
Fear

Ephesians 4:31

“Are you running?”



avid experienced fear as he hid from the rage of Saul. After seeing that God caused fire to rain from heaven and destroy the false prophets of Baal, Elijah's fear of Jezebel caused him to run and hide. His unhealthy response to fear led to his severe depression and his desire to die. Peter's fear caused him to deny three times the Christ he had defended in the garden. The disciples' fear caused them to run and hide after the crucifixion of their Lord. You may be thinking, “Well, if I have fear, I should confront it like a man and beat it.” But remember, the fear isn't the problem. Fear is a God-given emotion. It drives you to flee danger or rappel down the side of a cliff to safety. By pretending that we don't fear, we fail to grow. Identify your fears, and learn to understand their source. Then you can begin to discriminate between legitimate and irrational fears.

Reflection

Normal or rational fear is healthy and valuable. It serves as an invaluable protective function, especially in times of crisis. Irrational fear involves an exaggeration and overreaction to normal fear. When we don't learn how to identify normal fear, when we ignore its signs or repress, deny, or ignore its alarm, we become more vulnerable to irrational fear.

Many of us react normally to fear. For some, the flight response causes us to run. At times, we run to something that will either numb, or take our mind off the fear. Alcohol, drugs, work, television—these become destructive refuges. For some, the fight response causes us to attack in times of fear. And for others, the response is to freeze, making us unable to take positive action.

Accountability and Application

Which of these responses is most characteristic of you? What do you think you can do about it? Write about normal fears for you, and your normal responses. Are they healthy?

PRAYER: *Lord help me to respond more constructively to my fear. Please help me to deal with the things that bring me fear and to work through those fears in a way that is acceptable to you.*

Ephesians 4:31 (New International Version)

³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.