

## CHAPTER 5 OVERCOMING FEAR (e<sup>3</sup>)

**"...I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid..." (Genesis 3:10).**

**"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).**

Fred Doerflein, a friend of mine, shared with me that in the middle of his business career he suddenly became fearful that his business would fail. There was no physical evidence that would lead him to believe that his business would fail; in fact, his business was doing quite well. But his mind became filled with fearful thoughts that his business would go bankrupt. This fear became so intense that there were days that he didn't want to get out of bed in the morning; going to work was torture. This went on for several months. One day Fred remembered the scripture "For God has not given me the spirit of fear but of power and love and of a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7), and he began to confess this scripture to himself over and over again. After several days, Fred noticed that the "fear of failure" had diminished somewhat. After confessing the Word of God for several additional days, the spirit of fear left him and he was able to return to a normal thought-life.

It was not long after this experience that Fred began to feel physically tired. After several weeks of feeling exhausted and weak, his wife Joyce convinced him that he should go to the doctor for a physical examination. When Fred met with the doctor to review the test results, the doctor told him that he had leukemia. Immediately the fear of death attacked his mind, but only for a few seconds, because the faith of God rose up from within and drove off the spirit of fear that had attacked his mind. Fred told the doctor, "I am going to go home and pray about this." After prayer, Fred decided to believe God for his complete healing; he did not return to the doctor for eight years, and only then for a routine physical examination.

When Fred arrived home from the doctor appointment, his wife Joyce asked what the doctor had found. Fred simply said, "**The doctor said I have a blood disorder**"; he refused to even say the word *leukemia*. That evening Fred remembered a story that a preacher had shared during a sermon, a story concerning a boy who asked his father for a new bicycle. When the father heard his son's request, he immediately agreed to give him a new bicycle. But the next day when the boy hadn't yet received the bicycle, he asked his father a second time. Each day thereafter he would again ask his father for the bicycle until his father became very upset by his constant nagging. Finally the father said, "**Son, don't you trust me?**"

Remembering this illustration, Fred asked his heavenly Father to heal him of the leukemia only once; thereafter he simply thanked God that He was healed. Fred says, "**Sometimes we simply need to wait on God in faith, and not expect an immediate answer to our prayer.**" Within six months of asking God to heal him, the symptoms of leukemia had left Fred, and he is still healthy and vibrant today some twenty-five years later. Fred had learned that "*God has not given him the spirit of fear but of power and love and a sound mind.* (4)

When God created man, He gave him a free will, but sadly few people choose to exercise their will like Fred Doerflein did. The majority of men simply accepts every random thought as their own, and therein lies the secret of success and failure in life. In this chapter you will become aware of the absolute necessity of exercising your will to take control over your thoughts.

### THE ORIGINATION OF FEAR

When Adam, the man whom God proclaimed to be His under-ruler on the earth (Genesis 1:28), collaborated with God's arch enemy Satan, he died spiritually. He became separated from God (Genesis 2:17), and the spirit of faith (the nature of God) was replaced by the spirit of fear (the nature of Satan), and therefore Satan became mankind's spiritual father (John 8:44). The spirit of fear and the host of negative emotions which are caused by it are so destructive to an individual's life and business success that we will spend this entire chapter learning to recognize and cope with them.

## **MANKIND IS UNDER A CURSE**

When Adam sinned in the Garden, mankind came under a curse (Genesis 3:17). Paul refers to it in the book of Galatians as the "curse of the law" (Galatians 3:13). The law is contained in the first five books of the Bible and the "curse of the law" is summarized in Deuteronomy 28:15-68. This curse includes:

- **Poverty**
- **Sickness**
- **Death**

## **THE FEAR OF POVERTY**

The "fear of poverty" is extremely destructive to one's business life. It can paralyze your ability to think, discourage you from developing faith in God's promises, and prevent you from obtaining victory in your business and personal life. It leads to torment in your mind and failure in your actions. Nothing brings mankind as much suffering as poverty does. The fear of poverty is so subtle and deeply rooted in our minds and spirits that we can go through life and never recognize its presence. I suffered from a subtle form of the fear of poverty for years; it caused me to be overly cautious and prevented me from making several profitable investments.

But thank God, Jesus has redeemed us from the curse of the law (poverty, sickness and spiritual death), so that we might receive the blessing of Abraham (prosperity health and eternal life) by faith. The Apostle Paul says emphatically that whatever is not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23 b). Faith is the antidote for the fear of poverty or, for that matter, any other fear.

