

**FEAR SERIES ONE**  
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**LOOMING FEAR**  
**JUNE 3, 2007**

Drama

Plane Talk

16 years of ministry has taught me that everyone has fears... People handle them in many different ways... sometimes we don't even know we have the fear until it hits us... They don't always make sense either...

Childhood fear

As a small boy I remember being afraid of dogs... I was bit by horse... stung by countless bees on the head... (which I deserved) But never afraid of horses of bees.

Survey fears  
 funny

In our informal survey the fears run the gamete...

A number of people said they were afraid of clowns... one person was afraid of smiling clowns...

My favorite was - sausages made of soy... Is Denny's experiment w/ something new... actually this might spill over into bacon... now I'm afraid.

Serious

Many of the fears expressed were not phobias of spiders or snakes..

They were the fears of what happen if... in someway my life is turned up-side down...

Failure – failure in my career, or failure as a person.

Abandonment by a spouse or parent... facing life alone

Elijah

I want to unpack a narrative in the O.T. about a guy who faces this kind of fear. He's a priest and prophet who's world is turned upside down when the King of Israel decides to destroy belief in God... and replace it with Baal worship.

His friends are dieing by the droves... the nation he loves is thrown in total disarray... He believes he is left to do ministry alone...

Two Types of Fears

Acute Situational Fear

Acute situational fears...

You are in eminent danger.... Say a bear is chancing you... In this case fear is your friend... It's meant to be corrective

Chased by a bear

At this point I didn't have enough "Acute Situational Fear"

Run down hill, don't waste time looking back  
Suddenly I had plenty of "Acute Situational Fear." So I ran

- Some fear is a good...
- Parents want their teenager to have a little fear... "Have a good time tonight honey... if one of your intoxicated friends wants to race around in an over packed car at 90 mph later tonight... don't be fearful... embrace your fear"  
"I'm afraid of what my dad would do if I got in that car..."

### Looming Fears

"Looming Fears" hangs over you.... Fills your heart & mind w/ dread.  
It's playing out a worst case scenario in our minds. It pulls us into hyper mental processing,  
~ We experience **real emotions in the present** based on what hasn't happened yet, but may never happen in the future.

### Elijah confronts the priest's of Baal.

Cult of Baal takes on Elijah... this great encounter with the priest of Baal. Elijah calls down fire from heaven... fire consumes this altar and the priest of Baal loses face. Then Ahab explains what happened, and Jezebel becomes furious and she goes on a rampage to kill Elijah.

### Jezebel threatens Elijah

#### 1 Ki 19:1-2

Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say...,

(He looks at his phone and he's the text she sends... you're dead)

"May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them.

↳ You would think that at this moment Elijah would be laughing...

#### 1 Kings 19:3

Elijah was afraid and ran for his life.

Q:

He's afraid! Why?

Doesn't this seem a little strange to you. This is Elijah. It's a very small circle of folks in history that have called down fire from heaven... you know where it actually worked.

Elijah shouldn't be afraid... Ahab & Jezebel should be afraid of him.

- Everyone has their weak points... Fear is universal...  
We all have weak points.

- 1 Kings 19:4 while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors."
- ⇒ **Looming Fear unchecked distorts our thinking.**
- 1 Kings 19:4b* "... Take my life... I'm no better than my ancestors"
- Q: When did God ever ask him to compare himself to his ancestors?
- ~ But in his mind all of a sudden he's thinking God must think I'm a failure compared to my relatives
- His mind runs ramped... and looming fear always pushes us to this belief...
- ⇒ **Looming fear pushes us to believe "I can't handle the truth"**  
↳ It's mental & emotional defeat... that's what "looming fear" does.
- 1 Kin 19:4b* "I have had enough... just take my life..."
- A Few Good Men Remember the movie "A Few Good Men? There's a classic scene in that movie. Where Tom Cruise is interrogating Jack Nicholson... and Tom Cruise says "I just want the truth."  
"You want the truth?" "I deserve the truth."  
Remember what Jack Nicholson says... (You can't handle the truth!)
- Yea! "You can't handle the truth."
- Evil One**
- ⇒ **That's what the Evil One whispers to us... "You can't handle the truth."**  
You can't deal w/ this... this is too much... you're weak, or dumb, or... it hopeless... You can't handle the truth.  
↳ It's meant to trap us in fear...
- Lies Looming Fear unchecked distorts our thinking... and  
~ The Evil One fertilizes that lies upon lie.
- Q: Was Elijah the last prophet...? He though he was... but that wasn't true.
- ✓ No one really loves you or likes you.
  - ✓ You're a failure... you'll never make it
  - ✓ You'll never be able to figure this out...
  - ✓ Someone else is ahead of you
- So you say to yourself... "You can't handle the truth."
- Jesus How different it is w/ Jesus. Jesus says...
- John 8:32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

