

I. Exposition of the Text**A. Understanding the Text**

- 1) What is *fear*?
- 2) What is *love*? (Mt 22:37-39; Rom 13:10; 1 Tim 1:5).
- 3) What is meant by *perfect love*? (1 Jn 4:19)
- 4) What is meant by *being made perfect in love*? (Gal 5:6)

B. Understanding the Argument Employed in the Text**II. Doctrines from the Text****A. The Commonness of Fear — Toward God, Others and Ourselves (2 Cor 7:10; Num 23:19).****B. The Sinfulness of Fear**

- 1) Fear looks to the creature and not the Creator
- 2) Fear turns our affections to an improper subject (Gen 20:11).
- 3) It is contrary to our new nature in union with Christ (2 Tim 1:7)
- 4) This sin is more heinous for those older in grace (1 Cor 13:11)
 - a) You should be more familiar with God's promises
 - b) You have seen the many providences of God

C. The Seriousness of Fear

- 1) Fear seeks to destroy the Christian (Gen 4:7).
- 2) Fear leads to many further sins
 - a) Joining in the sins of others (Pr 29:25)
 - b) Complaining (Ex 14:12)
 - c) Lashing out in anger is more often than not due to fear.
 - d) Fight: Seeking to tackle problem on one's own rather than trusting the Lord's providence or going about the means He has prescribed (Gen 16:2a)
 - e) Flight: Covering up our sins and hindering a free confession and repentance as well as receiving free forgiveness (2 Sam 11).
 - f) Freeze: To neglect one's duty, e.g. work or family obligations.
- 3) Through being paralyzed by fear, we will often be the causes to bring about our own fears.
- 4) The sin of fear is very serious because it shows either the absence of or immaturity of one's faith.
- 5) Fear may enslave you to unbelief and keep you from heaven.

D. The Means to Cultivate Love Which Casts out Fear

- 1) The Love of God (1 Jn 4; 2 Sam 23:5; Mt 7:11; Psalms 23:4a)
- 2) The Loveliness of God (Song of Songs 5:16)
- 3) The Enjoyment of Communion with God (Psalms 84:8, 10)
- 4) The Obedience of Faith.

E. The Excellencies of Love

- 1) Love conforms us to be more like God (1 Jn 4:16b)
- 2) Love makes duties delights (Gen 29:20)
- 3) Love causes us to endure hardships with joy.
- 4) Love entreats us to further obedience.
- 5) Love on earth prepares us for heaven.

F. The Mercy of God (Psalms 103:11-13)**G. There are times that a lack of fear is symptomatic of other forms of sin rather than faith working by love.****III. Answering Objections to the Text**

- A.** Objection 1: But I cannot control whether or not I feel fear!
- B.** Objection 2: But I do not possess the feeling of love as I ought!
- C.** Objection 3: But my causes for fear are so great!
- D.** Objection 4: Can I be forgiven of my fear and be freed from its grip?

IV. Uses from the Text

- A.** Pray (1 Pt 5:17).
- B.** Meditate and believe God's promises (Isa 41:10, 13; Rom 8:37-39)
- C.** Commune with God. Loving God is not merely knowing about God, but knowing God.
- D.** Fear has to be replaced with virtue (Mt 12:43-45)
 - 1) Humility (Job 42:3, 6)
 - 2) Contentment
 - 3) Courage (Psalms 56:3-4)
 - 4) Joy (Phil 4:4)
- E.** Plan your obedience with particularities and not just generalizations, and commit it to prayer.
- F.** Obey with focus in the moment, lest you be overwhelmed by the whole (Acts 27:25-26)
- G.** Confess your sins and repent often.
- H.** Repeat all of these applications through your lifetime.