## **JOB LIVED IN "FEAR OF POVERTY"**

In the prologue of the book of Job a conversation between God and Satan is recorded for our admonition. Satan presents himself before God and challenges Job's piety, stating, "...Does Job fear God for nothing?" (Job 1:9). He goes on to suggest that if everything were taken away from Job, that Job would curse God. (Job 1:11) God said to Satan, "...Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person" (Job 1:12). **To the casual reader it would appear that God gave Satan permission to attack Job. But I believe God merely pointed out that Job was walking in fear (he was in sin) and was therefore out from under the protection of God. Job was in a position where the Devil could attack him.** Job himself confirms this position when he confessed, **"For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me, and what I dreaded has happened to me"** (Job 3:25). Job was the richest man in the East, but he lived in fear, the "fear of poverty." Job feared that he would lose everything that he had accumulated, and that fear gave Satan access into his life. It allowed the devil to steal his wealth, kill his children, and attack his body (Job 1:13-19 & 2:7).

## **SYMPTOMS OF THE FEAR OF POVERTY**

Perhaps you may be wondering if you suffer from the fear of poverty. Below are several symptoms of the fear of poverty that will assist you in making a self diagnosis. If you...

- ...suffer doubt that it is God's will for you to prosper
- ...are overly envious of others who are successful
- ...often worry about problems you are facing, lacking confidence that God will help you to succeed
- ...have feelings of inferiority
- ... are indecisive and often prognosticate in making decisions
- ...are indifferent toward your work and suffer from lack of ambition or the desire to succeed

...then you no doubt suffer to some extent from the fear of poverty, and you need to take steps to establish faith in God's Word concerning his promises and his desire to prosper you.

## **THE FEAR OF SICKNESS AND DEATH**

The fear of sickness, old age, and death are all closely related. Fear of ill health is also reinforced by the fear of poverty. We think *if I should become ill, I could lose my livelihood and it could cost me my life savings*. In America, it is impossible to turn on the television or radio without hearing a drug manufacturer's advertisement proclaiming the benefits of their particular brand of cure and describing in vivid details the symptoms of some sickness or disease, reinforcing our innate fear of sickness and death. Among physicians, it is a generally accepted perception that a large percent of their patients are suffering from imaginary illnesses. It has been demonstrated that the **fear** of disease, even where there is not the slightest physical cause for that fear, may cause an individual to meditate on the disease until it produces physical symptoms of the very disease that the individual fears.

### **AN EXPERIENCE FROM MY OWN LIFE**

A number of years ago I had an experience which brought home the power that our thoughts can have on our health and prosperity. One day the following thought flashed into my mind: *Now that you are getting older, you will probably have to start taking pills for sugar diabetes like your father used to take* (my father had passed away several years earlier). I really didn't dwell on the thought; I simply dismissed it. But several weeks later that same thought passed through my mind again. Again I dismissed it. During the following year, that particular thought was impressed upon my mind again and again. Near the end of the year, I went to my doctor for a routine physical examination. Several days after the examination a nurse from the doctor's office called and said, *"You tested positive for sugar diabetes; we would like you to take a second test."* As I hung up the telephone I turned to my wife Barbara and explained to her the nurse's report concerning my blood sugar levels. Then I asked Barbara to agree with me in prayer, and I proclaimed *"In the name of Jesus, I rebuke the sugar diabetic condition!"* Then I boldly confessed *"My body is strong and perfect."* The following week I took a second blood test and my blood sugar level had returned to normal.

Several years after the above incident I was visiting with my mother and I related to her the above experience. Somewhat bewildered, she said, *"Where did you ever get the idea that your father took pills for sugar diabetes; he didn't have sugar diabetes!"* Where did I get that idea? While I had refused to receive the suggestion that I had sugar diabetes, I had come to firmly believe that my father once had it. The devil had sent one of his demon spirits of fear to sit on my shoulder and try to convince me that I was doomed to suffer from sugar diabetes because my father had it. I am convinced that if I hadn't taken control of the thoughts which I allowed to dominate my mind, today I would have sugar diabetes.

### **FEAR IS A SPIRIT**

Fear is a spirit; it affects us from the outside. The root cause of virtually all the problems we have in life are caused by fear. When we allow fearful thoughts to dominate our conscious thinking, those thoughts will cause negative emotions such as envy, jealousy, bitterness, and anger to take up residence in our soul; and those emotions will eventually poison our spirit. These negative emotions are dangerous, because as we have explained elsewhere in this book, they prevent faith from developing in our spirit man. Allowing fear and negative emotions to develop in our spirit is a sin (Romans 14:23 b), and it will quench our relationship with God. It will not only affect our relationship with God and the people with whom we associate, but also our physical and mental health. Therefore the elimination of fear (and its resulting negative emotions) is the number one task for the individual who aspires to be successful in life. Fear and negative emotions are the primary causes of under achievement and failure in life, particularly in the business world.

