###### FEAR

Back in the Golden Age of Radio in the 40s and early 50s, I’d curl up under the covers with my little red Motorola, and tune in “Suspense,” “The Shadow,” “Boston Blackie,” “Sam Spade,” “The Green Hornet,” “Johnny Dollar,” “Mr. & Mrs. North,” “Mr. Keen-Tracer of Lost Persons” and other spine-chilling mystery shows. Letting these programs make my teeth chatter with fright was addictive. I was hooked. Terror was a siren which I found irresistible.

As I grew up, I discovered that men should be immune to fear. We had to be tough, unintimidated, able to walk dark alleys with our teeth gritted, fists cocked, ready to defend our manhood and protect our loved ones.

In recent years life has presented lots of scary situations --- wartime combat, devastating urban riots, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, Hillside Stranglers, freeway snipers and suicide bombers.

## **TONIGHT’S BIG QUESTION**

## What do you fear most?

## Is fear healthy or unhealthy?

**(DISCUSSION)**

Bill Bright, who founded Campus Crusade for Christ, said: “We naturally fear and respect things that have great power or that can alter our lives in a fraction of a second. … What about God? He’s the sovereign Creator and Ruler of our universe. How much respect should we have for Him?

“Psalm 147:11 reads, ‘The Lord delights in those who fear Him.’ But what does fearing God really mean?

“… ‘fear’ can describe everything from dread, or being terrified, to standing in awe or having reverence. … It’s an attitude of both reluctance and adoration that results in a willingness to do what God says.

“… In addition to its being commanded by God, here are three more reasons why we should fear God:

“1. **God is infinitely superior to us.**

“…. When you think of how much He loves us tiny microscopic mites on planet Earth, does it not cause great respect for Him to well up in your heart?

“2. **God has supreme authority over us.**

“God personally designed us and gave us life. Therefore, He’s totally justified in doing whatever He wishes with us, for He knows what’s best for us. How can we shake our fists at our Designer and presume to run our lives better than He can? …

 “3. **God blesses those who reverence Him.**

 “…It’s wrong to treat our all-powerful, infinite Maker as though He were our ‘buddy’ or ‘the man upstairs.’ …..Remember God’s promise in Psalm 103:11: ‘As high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him.’ Once we cultivate a healthy fear of God, He’ll begin doing things we never dreamed possible.”

Luke 12:4-5

 (Jesus to His disciples) “I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. 5But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear\* him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.”

* phobeo (Gr.), be frightened, alarmed, in awe of, revere, be sore afraid

Hebrews 10:31

“It is a fearful\* thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

* frightful, formidable, terrible

Proverbs 1:7

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.”

##### Romans 8:15

“For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’"

I John 4:16-18

“16 We know it so well, we've embraced it heart and soul, this love that comes from God. God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us. 17 This way, love has the run of the house, becomes at home and mature in us, so that we're free of worry on Judgment Day -- our standing in the world is identical with Christ's. 18 There is no room in love for fear. Well-formed love banishes fear. Since fear is crippling, a fearful life -- fear of death, fear of judgment--is one not yet fully formed in love.”

**John Powell in *WHY AM I AFRAID TO TELL YOU WHO I AM?***

**The Five Levels of Communication:**

Level 5 -- Cliches

The most superficial – “How are ya? How's the family? Where ya been?” Most men speak on this level.

Level 4 – Just the facts (news, sports and weather)

We tell people what so-and-so said or did. We’re reporters, not newsmakers or commentators.

Level 3 -- Ideas and judgments

Most of us are not willing to communicate these. If we try, and run into confrontation, we run for cover.

Level 2 -- Feelings

They lie behind our ideas, judgments and convictions. Less than 10% of Americans communicate at this level.

Level 1 -- Peak/intimate communication

All deep, authentic friendships must be based on absolute openness and honesty. More than communication, it's communion, and it’s for no one else's ears.

On which level do you communicate with those dearest to you?

His Deal

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