

Transformed

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV)

12 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service.* ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Conformed: to fit into a fixed pattern

- God doesn't want us to fit into the pattern of the world
- This pattern isn't God's pattern
- God wants us to act better, above the world's standards
- He wants us to be transformed

Transformed: “metamorphosis”

- A metamorphosis is a complete change
- When a caterpillar enters a cocoon and emerges a butterfly
- Those two stages of life represent both a complete end and a new beginning

We are transformed by the renewing of our minds

- The mind is the part of our soul that activates or originates behavior
- By renewing our minds, we can know and do *God's good, perfect, and acceptable will*

The Problem of Worry and Anxiety

Anxiety is the state of unease or nervousness about an event, person, or problem that you cannot control

Philippians 4:6–7 (NLT)

⁶Don't worry "*be anxious*" (NLT) about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. ⁷Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Many times, our worry and anxiety are linked to insecurity

- Insecurity is a lack of confidence on a personal level
- You have a sense of uncertainty or anxiety about yourself
- This can lead to self-image problems, even self-hatred
- This can bring insecurity to most if not all of life's circumstances

The Antidote for Insecurity

Psalms 91:1–2 (NKJV)

¹ He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. ² I will say of the LORD, "*He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.*"

The Secret Place – Matthew 6:6

- Your secret place is your place of prayer and refuge

God Does Not Want Us to Live in Fear

Next to the command “to love”, “Do not fear” is one of the most used phrases in the Bible

- God did not create us for fear
- He created us to live in peace
- The garden of Eden had peace
 - It was a paradise
- Jesus is the Prince of Peace
- The devil brings fear into our lives

Jesus Experienced Fear for Us

Luke 22:39–47 (NKJV)

³⁹ Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. ⁴⁰ When He came to the place, He said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.” ⁴¹ And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.” ⁴³ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. ⁴⁴ And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. ⁴⁵ When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. ⁴⁶ Then He said to them, “Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.”

⁴⁷ And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him.

- Clearly Jesus was in agony
- The Greek word *agonia*, means great fear or distress
- Jesus felt more fear in that moment than any other human being has ever felt
- Luke says that Jesus' sweat became great drops of blood
- The medical term is, *hematohidrosis*
- A rare condition in which the small blood vessels leading to the sweat glands rupture
- This is brought on by great stress
- Jesus actually sweated blood
- Jesus experienced real fear, but He also defeated it!
- Because He defeated it, we can do the same
- He actually shows us how to do it

Why did Jesus experience fear in the garden?

- First of all, to identify with us
- Jesus is fully God, but also fully human
- He sympathizes with our weakness

Hebrews 4:14–5:2 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession.

¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. **5** For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness.

- Jesus was tempted in every way that we are
 - Yet without sin
- What tempted Jesus in the garden?
- Did He want to run away?

When He entered the garden, He instructed His disciples

Matthew 26:41 (NKJV)

⁴¹ Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.”

He must have been warning them of what was about to come
Satan wants to fill you with fear so that you will not do God’s will

- Every time you make a decision based on fear, you do not make one based on God’s will
- You will regret every fear-based decision that you make

Three times Jesus prayed to His Father and said that He didn't want to do this

Luke 22:42 (NKJV)

⁴² saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

- Thank God our Savior acted above His fears
- As disciples, we should follow His example and act above our fears
- Fear will always be present to some degree
- But we have a High Priest who understands every circumstance that we are facing

We have a loving Father who promised to bring us victory by His Holy Spirit

The devil wants to convince you that God is mean and unloving

- That He is angry at you
- That He only sees the sinful, dumb things you have done
- Nothing could be further from the truth
- Our High Priest is madly in love with you and calls you His friend!

Matthew 11:29 (NKJV)

²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Jesus Knew He would Face the Cross

You and I experience fear because of the unknown

- What will happen tomorrow?
- What will happen with your job?
- Your children or your health?
- We don't know so we give into worry and insecurity

Jesus had full knowledge that He would die the most grisly, painful death imaginable

- He raised Lazarus from the dead with only two words, "Lazarus arise!"
- Jesus never had to pray twice about anything
- Yet three times He asked Father to take this cup from Him
- After an angel ministered to Him he prayed more intensely
- He knew everything He was about to suffer, yet did it for our sake

The devil launched a full-scale assault against Jesus

- Satan is the real spirit of fear
- Fear is not something
- Fear is someone

The Devil is an opportunist

- He will attack you when you're at your weakest and most vulnerable
- When you're hurting He presses in and tries to do his worst

2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)

⁷For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

- The devil doesn't control your thoughts
- But he does influence them
- He whispers thoughts of fear hoping you will give in, so he can control your life
- God will never use fear to control you

Good Fear Versus Bad Fear

When the Bible says, “*the fear of the Lord*”, it means a reverence for God

- Good fear produces faith and life
- Bad fear produces death

Hebrews 2:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

- Ultimately all fear is the fear of death
- You may say that you have a fear of snakes
- In fact, you're afraid that the snake will bite you and you'll die

The good news is, you never have to die!

John 11:25–26 (NKJV)

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

- You will never, in all of eternity, experience a moment of death
- Your spirit is eternal
- It will never be buried in a casket in the ground
- Your body will die but one day God will reunite your body with your spirit
- The instant your eyes close on earth they will open in heaven

Jesus told the thief on the cross

Luke 23:43 (NKJV)

⁴³ And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

- Eternity is not an amount of time, it’s a place!
- The minute you’re senses go numb here, they will come alive there
- The instant you take your last breath here, you take your first breath there
- Don’t let the devil put the fear of death on you!

Romans 5:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

- Faith comes from the Spirit of God
- It gives you a positive view of the future, so you can make a faith-based decision that God will honor
- Faith gives you hope, and hope does not let you down!

You can only give away what you have

- The devil has fear, and that is all he has
- Fear is born of the devil
- Peace comes from God

Peace is the opposite of fear

- Peace is God's property
- Fear is the province of the devil
- Fear is expecting the devil to move
- Faith is expecting God to move
- You know the presence of God by peace
- You know the presence of the devil by fear

A transformed mind knows how to recognize the difference

Three Steps to Overcoming Fear

Admit Your Fear

- You don't have to be ashamed
- We all have fear
- You don't have to hide it, God wants it out in the open

Submit Your Fears to God

- Emotions and fears are real but that doesn't mean they're right
- The worst time to make a decision is when you're feeling fear
- We all need someone in our lives that is more mature and can give us a broader perspective on what to do
- Mature believers act above their emotions
- Other people help with this, but the best counsel is the Holy Spirit

“Courage is not the absence of fear, but the mastery of it”
– Mark Twain

Great people feel fear, nevertheless, great people act above it!

Focus on God's Presence and Love

When the children of Israel came to the edge of the promised land 10 spies saw the obstacles and based their negative report on the fear they felt

- Caleb and Joshua chose to look at the promises of God

Numbers 13:30 (NKJV)

³⁰ Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.”

When David was facing death

Psalms 23:4 (NKJV)

⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You *are* with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Jesus knew His Father would never abandon Him

Psalms 16:8–11 (NKJV)

⁸ I have set the LORD always before me; Because *He is* at my right hand I shall not be moved. ⁹ Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. ¹⁰ For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. ¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence *is* fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.