### **FEAR IS THE RECIPROCAL OF FAITH**

The Manufacturer's Handbook describes both faith (2 Corinthians 4:13) and fear (2 Timothy 1:7) as spirits. Faith is the master over fear! It has been proclaimed: *"Fear knocked on the door, faith answered and there was no one there."*

Faith is information we get from God (his Word) to act on. Since fear is the reciprocal (opposite) of faith, it can therefore be considered information we get from the devil to act on. Here is how it works: A demonic spirit comes and impresses his negative thoughts of defeat and failure upon your mind. Thoughts such as *you will never make enough sales to keep your*

*employees busy this month.* The next day he whispers, "See you lost another sale...you are not going to make your goal...why call on more customers...you may as well go home and rest." If you are not aware of the source of these negative thoughts, you will accept them as your own. If you begin to think upon and confess these negative, fearful thoughts, you will begin to worry, and subsequently this will produce doubt in God's Word and His ability to help you. The spirit of fear will quench your faith and allow a host of negative, defeating emotions to become established in your soul. Those negative emotions will eventually poison your spirit and prevent you from taking the action which is required for you to succeed in life. You may not realize it, but as we pointed out earlier, when you act in fear, you are in sin and no longer in a position for God to help you. Without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6).

### **UNDERSTANDING HOW FEAR ATTACKS THE MIND**

It is important for you to understand how the spirit of fear attacks your mind if you are to prevent its negative defeating effects from gaining a foothold in our life. You need to recognize the devil's methods so that you can take a stand against them. Paul says, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11). In another place he says, "...for we are not ignorant of his (Satan's) devices" (2 Corinthians 2:11). We need to take a closer look at these verses as they describe Satan's strategies for attacking mankind; we need to recognize his strategies so that we can take a stand against them.

A number of years ago I read an excellent book entitled *Dressed to Kill* by Rick Renner (1) in which he discusses the root meaning of the word *wiles* and *devices* used in the above scriptures. He states that the word *wiles* used in Ephesians 6:11 comes from the Greek word *methodos* (meth-o-dos), from which we derive the word "method." However **method** does not really convey its full meaning. Renner points out the word *wiles* is often translated as someone who is being crafty or full of trickery, but the most basic translation is "on a road." In other words, the devil does not have all the power or all the means he would like us to believe he has. In reality he has only one road or approach by which he can attack you. Renner goes on to explain that the English word *devices* used above in 2 Corinthians 2:11 is a translation of the Greek word *noemata* (no-e-ma-ta), a form of the word **nous**, which describes the mind or the intellect. The word *noemata* used by Paul in the above scripture carries the idea of a deceived mind. It actually depicts the insidious plot and wicked schemes of the devil to confuse and attack the human mind. Renner quoted one language specialist as stating that the word *noemata* suggests "mind games."

**The devil and his demon spirits have only one road or avenue by which they can attack you; they play games with your mind. They impress their negative, evil thoughts on your mind in an attempt to get you to think upon and confess those thoughts. They attempt to manipulate your physical senses and your emotions to get you to believe something that is not really true.** They try to make you believe the worst about your life, your family, your health, your finances, your business, etc. If you begin to think upon and confess the devil's lies, you will begin to perceive them as reality, and they will eventually become established in your life. Remember:

- ❑ The way you think...
- ❑ Determines what you believe in your heart (Proverbs 23:7a),
- ❑ Which determines the way you talk (Mathew 12:34 b),
- ❑ Which determines what you have in life (Mark 11:23).

Now let's take a closer look at how the spirit of fear works to gradually take over your thinking and eventually your entire body, soul and spirit.

**DEPRESSION** ...When a problem arises in your life, a devilish spirit of fear causes you to think thoughts of failure and defeat that attack your mind; we commonly call this condition "depression." The demonic spirit causing you to become depressed is actually on the outside of you—this spirit is impressing his devilish thoughts on your mind. If you refuse his thoughts, and you meditate (think upon and confess) the Word of God concerning the answer to your problem, you will defeat him. If you resist the devil and his demons, and you refuse to allow

his thoughts to dominate your mind, the spirit of fear will have to leave you (James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:9), just like it left my friend Fred Doerflein mentioned in the opening paragraphs of this chapter.

