



Overcoming Fear

Choosing Courage
in the Age of Anxiety

Driving Out Fear with Love

1 John 4:7-18

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1 John 4:18

There is no fear in love. Perfect love drives out fear.

Theologically

1 John 4:7-18

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we

also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

hesed/agape = steadfast love

GOD IS THIS LOVE

John 1:18

No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

1 John 4:12

No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

Neurobiologically

Love neutralizes fear.

Bottom line from a neurobiological level: If you have loving contact with others, and others with you, the outside world will seem less scary and threatening to you.

Spiritually

Romans 8:38-39

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 John 4:18

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

Socially

“Does love have a relationship to our modern fear of war, economic displacement, and racial injustice? Hate is rooted in fear, and the only cure for fear-hate is love.”

- Martin Luther King, *Strength to Love*

“What then is the cure? We know the cure. God help us achieve it! Love casts out fear. This truth is not without a bearing on our personal anxieties. We are afraid of the superiority of other people, of failure, and the scorn or disapproval of those whose opinions we most value. Envy, jealousy, a lack of self-confidence, a feeling of insecurity, and a haunting sense of inferiority are all rooted in fear. We do not envy people and then fear them; first we fear them and subsequently we become jealous of them. Is there a cure for these

annoying fears that pervert our personal lives? Yes, a deep and abiding commitment to the way of love. Perfect love casteth out fear. Hatred and bitterness can never cure the disease of fear; only love can do that. Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it. Hatred confuses life; love harmonized it. Hatred darkens life; love illuminates it.”

- Martin Luther King, *Strength to Love*

1 John 4:17

This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus.

Fear knocked at the door.

Faith answered.

There was no one there.