

To wrap up his teaching on what to do when we are afraid, the psalmist gives us three instructions – wait for the Lord, be strong, and let your heart take courage. I think this is a progression of what happens when we wait on God for the answer. As we spend time in prayer, we find our strength increasing. Our faith rises, and then we can take courage and get a grip on our fears. But it all starts with us waiting on God. It all begins with genuine prayer.

<i>F – Forget God</i>	<i>F – Face your Fear</i>
<i>E – Eliminate Prayer</i>	<i>E – Expect Deliverance</i>
<i>A – Abandon Hope</i>	<i>A – Anticipate Help</i>
<i>R – React with Panic</i>	<i>R – Respond with Faith</i>

In both the English and the Hebrew the identical phrase "wait for the Lord" is repeated. Whenever this occurs in Hebrew poetry, it is done for emphasis. God wants us to learn this important lesson and he wants to emphasize it to us – wait for the Lord. He will deliver us!

What is God’s Antidote for Fear?

"Do not be afraid; only believe." Mark 5:36 Here God is saying ‘have faith’ in me. This is the key. The emphasis is on Faith and Trust in the power and presence of God. Again he says, *"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:6, 7) (NLT). If we do this, God will give us his peace. It is often a huge struggle, because it is so easy to give in to our

natural way of thinking, but by faith in the Lord, we can receive help to overcome our fears.

Some Practical Steps in Dealing with FEAR

1. Seek to identify the cause of the fear
2. Remove yourself from the cause if possible
3. Talk with a Christian friend or counselor
4. Seek family assistance where needed most
5. See a doctor about medical help
6. Get helpful information about your fear
7. Conquer aspects of fear a bit at a time
8. Use Scripture, faith and prayer for the mind

When we do these things we know we are on the way to overcoming our fears. It is a beautiful thing for us as Christians to be able to go to the Lord for help. Through prayer and meditating on key Bible passages we get his assistance and guidance during our troubled times. Our mind is linked with his mind.

God ministers to us individually through his Word, as Isaiah 26:3 says, *"You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, whose thoughts are fixed on you!"*

This verse means that when we are overcome by fear and panic, as we focus on God, we can let him build a powerful protection around our minds. As we talk to him about our fear, panic is reduced and he gives calmness of mind and soul.

"When We Are Afraid"





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When We Are Afraid

Psalm 27

All of us have had to face times of fear in our lives. Sometimes we are afraid for good reason, and other times our fears are irrational.

I read the story of a little boy who was finally old enough to start going to school. As the time approached, his parents noticed that he was suddenly having fears about school. They tried to find out what he was afraid of. First they asked if he were afraid of the teachers, but he assured them that wasn't it. Next they asked if it were a fear of bullies, but he told them it wasn't that either. Then they asked him if he didn't want to leave his Mom and younger brother home alone all day. But he assured them this was not the case. Finally he admitted the reasons for his fear. He told them, *"I don't want to go to school because I don't want the same thing to happen to me that happened to cousin Raymond. As soon as he started school, all his teeth began to fall out!"*

Our fears may not be that simple, but whenever we are afraid, we can turn to the Bible for help. God caused David to write **Psalm 27** which addresses this problem. Although we may be facing a difficult situation in our life, we can learn from this psalm what to do when we are afraid. There are some key verses worth considering.

Verse 1 - *The LORD is my light and my salvation-- whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life-- of whom shall I be afraid?*

This psalm begins with two questions – whom shall I fear and of whom shall I be afraid. And David gives us three reasons to not be afraid.

He tells us that the Lord is our light, our salvation, and the stronghold of our life. These are all good reasons for us not to be frightened.

David reminds us that our relationship with God, provides us with salvation and eternal life. This brings a sense of safety and certainty about this life and the life to come.

Even though fears may come, let us remember that God is our light, our salvation, and our stronghold. He will give us spiritual strength to overcome our panic. He will give light to our mind, give deliverance to our spirit, and give strength to our body.

Verse 2 - *When evildoers assail me, uttering slanders against me, my adversaries and foes, they shall stumble and fall.*

Many commentators think David in this verse is recalling past victories when God delivered him from evildoers. When we are faced with a frightening situation, it is good to remember those times before when God has delivered us. We can overcome our anxiety because we have seen God's hand upon us in the past. We must speak to ourselves and ask our mind to recall God's answers to prayers of the past.

When facing fear, sometimes we need to ask what's the worst thing that could happen to us. Some of the answers might be – I would be incapacitated with sickness, I would be in jail, I would go bankrupt, or I would die.

If you're sick, God is with you, if you're in jail, God is still with you, if you go bankrupt, God will still be with you, and if you die, you are with God!

Next time you are facing fear, try this mental

exercise. Instead of thinking about all the bad things that might happen and totally focusing on the situation which is causing your uneasiness, think about all the times God has been with you in your life – all those times God has given you guidance, strengthened you, and been there for you.

As you think of past deliverance, the present situation will seem less ominous.

Verse 3 - *Though a host encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.*

The next thing that David does to overcome his fears is to speak in faith. As we read through this psalm, we see clear indications that David's fear was real. It was there hitting him in the face. But instead of allowing terror to overwhelm him, he forced himself to make these statements of trust – *"my heart shall not fear"* and *"yet I will be confident."*

This does not mean that David didn't feel some dread in his heart nor that there weren't moments of doubt as we can see from verses 7, 9, and 12. Fear is a real emotion and can tear us apart and we cannot escape it on our own. David was willing to trust in God and discipline his thoughts to not abandon his faith in the face of calamity.

Here's a Fear Acronym. If we do the first set of things, we are guaranteed to have fear. But if we practice the second set, (on the right) we will do much better.

Verse 14 - *Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; yes, wait for the Lord!*