**OBSESSION...** If however, you begin to receive these devilish thoughts of fear and failure, and you meditate upon (think upon and confess) them until they dominate your thinking, you will give that demon spirit permission to enter your mind. When that spirit enters your mind, his thoughts will become your thoughts—they will become an obsession; they will dominate your every thought. Once a demonic spirit enters your mind, he can control it. Now that spirit is in you (in your mind) and you will require help in order to be set free from this spirit and his oppressive fearful thoughts.

It is my experience in praying for people around the world that often a very fearful and traumatic experience in one's life such as an accident or a physical attack on one's person may also allow a spirit of fear to slip into and obsess that person's mind or body. When a person experiences such a traumatic event, the spirit of fear will oppress them without that individual even recognizing the source of the oppression. While I was speaking in Japan in August of 2000, a woman in her fifties came to me for prayer and told me that the left side of her body was partially paralyzed. She explained that several years earlier she had been in an automobile accident in which her left side was painfully injured and had become paralyzed. She said she no longer had the sharp pain she once had, but the left side of her body was still partially paralyzed, and she explained that she was still extremely fearful of riding in automobiles. As she told me her story, I could see the spirit of fear looking at me through her eyes. I slapped her left side of her body with my hand and I proclaimed, "In the name of Jesus, I command the spirit of fear to come out of her." She began to scream at the top of her lungs; she grabbed her left side and continued to scream as I continued to demand that the demon of fear come out of her. In about two to three minutes the spirit of fear left her and the woman was free. She was free of the fear and free of the paralysis.

After I had finished praying for her she was very apologetic to the other people who were in the meeting because she caused such a disturbance. She said that she had never done anything like that before and she couldn't understand what had caused her to scream. But she was totally healed. Neither this lady, her doctors, nor her pastor or friends had recognized that it was a spirit of fear that held her in such physical and mental torment. They just thought it was an injury from the car accident. **Certainly the trauma of the accident had allowed the spirit to enter her body, but it was the spirit itself that caused the physical problem in her body.**

**POSSESSION ...** If a person allows his mind to be obsessed with negative demonic thinking long enough and does not get help, that demonic spirit may get down into his spirit, and completely take over his mind, spirit, and body. We use the word "possessed" to describe the state of such a person who is totally controlled by an evil spirit. In the more than thirty years that I have been praying for people, I have met very few individuals who are actually possessed, and they have all been non-believers. A person cannot be possessed and be a believer. Once a person is possessed by an evil spirit they will definitely require help to be delivered and set free.

#### **STAND AGAINST THE SPIRIT OF FEAR**

The "good fight of faith" is not a momentary gust of faith to deliver you from a problem; it is a life style, a life-long commitment to meditate upon (to think upon and confess) "God's Word." It is a determined and committed state of the mind and heart. Paul admonishes the believer to be "strong in the Lord and the power of his might." We are to put on the whole armor of God and to stand fast in the face of every demonic attack. In Ephesians 6:10-18 Paul uses the various pieces of the Roman soldier's armor as a metaphor for applying the word of God. He says we are not to be moved by adverse circumstances or the bad news that the devil tries to impress on our mind. We are to take the "sword of the Spirit," which is the Word of God, and pray and confess that Word right in the face of every problem. If we refuse to back off of our confession of God's Word, faith and patience will always produce victory (Hebrews 6:11-18)

### **FAITH IS PRESENT TENSE, FEAR IS FUTURE TENSE**

Faith is always present tense—faith says it's mine; I have it now. Faith is established in your heart by meditating on (thinking upon and confessing) the promises of God. Satan tries to get you to think upon and confess your fears in order to quench your faith. He will try to impress thoughts of failure and defeat upon your mind so that you will doubt God's promises and fail to act on them. If you receive his devilish thoughts and begin to meditate upon (think upon and confess) them, those thoughts will replace the faith (faith that God will prosper you) that you have developed in your heart with the fear that you will fail.

Fear and worry are always future tense. Fear says, *"Even though the economy is good it may turn bad next year so don't try to expand your business."* Worry says *"I may have made an error on the bid for that new project; maybe I shouldn't go ahead with it. I don't know what to do."* Fear causes you to doubt God's promises. Doubting is to fear as believing is to faith. If you believe God's promises you will act on them, and that action shows God that you believe him. If you doubt God's promises you will fail to act on them, and your failure to act shows God that you do not believe Him. More importantly it shows the devil that he is winning the fight of faith.

### **DON'T EVER CONFESS YOUR DOUBTS AND FEARS**

The devil is not omniscient; he cannot read your mind. The only way he knows if he is winning or losing the battle for your mind is by listening to your talk and observing your actions. The confession of God's Word from your lips, spoken in faith from your heart, will defeat the devil on every occasion and will give **God dominion in your life**; however, your confession of the devil's ability to hinder you and keep you from success will give **the devil authority in your life**.

