from sin, not to save the Jews from the Romans. Armed with the truth and the power of the Holy Spirit, the gospel spread everywhere. Many believed and were converted. Others rejected and fought against the truth and killed many who chose to follow Jesus. The disciples did follow Him later just as Jesus said they would.

16. What promise did Peter make to Jesus? John 13:37

17. What was Jesus' Response? John 13:38; Matthew 26:34,35

Peter loved Jesus. He had left all to follow Him (Matthew 19:27). He promised to follow Jesus to the very end, even laying down His life for Him. When Judas led a group to arrest Jesus, Peter used a sword to fight, cutting off the ear of Malchus. He must have received the courage to do so when the mob fell to the ground before Jesus (John 18:6,10,11).

But then Jesus did something that totally surprised Peter. He said, "No more of this!" (Luke 22:51 NIV). Then He healed the ear of Malchus

and let the mob arrest Him. Peter couldn't understand. He must have wondered, "If Jesus was truly the Messiah, why would He allow this?"

In just a few hours, Peter went from attacking with the sword to denying that he even knew Jesus. Out of fear, he was willing to lie about his best Friend. When the rooster crowed, Jesus looked at Peter. Reminded of his failure, Peter "went out and wept bitterly" Luke 22:57-62.

18. What was Peter told ahead of time that would help him not give up after he had denied Jesus? John 13:38–14:3; Luke 22:31-34

The chapter divisions make us think John 14 is a totally new section. However, if we continue reading after John 13:38, we realize the significance of what Jesus was saying to Peter and the other disciples. The message applies to all of us when we fail God.

"You will deny Me, but let not your heart be troubled. I haven't given up on you! I am going to prepare a place for you... that where I am, there you may be also!"

Jesus assured them of His unconditional love and forgiveness. He was also promising that He would be resurrected after He died. Jesus knew the spiritual war was fierce. He prayed for Peter that his faith would not totally fail (Luke 22:32).

19. Read John 21:15-17 in the paragraphs on the next page.

(The Greek words that are translated "love" are included to give additional insight into the conversation.)

- A. How many times does Jesus ask Peter, "Do you love me?" _____
- B. How many times did Jesus use agapao? _____
- C. How many times did Jesus use phileo? _____

“So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, *son* of John, do you love [agapao] Me more than these?’

He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You.’

He said to him, ‘Tend My lambs.’ He said to him again a second time, ‘Simon, *son* of John, do you love [agapao] Me?’

He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You.’

He said to him, ‘Shepherd My sheep.’ He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, *son* of John, do you love [phileo] Me?’

Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love [phileo] Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘Lord, You know all things; You know that I love [phileo] You.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Tend My sheep.’”

Peter was grieved, not because Jesus had repeated the same question three times (as the English Bible implies), but because Jesus had switched from “agapao” to “phileo” the third time.

Peter thought he had a love for Jesus that was stronger than death when he promised, “I’ll die for You!” He had to admit, however, that he didn’t have that kind of love. He also learned that Jesus knew him better than he knew himself, so he responds, “Lord, You know all things. You know the kind of love that I had for You failed.”

20. What did Jesus say would happen to Peter? John 21:18,19

It would have been easy for Peter to wonder if he would fail again when under pressure. This prophecy assured him that he would not deny Jesus again when he was faced with the threat of death. Peter had learned that He could trust what Jesus said. This freed Peter from constantly worrying and wondering if he would deny Him again.

After Peter was humbled and had repented, Jesus was able to use him to “feed His sheep.” It is the same with all of us. When we are humble and teachable, Jesus is able to use us and create within us the kind of love that will not fail, even when put to the ultimate test.

The historian Eusebius records, “Paul was beheaded in Rome itself, and that Peter likewise was crucified under Nero. This account of Peter and Paul is substantiated by the fact that their names are preserved in the cemeteries of that place even to the present day.” (Ecclesiastical History, by Eusebius, bk 2, Ch. 25:5. www.newadvent.org/fathers/250102.htm).

Definitions by Strong’s Concordance – From phileo, word #5368

Phileo – “To be a friend to; to be fond of (an individual or an object), i.e. have affection for, denoting personal attachment, as a matter of sentiment or feeling.”

Agape - In contrast to phileo, agape “is wider, embracing especially the judgment and the deliberate assent of the will as a matter of principle, duty and propriety.” (Agapao is the verb form of agape.)

In general, phileo could be described as a love “of the heart” and agape as a love “of the head.”

While these definitions are helpful, it is important to understand that agape can embrace all aspects of healthy love. “Love [agapao] the Lord your God with all your *heart*,... *soul*,... *strength*, and... *mind*’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’” Luke 10:27

It is also inspirational to know that God’s love is described as phileo in John 16:27. He enjoys the relationship He has with those who love Jesus. “The Father Himself loves [phileo] you, because you have loved [phileo] Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.”

Our next lesson will focus on the truth that compelled Paul to serve God.