



August 30, 2015

Hope in God When We Are Afraid

Various Scriptures

[Q] Discuss: When was the last time you were afraid? Please explain.

The Myth of Safety

In discussing the right reasons to take risks for the cause of God, Pastor John Piper says:

“...both the Bible and experience teach us that safety is a myth. You can’t put enough padlocks on your door and enough bars on your window to keep a heart attack from happening. There is no guarantee that anybody is going to live another breath. In terms of absolute security, all the efforts that we make to keep ourselves safe are ultimately an illusion.”

desiringgod.org/messages/risk-and-the-cause-of-god

Read James 4:13–15.

[Q] Does understanding that there really is no guarantee of safety help calm or aggravate fear? Why?

[Q] Why is it difficult to put our trust in the living God, instead of false confidence (the illusion of safety)?

From the weekend message:

Hope is not based on what we know about the future.

Hope is based on what we know about God.

[Q] Read Psalm 131 and Deuteronomy 29:29. How might admitting you can’t know or control everything bring calmness? Have you found this to be true in your experience?

Hope in God

Read Psalm 147:11:

The LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.

[Q] How do fearing God and hoping in His unfailing love go together? What is the result?

Christ-followers often wrestle with the relationship between fear and faith. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10), yet often the psalmist states the reasons we do not need to be afraid. [Q] Read the following passages and discuss those reasons:

Psalm 23:4:

Psalm 27:1

Psalm 56:3-4

A healthy fear of our awesome God is a crucial part of directing our lives—while fear of anything else can prevent us from experiencing the life God has planned for us.

Read Romans 8:31-39.

[Q] According to this passage, what are the possible losses in our lives? What can we never, ever lose?

[Q] How do God’s love and sovereignty give you hope when you are afraid?

Hope Together

[Q] Paul wrote to the Thessalonians in uncertain times. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:8-11. Have you experienced the encouragement of other believers in a fearful time? Please explain.

[Q] What are some ways we can encourage one another in the face of fear?

Pray

May your unfailing love be with us, LORD, even as we put our hope in you. Psalm 33:22