If you are fearful, it is not something that is on the inside of you, it is something that is on the outside of you trying to get into you. The Creator's Handbook tells us more than seventy times **"Fear not."** God admonishes you and me to "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isaiah 41:10). Never confess your fears; resist the spirit of fear and it will flee from you (James 4:7). Now, you may have doubts and you may even sense fear, but don't ever confess them. Confess God's Word concerning your situation instead. Confessing the Word of God one minute and speaking doubt and failure the next minute will cause confusion in your spirit; it will give the devil dominion over you and cause you to fail in life. Your actions must correspond with your confession.

**Jesus said, "I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace and confidence. In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage, be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you]" (John 16:33 Amplified Bible).**

### **WORRY IS THE TRIUMPH OF FEAR OVER FAITH**

**As a businessperson you would never pay interest on money you have not borrowed. Why then would you worry? Worry is "interest paid on trouble that never happens."**

Worry is simply the triumph of fear over faith. It is a subtle form of fear; it is meditating on all the things that might go wrong in the future. It is the misuse of the creative imagination that God has placed within each of us. It allows fear to take hold of your mind thought by thought and it will eventually paralyze your reasoning ability, destroy your self-confidence, and overcome your faith in God's ability to fulfill His Word. Worry is a sin because it is faith in the devil's ability to harm you, rather than in God's ability to protect you. Jesus specifically told us not to worry: "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'what shall we drink?' or 'what shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own

trouble.” (Matthew 6:31-34) Those who are filled with fear and worry not only destroy their own ability to act, but if they express those fears to others, then **their** ability to act will be destroyed as well.

### **TAKE CONTROL OVER YOUR THOUGHTS**

God has given mankind absolute control over but one thing... their will. Those who fail in life do so because they fail to exercise their will. They allow every negative thought to enter and inhabit their mind, while others of equal ability and training allow only positive, faith-filled thoughts to dwell in their minds. Because everything that mankind accomplishes begins with the way they think, we can readily understand how thoughts of failure and poverty can cause one to fail in life, and anxious thoughts of sickness and poor health can actually shorten one's life.

This last statement is substantiated by research accomplished by Ellen Idler, a sociologist at Rutgers University, and Stanislav Kasl an epidemiologist at Yale University School of Medicine, who co-authored the following study:

*“A person's answer to the question, 'Is your health excellent, good, fair or poor?' is a remarkable predictor of who will live or die over the next four years”* according to their findings. *“A study of more than 2800 men and women 65 and older found that those who rate their health 'poor' are four to five times more likely to die in the next four years than those who rate their health 'excellent.' This was the case even if examinations show the respondents to be in comparable health. These findings are supported by a review of five other large studies, totaling 23,000 people, which reached similar conclusions,”* according to Idler and Kasl (3).

### **YOU MUST DEAL WITH YOUR NEGATIVE EMOTIONS**

In an article in *Charisma Magazine* (a popular Christian magazine in America) entitled **“God Doesn't Want You to Crash and Burn,”** the author states that *“negative emotions such as anger, envy, and bitterness--- as well as the mishandling of stress---can destroy ones health and life. Studies have shown, in fact, that anxious thoughts cause our bodies to release chemicals that actually suppress our immune systems.”* That article goes on to state, **“The dangerous emotions that we must guard against are prolific and include jealousy, pride, envy, anger, and bitterness.** *It is important to understand what plays into each one of these emotions...One of the most dangerous of all emotions is anger. When anger is not dealt with immediately, it festers in our souls causing pain, isolation and eventually physically disease. That is why the Bible says not to “let the sun go down on your wrath” (Ephesians 4:26). Warning signs of anger include low self-esteem; being overly critical, controlling or confrontational; lacking in trust; blaming others for mistakes; and overreacting...If anger is not dealt with, bitterness sets in. You can choose to hold on to your hurt or pain and grow increasingly bitter, or you can deal with it, release it and feel better...”* (2) We deal with the issue of eliminating negative emotions such as jealousy, pride, envy, anger, and bitterness in more detail Part III of this book.

(1) *Dressed to Kill*, Copyright © 1991 by Rick Renner (Pg 243-244)

(2) “God Doesn't Want You to Crash and Burn.” Janet C. Marccaro, *Charisma Magazine*, July 2003. )

(3) “Patient Knows Best.” *Reader's Digest Magazine*, August 1991

(4) Printed by permission, Fred Doerflein, Desert Hot Springs, CA