

Overcoming Fear

1 John 4:17-19

INTRO:

We live in a world of fear. I watched television the other night. Virtually all the commercials were aimed at mature adults. Every commercial tapped into our fears. They attacked our fear of retiring with not enough income. Our fear of embarrassment in purchasing adult diapers. They even tried to get us to panic over sticking our children with our funeral expenses. The news programs sell fear on every level. Who needs terrorism when we have the nightly news programs.

The New Testament on the other hand, is about overcoming fear. That is why we are going to explore **1 John 4:17-19**.

I. There is no fear in love.

II. What is "Perfect" love?

III. God's love not perfected in us allows us to fear.

I. There is no fear in love.

1 John 4:18 *"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love."*

A. What kind of fear is John talking about? The word "**fear**" is the word "**phobos**." We derive the word phobia from this noun. The Bible talks about two types of fear.

1. First we read of fear as in feelings of panic because of a sense of danger. One example of this kind of fear is described in

Matthew 18:26 *"But He said to them, 'Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?' Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm."*

2. Second the word means awe of God and trust in Him. For example,
Psalm 22:23 *"You who fear the LORD, praise Him. All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And be in awe of Him, all you offspring of Israel."*

B. What kind of love does not contain fear? John told us in **verse 18**.
"Perfect love casts out fear."

II. What is "Perfect" love?

A. What Does the Word "**perfect**" or "**perfected**" mean? In this context, the word primarily means to bring something to completion, or fully developed. It is true that God's love for we who come to know Christ as Savior, was first entirely from God to us. His purpose in loving us was so we would return that love in loving Him and practice loving other believers in the same way God loves us. When we love like this, God's love is completed in us.

B. Perfected love is defined in

1 John 4:10-12 *“In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.”*

C. What happens if God’s love is perfected in us?

(v.17) *“Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.”*

III. God’s love not perfected in us allows us to fear.

A. The perfecting of our love involves our knowing God’s love in His Word, by faith experiencing God’s love in our lives, and then expressing God’s love to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

v.18 *“He who fears has not been made perfect in love.”*

If this is not a reality in our lives, we will not be free from fear in our lives.

B. How do we love like this?

1 John 4:19 *“We love, because He first loved us.”*

C. A practical suggestion for overcoming fear in our lives. First, we must be convinced God loves us.

Hebrews 13:5-6 *“Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ So we may boldly say: ‘The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?’”*

Assurance of God’s presence takes away fear.

Matthew 14:31 *“And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught [Peter] and said to him, ‘O you of little faith, why did you doubt?’”*

Earlier, Peter was walking on the water. Yet, when he saw the waves he became afraid. He feared and doubted whether Christ could keep him walking on the water. What changed at that point? Was the situation different from when he had stepped out of the boat? NO. Did the proximity of the incarnate Son of God? No. So what happened to Peter’s assurance and his faith? He let the circumstances overwhelm his faith in the Lord and he sank.