**Edward Church- PHOBIAS -No Longer Terribly Afraid Isa 41:10 pt 3**

**Misunderstood…**criticized**…**ridiculed**? Do you have a** persistent**,** irrational **fear that just won’t** go away? **It’s** excessive**, out of** proportion **to the** actual **degree of** threat**, and it’s affecting** every **area of your** life**—**curtailing **activities and** suffocating **joy. People in this** ditch **are deathly** afraid**,** huddled **in a corner,** fearful **that** no matter **how high the ditch** walls**, they** won’t escape **the** threat**. Whether it’s a formidable** fear **of** elevators**,** spiders, or something **else, one thing is certain: God wants to** empower **you to** move **from the** pandemonium **of** panic **to** peace**.**

*“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand”* **-Isa 41:10**

 **What Are Key Contributors to Irrational Fear?**

**Phobias do not** appear **in a** vacuum**. Something set you up to be** controlled **by** fear**, and** something **serves to** trigger **that** fear**. The** setup **occurred in the** past**…while the** trigger **occurs in the** present**. Here are the Key Contributors to F-E-A-R:**

* **(F)ormer** Experiences **Are** Typically Traumatic **Experiences**:
* **Analyze the** Reason **for Your Fear…Then Tell Yourself the** Truth **about the** Past/ Present**.** *“Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place”* **-Psa 51:6**
* **(E)motional** Overload
* **Denying** Feelings**:** *“I must* ***not*** *show my pain.” “I must* ***not*** *have any anger.”*
* **People-**Pleaser **Mentality:** *“I must* ***keep*** *everyone happy/* ***prevent*** *anger”*
* Internalizing **Stress:** *“I have a lot of* ***hidden*** *anxiety/ no* ***outlet*** *for venting emotions”*
* **Strict or Perfectionist** Authority **Figures:** *“I* ***never*** *pleased my parents.” “It seemed I was* ***always*** *receiving harsh punishments.”*
* **Analyze the** Reason **for Your Fear- Let the Lord** Help **You** Heal **from Your** Hurts**.**

*“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in* ***due time****. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you”* **-1 Pet 5:6-7**

* **(A)voidance of Threatening** Situations
* **Refusing to** Face Fears**:** *“I think it will go away in time-**I can avoid fearful situations.”*
* **Giving No** Opportunity **for** Change**:** *“I don’t seek help or talk to anyone or ask why fearful.”*
* **Continuing to** Reinforce **Fears:** *“Everything I do is contingent on my fearfulness.”*
* **Reinforcing** Negative **Thought Patterns:** *“Fear dominates all my decisions-**filter of fear.”*

Analyze **the** Reason **for Your Fear/ Let the Lord Help You** Face **Your Fears.** *“I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you”* **-Isa 41:13**

* **(R)unaway** Imagination
* Expecting **Life to be** Threatening**:** *“I always expect resistance and roadblocks, disaster.”*
* Anticipating **the** Worst **Will Happen:** *“I expect rejection / ridicule, hurt/ heartache.”*
* Believing **You Can Never** Change**:** *“I think I will always be controlled by fear forever.”*
* Thinking **You Have** No Control **Over the** Situation**:** *“I feel overwhelmed/ powerless ”*

Analyze **the** Reason **for Your Fear/** Change **Your** Thought **Life.** *“Whatever is true …noble …right …pure…lovely… admirable… excellent…praiseworthy—think about such things”* **-Phil 4:8**

**Memorize Isaiah 41:10:** *“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*

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**HOW CAN YOU DECREASE PHOBIC FEAR WITH “DESENSITIZATION”?3 If you are overly sensitive to an object or situation, “desensitization” can be the key that opens the door to freedom. Systematically repeat each of the following steps one at a time. Repeat the same step day after day for a week or two, or until you no longer have a strong emotional reaction, then move on to the next step. Anxiety should be expected when moving to the next step, but it will dissipate as the step is done with increased repetition.**