



### Overcoming the Fear Factor

Worry, fear, and anxiety were never meant to be a part of our vocabulary, and yet most of us worry more than we'd care to admit. What are you afraid of? Are you scared of waking up to an intruder in the middle of the night? Perhaps it's flying on an airplane. Maybe it's the fear of sending your child off to college. Perhaps your greatest fear is not being able to provide for your family. Most of us can find something that haunts us.

Panic best describes the emotion I felt when the nurse rolled Jimmy out into the living room. Both of his legs and most of his fingers had been amputated. Jimmy was the father of my son's friend. Beset with diabetes, he was at the end of his life, but refused to let go. Concerned about whether Jimmy knew the Lord or not, I had phoned his wife, Juanita, and asked if I could visit him. I wanted to be sure that Jimmy would meet his Creator as Savior and not as Judge.

Jimmy's deteriorating condition took me by surprise. When I saw him I was terrified. I whispered to the Lord under my breath, "Oh, God, how can I minister to this man when I don't know what he's been through?" Even though I was scared stiff, somehow I knew God would show up to do what I couldn't do. That's exactly what He did because God has given us this promise. "'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me'" (Phil 4:13).

As Jimmy and I talked, it was apparent that he knew the Father, but I sensed there was more. We weren't far into our conversation when I discovered the real trouble with Jimmy – he was afraid to die.

I told Jimmy Bible stories about God sending angels to people in need, people just like him. Those angels had a special message: "Fear not, for God is with you!" As I shared with Jimmy, peace washed over his face as he received the message for himself.

At Jimmy's funeral his wife shared Jimmy's last moments with me. Jimmy would often wake from his sleep wide-eyed and call out, "I'm afraid!" Juanita would pat him gently and remind him of God's promise: "Don't be afraid, Jimmy. God is with you." Then he would sleep again. The last time Jimmy opened his eyes, he just stared at the ceiling.

His wife asked, "Jimmy, are you afraid?" Jimmy whispered, "No, I'm not afraid. I'm just looking at the angels." With that, Jimmy stepped from this world into the next.

I find it interesting that while Jimmy's outcome didn't change, the way he experienced death changed because he trusted in the promise of God. I experienced this same truth in my life. Even though I pleaded with God to save my first husband from death, it wasn't God's plan. Yet I chose to trust God's purpose. In spite of my fear, I chose to believe what I couldn't understand. Doing so changed the way I journeyed through life and the valley of death. I had a companion named Jesus.

Jimmy's story reminds me that when I'm afraid, I need not fret because the same promise God made to Jimmy, He makes to you and me: "Fear not, child, for I am with you." In fact, did you know that the phrase "fear not" is stated in the Bible 366 times? That's one "fear not" for every day of the year, with one extra left over for those really hard days. Why does God faithfully remind us over and over to "fear not"? He does so because we are not created to live in fear. Second Timothy 1:7 tells us, "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." You and I were created to live by faith, and in God, we have all the power we need for a faith that is stronger than all our fears.

### **It's a Problem of Faith**

The truth is, most of what we worry about never comes to pass, but we insist on tormenting ourselves anyway. Worrying about what may or may not happen can nearly drive us crazy. A lot can go wrong in life, but God doesn't want us to become worrywarts.

It takes faith to battle fear and learn to live with assurance in a God we can bank on. Unfortunately, most people go through life missing opportunities because they're afraid to really live the way God intended. Fear becomes a stumbling block that leaves us with regrets. Relying on our faith allows us to live fearlessly.

### **False Advertisement**

My youngest son loves chocolate milk. One day as I stirred syrup into a tall glass of milk, I noticed that the label on the bottle read "Genuine Artificial Flavor." I was shocked! What appeared to be look and taste real was actually artificial! I felt cheated and deceived. This was false advertisement.

In the same way, the father of lies specializes in false advertisement. He's good at making our fears look real when they are not. In fact, Satan's greatest tool for causing us to doubt God's protection is the fear that God will not follow through with His promises. The Enemy works hard to convince us that God is too busy to do anything about our concerns. If anything is going to be done about our situation, we'll have to do it ourselves. Like the boogeyman, Satan's spooks are all smoke and mirrors. We can easily expose his trickery by determining if there is really something to fear or if our concerns are simply...

False  
Evidence  
Appearing  
Real

This acrostic for fear is the kind of shock wave Satan uses to stun us. While the sting of fright feels real, in truth it's merely the trickery of Satan that gets our heart pounding. It's important for you and me to determine if our fears are real or simply Satan's hocus-pocus. If it's a real concern, I heed its warning. On the other hand, if my worry is false evidence that just appears real, then I know the Enemy is involved.

You may be skeptical right now, but when you realize you were created for faith, not fear, things will begin to change for you. You'll learn how to rely on God's care while giving Him your cares, you'll be able to identify His goodness and mercy in your life, and you'll overcome your fears of loneliness and insecurity. Before you know it, you'll be able to say along with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Micca Campbell helps women live carefree in God's care. As a national speaker and author, Micca has touched and transformed the lives of thousands across the US. For more information visit [www.miccacampbell.com](http://www.miccacampbell.com)