Jesus always put forth this notion that you can always face the truth if you're under my love and my care.

There's nothing the two of you can't handle... together.

In the hours prior to his arrest and crucifixion Jesus the disciples are dealing with some "looming fear", and Jesus says.

John 14:1-4

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.

⇒ **Jesus is saying you can handle the truth...** with me... trust me and there is no truth you and me to gather can handle.

## Hinge Moment

The Choice:

There is a choice... you have to decide who you will trust... Jesus or Jack Nicholson.

With Jesus Christ there is no truth we can't face.

- ✓ Whatever the truth is... whether its the state of you're
- ✓ Heart... the state of you're
- ✓ Life... the state of you're
- ✓ Job... the state of you're
- ✓ Family... the state of you're
- ✓ Finances... the state of a
- ✓ Relationship...

⇒ There is no truth you and Jesus can't handle together...

You have Choice... I have a choice:

i.e.

- > Some of us are afraid for our health... even death
- > Some of us hold fear in a relationship... what if this marriage fails... what if he/she abandons me, or cheats on me...  
What if I'm left alone... and unloved?
- > Some of you fear failure... Your job, or finances could collapse....

~ You can let that "looming Fear" run ramped... Or... we can face... it

Narrative cont.

So, here's Elijah...

So, Elijah is faced with this same choice... "I can trust God... or Jack Nicolson..." (of course he doesn't know who Jack Nicolson is yet.)

1 Kings 19:9b-10

And the word of the LORD came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He replied, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too."

⇒ **You can do this... Express your fears to God...**

You know what God doesn't do

~ God doesn't shame him...

There are no words of condemnation... but

⇒ **God doesn't eliminate the issue of fear, Rather... he's asked to face it.**

1 Ki 19:15

The LORD said to him, "Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus.

↳ "Elijah... go back... trust me... you and me together can handle this... whatever it mean."

Narrative

Elijah gets up and heads back to Israel... he

Q: Do you think Elijah was afraid... Yea!!! But facing fear doesn't mean we don't stop feeling afraid...

~ It means we face it by taking the right steps.

Q: What is the action you must take to face your looming fear?

- ✓ Maybe it's marriage counseling... the intimacy is gone. Your marriage is slowly degrading... you both know it... But you're not willing to get marriage counseling,
  - It might be embarrassing, My flaws my come out... I just want my spouse to recognize their flaws
  - The councilor might ask me to do something uncomfortable
- ✓ Maybe it's at work... It might be standing up for someone weaker.
- ✓ It might me loving or excepting someone who irritates you.

- ✓ It might mean sharing with close friends in your S.G. or ABF a area you need accountability in.
- ✓ It might be a step of faith in allowing God to walk you through some change in your spiritual journey.

(Letter)

Dear Glenn,

My wife and I have been attending Casas for over a year now... We are from a small town in Wisconsin and were raised Catholic (really Catholic...like the nuns with the rulers on the knuckles kind of Catholic).

Both raise in religious tradition very different that this, but struggling to find something new...

Imagine our fear when walking into your service for the first time!

We had never experienced a service where music and prayer is so beautifully intertwined, and where receiving a message in a positive manner is commonplace. We have found your community and your services an exact fit for our spiritual lives,... (But there are still issues as they move forward)

Face your fears...

Q: What does it look like to actively walk with God in a trust relationship... well you'll have to come back next week!