

Fearless: Imagine Your Life Without Fear

Q & A with Max Lucado

Q: Why fear?

Max: I wrote a book about fear because fear is everywhere. You can't open a newspaper or turn on a television without getting bad news. But, Jesus spoke about fear more than he did any other topic, so I really believe that fear is an option and that faith is a better choice.

Q: As a pastor, what do you see as the biggest fear people face today?

Max: I think people are afraid they don't matter. I think the fear of insignificance, of making no contribution, of living a life of coming and going and no one knowing. I think the fear of being too small is the biggest fear of all.

Q: Fear is a powerful emotion. How does faith counterbalance it?

Max: Fear overtakes other emotions because it's the default emotion; it's what comes natural. Faith is one of the only emotions that demands a decision. By nature, we are fearful people, we have to decide to have faith, and we have to choose to have hope.

Q: How does fear affect relationships?

Max: Fear can hamper our relationship with God in the sense that it causes us to question the goodness of God, and question the existence of God. Fear hampers our relationship with others because it turns us into control freaks; it turns us into mean people. If we can control one part of our life, we feel like it's going to eliminate fear, but it doesn't work that way.

Q: How can fear of God be a good thing?

Max: Fear of God can be the best thing. The Bible says the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. When the Bible talks about fear the better word is reverence, respect or awe. The fear of God can be the healthiest emotion, because fear of God is actually a respect for God, an awe of God, a sense of God's holiness. Our fear of God places us in a posture so we understand how great God is and how we depend on him. Depending on God brings wisdom.

Q: How have you seen fear impact parents?

Max: Fear can affect our parenting because we are afraid our kids are going to get hurt. We're afraid of the bad influences so we over-protect. We believe we are in charge of our kids, forgetting they were God's

children first. The ultimate answer to our fear for our children is prayer, prayer that trusts God to help them.

Q: How can people face death without fear?

Max: Facing death without fear can only be done only if you know somebody who has defeated death, and that's why the Christian hope is so valuable. Without the resurrection of Jesus, I don't know how you face death without fear because it is the big unknown. But with the resurrection of Christ, I think we have every reason to face the grave with confidence, courage and even hope.

Q: What advice would you give the person who is fearful about their money and their future?

Max: The person who's facing financial fears needs to remember that times like this come; it's just a part of living in a world that depends on an economy. But our ultimate hope is not the economy, we trust in God and he gets us through any type of fear, even financial fears.

Q: What if someone believes God is not real? How does that affect their fear?

Max: The person who struggles to believe if God is real or not, they are facing a legitimate fear. I believe every person who sincerely seeks Christ has those moments of fear that there is no God. So what you do is you walk with God, you take God up on his invitation, you read his word, you pray, you talk, you believe like he is there, and you live like he is there and then you really discover if he is there or not.

Q: How does trust relate to fear?

Max: The relationship between trust and fear is pretty simple. Trust is fear that chooses to believe. It's not the absence of fear, but it's a facing of fear with faith that results in deeper trust.

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