

# Day 6 -Fix Your Love.

## Meditation.

In the last few days, I've had people shoot me a text message with the verse "Perfect love casts out fear". I've also lost count of the number of times I've seen this verse on my Instagram feed. I'm not complaining, the verse is powerful and true. Like we touched on yesterday, when we are close to Jesus, when we abide in His love, there is no room for fear.

But there is another important sense in which this phrase is true which people seem to be missing. It isn't just about receiving perfect love and having that displace fear. It isn't about how we are loved. It's about how and what we love. Let me paraphrase it so you can see the clear direction I want to head.

"Loving the right things, the right way, casts out fear."

Which means, if you are scared, maybe you need to change what you love because if you love the wrong things you will automatically be scared.

This connection between fear and love might be new but it isn't hard to get your head around. If you love what is vulnerable, transient, or temporary it makes sense fear will be an issue because what you love could be taken from you at any time. However, love what is eternally solid and you will have no reason to be scared, what is most precious to you is incorruptible and uncompromisable. When something is impossible to lose, why would you fear losing it?

In Luke 12, Jesus helps us conquer fear as he directs us to love the right things. We are to choose to invest our hearts in those things which are permanent. The by-product of putting your treasure in heaven is your heart ends up safe. Jesus teaching for us to pursue the right kind of treasure is not an invitation to just live a more ethical or pleasing life, it is instruction for how to live a fearless life.

At this stage most of the fear I have observed in Canada and the US has more to do with the possibility of a significant dip in our standard of living. Although it is getting harder by the hour to ignore the likelihood that this virus might touch each of us in more heart-wrenching ways. So while I agree with what Jesus is saying for the most part there is a part of me which is wondering about our love for people? Is Jesus saying what our loved is screwed up if we are scared of losing a loved one?

I suggest to you the honest answer is "yes and no".

### First, "no".

Our love is not messed up. It is appropriate to love people and be fearful of them dying.

When Jesus comes across a funeral he doesn't admonish the grieving for loving the wrong thing. No, he weeps. He doesn't lecture about how short sighted they are or how they have misaligned loves. He understands pain, grief, and the fear of facing the future without an important and cherished piece of our lives. He doesn't make them guilty because they aren't at a place yet to not be scared of death and what comes with death. So, "no".

#### Second, "yes".

Yes, the deepest truths of the good news of Jesus, when they are most deeply felt, do result in a heart which isn't scared of death or dying. This is kind of the point. To be so swelled with affection for what is unbreakable, to be so acclimatized to eternity because of what you love, that you are able to navigate sad things and hard things without being paralyzed by fear.

The Kingdom of God permits a full range of emotion - except for fear. This makes sense because fear is a foreign concept in the Kingdom of God because it is a place where death is defeated. We will spend our entire lives as disciples pursuing that kind of fearless power, but don't think that just because you haven't experienced fearlessness yet doesn't mean it isn't where God is taking you.

That's about the best I can do to explain the theoretical part of how perfect love casts out fear, and I am not satisfied I did a great job. Thankfully, the practical part for how to implement it is easy. Love the right things and fear subsides.

Go love your neighbour as you love yourself.

Do to others what you would like them to do for you.

### And as you do these things, your fear will fall away.

It seems God's preferred way to make us fearless is not to download courage into us as we wait for it. **We receive courage as we care for others.** 

# Further Reading:

1 John 4:7-21 and Luke 12

## Key Verse:

"Perfect love casts out fear." (1 John 4:7-21)

"Provide purses for yourself which will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Luke 12:33b-34)

# Calibration Prayer:

Lord, purify my heart. I will not hoard. I will not protect. I will not set myself up at an advantage over others. I want to love perfectly. Show me where my love is aimed in the wrong direction. Help me love in a way which casts out fear. Open my eyes to ways to do this. Bring to my mind someone you would like me to care for today, and give me the creativity to figure out how to do that.