**Edward Church- PHOBIAS *“No Longer Terribly Afraid”* Isa 41:10 pt #1**

**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**.**

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**What Are Some Examples of Phobias?** Specific **Phobias (**Simple **Phobias) -the Fear of a** Specific **Object or** Situation.

**This type of phobia is a** persistent excessive **fear when in the** presence **of, or in the** anticipated presence **of, a** specific object **or situation.** Examples **of feared objects:** elevators, spiders, knives, snakes, cats, fire, insects

* **[Zoophobia](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/zoophobia) is the fear of** animals **characterized by a** sense **of** danger **even in the presence of** nonthreatening **animals.**

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* **[Acrophobia](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/acrophobia?s=t) is the** fear **of** heights **characterized by feelings of** extreme insecurity**/ of** falling **even when there is** no danger **of doing so.**
	+ **Examples of situations:** flying, **heights**, darkness, **driving** over bridges or through tunnels **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
* **[Claustrophobia](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/claustrophobia?s=t) is the** fear **of** closed spaces **characterized by a sense of being** smothered **in a** confined environment**.**

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* Social Phobias **([Social Anxiety Disorder](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_anxiety_disorder))—a Fear of** Embarrassment
	+ **This type of phobia is characterized by the** paralyzing **fear of** appearing **stupid or being** judged **as shameful in a social situation.**
	+ **Examples:** A persistent fear of **initiating** / **maintaining** a **conversation**, **eating** in public, **attending** a party; also, a persistent fear of **performance** situations such as stage **fright** and fear of **public speaking**.

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* **[Agoraphobia](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/agoraphobia?s=t)—**Fear **of** Open Spaces**, Fear of** Fear**. This phobia is the fear of having a panic attack in a place where** escape **could be** difficult **or** embarrassing**.**
	+ **It** comes as a result of **repeated panic attacks** and is the **fear** of having yet **another panic attack. Therefore, any situation** that could cause a sense of **panic is avoided.**

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* **Example:** Being so afraid of having a **panic attack** in a **public place** or in a **strange place** that a person becomes **homebound** or even **room bound**.

*“I so feared the crowd and so dreaded the contempt of the clans that I kept silent and would not go outside”* **(Job 31:34)**

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**Edward Church- PHOBIAS -No Longer Terribly Afraid Isa 41:10 pt 2**

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 **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**:

Childhood **Sexual Abuse or Rape, Car Accident, or Death of a Loved One**

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* **Scare** Tactics **Used on You by** Others**:**

 **Threats of Violence by a Parent, Sibling 0r Others, Fear-Producing Pranks, Movies**

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* **Caused by an** Underdeveloped **Sense of Self-**Worth**:**

 **Neglect,** Criticism**, Ridicule, Poor School** Performance

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* **Parents or Family Members** Displaying **Excessive** Fear**:**

**A** Father **Who was a Constant** Worrier **a Mother Who Was** Fearful/ Overprotective

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**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.”*

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* **People-**Pleaser **Mentality:** *“I must* ***keep*** *everyone happy/* ***prevent*** *anger”*

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* Internalizing **Stress:** *“I have a lot of* ***hidden*** *anxiety/ no* ***outlet*** *for venting emotions”*

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* **Strict or Perfectionist** Authority **Figures:** *“I* ***never*** *pleased my parents.” “It seemed I was* ***always*** *receiving harsh punishments.”*

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**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**

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

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* **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.**

**Edward Church- *PHOBIAS* -No Longer Terribly Afraid Isa 41:10 pt 4**

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**Exchange Panic for Peace—Focus On Psalm 23**

The Lord **wants** to **lead you** out of **fear** and into **faith**, **trusting** in His **strong, protective hand** rather than the **flimsy** refuge of your **fear-lined** ditch **walls**. The **path** to recovery **begins** with **focusing** on the **Lord** rather than the **object** of your **fear**. Then **peace**, not **panic**, will **rule** your **life**.

**Verse 1:** *“The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.”*

* **Imagine** a **grassy pasture** in which the **Lord is** with you.
* **Slowly say** five times, *“The Lord is my Shepherd.”*
* **Each time you say that,** emphasize **a** different **word**:
* **The** Lord is my Shepherd. The **Lord,** The Lord **is,** The Lord is **my** The Lord is my **Shepherd**.

**Verse 2:** *“He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters.”*

* Imagine **yourself lying down** beside **a** **calm pool** of water.

**Verse 3:** *“He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.”*

* **Take several deep** breaths and **slowly say five times**, *“My Shepherd restores my soul.”*
	+ **Each time you say that**, emphasize **a different** word:
* **My** Shepherd restores my soul. My **Shepherd,** My Shepherd **restores,** My Shepherd restores **my,**

 My Shepherd restores my **soul**.

**Verse 4:** *“Even 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.”*

* Realize **that you are not** trapped.
* **Slowly say,** *“I will fear no evil…the Lord is with me.”*

**Verse 5:** *“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.”*

* **Repeat five times, a** different **word**:
* **The** Lord is my Protector. The **Lord,** The Lord **is,** The Lord is **my,** The Lord is my **Protector**.

**Verse** 6: *“Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”*

* **Thank** the **Lord** for the way He will **use** each fearful **situation** for **good** in your **life**.

**My Prayer for Peace**

***Dear God, I thank You that You are*** *my* ***Shepherd. You*** *guide* ***me, You*** *protect* ***me, and You give me Your*** *peace****. You are the One who*** *restores* ***my soul. You*** *know* ***my*** *weaknesses* ***and the times I’ve*** *caved* ***in to*** *fear****. Now, in my*** *weakness****, I will*** *choose* ***to rely on Your*** *strength****. You are my*** *Shepherd****. I am choosing to rely on*** *Your* ***power to*** *move* ***from fear to faith. As I*** *turn* ***my fear over to You, use it for*** *good* ***in my life to*** *remind* ***me of my continual*** *need* ***for You. In Your*** *Holy Name* ***I pray. Amen.***

**If you** Focus **on your** Fear**, your** Panic **will** Increase**…**Focus **on your** Faith**, your** Heart **will be at** Peace**.**

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**Note: For serious phobic reactions, the process of desensitization is almost always used in combination with medical help.**