

## “Shipwrecks to Saints” – (Dealing with Fear)

I have found that God is so interested in me that He literally wants to be involved in absolutely every part of my life – spiritual, emotional, mental, vocational, financial and practical; every part.

God actually wants you to be successful and thrive in every aspect of your life. He has given us strategies for successful living in the Bible ... but here is where it gets interesting ... WE GET INVOLVED!

We are a ‘product of the use or misuse of those strategies’ – when we use our gifts and talents, how we use our gifts and talents ... or IF use them.

We have been given a Book of Books that is crammed full of these Godly Strategies. One Book in particular is full of wisdom and was written by a man who is accounted to have been the wisest man that ever lived. It is the Book of Proverbs.

In teaching this series on Strategies for Success I know I will be taking on the ‘Conditioning of the World’ and the ‘Lies of the Devil’. I am also aware now that I will be challenging some of you to the very core of your being – but I am convinced that you are the pinnacle of God’s Creation and as such you, as a congregation, are literally a ‘field of Diamonds’ waiting to be shaped into the breath-taking jewel God originally saw as He was forming you!

‘Wisdom & Understanding’ come from God, and there is a very real and practical sense of what to do, how to do it, and why it must be done...but wisdom is no guarantee that we will act wisely. Almost everything God teaches us has a personal requirement of ‘APPLICATION’!

There is a need for us to read and re-read God’s Word, hear and re-hear His Truth and Promises. We are called to ‘**Walk-by-faith & not by Sight**’ (2 Corinthians 5:7); we are being ‘**transformed from Glory to Glory**’ (2 Corinthians 3:18); and if we actually follow the strategies God gives us in His Word we will have success in all areas we choose to follow them in.

Here is a list of the rewards that can come our way if we choose to actually follow God’s strategies for our lives:

Knowledge	Discretion	Good judgment
Fairness	Preservation and Protection	Deliverance from enemies; victory over competitors
Glory	Longer Lives	Commendation and promotion
Riches	Understanding	Favour with those in Authority
Avoidance of Shame and Folly	Happiness	Strength
Confidence	Courage	Extra-ordinary Achievements
Satisfaction	Great Relationships	Happy Marriage
Fulfilled & Successful Children	A True and Meaningful Life	The Love and Admiration of others
Understanding	True Wisdom	Intimacy with God

We live in what is described as a ‘fallen world’. What does that mean? Mankind ‘fell’ from God’s Grace when we chose ... and continue to choose ... to live by our own means and authority. This in itself is a complete topic and teaching series so I won’t unpack it today but the bottom line is this ...

**ROMANS 3:23**

**NKJV - For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

**MSG - We’ve compiled this long and sorry record as sinners (both us and them) and proved that we are utterly incapable of living the glorious lives God wills for us,**

So, today, before we can change anything and even begin to live a completely successful life (in ALL aspects of our life) we absolutely MUST have Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, believing He is who He says He is, recognising that He died to pay the price for our sinful ways, confessing with our mouths Jesus, as the Lord and Saviour of our lives, call upon Him and we shall be saved.

**ROMANS 5:19**

**For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.**

Having established that, we now need to deal with one of the most effective tools that is used against us and stops so many people from being successful ... and that is the subject of FEAR!

I have met people over and over again that are literally held as prisoners serving a life sentence of suffocation because of fear. Their lives have literally become ship-wrecks because of fear.

Perhaps you are feeling a bit like a ship-wreck today - I want you to know that I have a license to look for 'sunken treasure' and by God's Word and His Spirit we are going to 'Raise the Titanic' and set you sailing again!

At His Coronation, Solomon was about to take over the most powerful and successful Kingdom known at the time ... I believe he was terrified.

### **2 CHRONICLES 1:6 'a THOUSAND burnt offerings!'**

... but Solomon called on God and asked this ...

### **2 CHRONICLES 1:9-10 'wisdom'**

God's response was AWESOME!

### **2 CHRONICLES 1:11-12**

God didn't 'snap' His fingers and 'BOOM' – He gave Solomon wisdom and as he walked in God's Truth and that Wisdom ... ALL THESE THINGS WERE ADDED TO HIM! Now doesn't that sound familiar?

### **MATTHEW 6:33**

**But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.**

The word 'FEAR' is both powerful and convincing but in truth it is only an appearance of reality, appearing real but actually imaginary.

FEAR = False Evidence Appearing Real.

There are FIVE Fears that encompass almost all others. They are:

#### 1. THE FEAR OF POVERTY

This does not deal only with money. It is clearly manifested in how we deal with money; but - Poverty is a mind-set that encompasses all aspects of life.

At the heart of a 'poverty mindset' is selfishness. It lies to you that 'You will never have enough - you must hold onto everything'. It is a paralysing mindset when if unchecked will lead the individual to a downward mental spiral of anxiety, fear, depression ending in despair.

What does God say?

**GENESIS 2:** God told Adam "... of every tree, except one, you may eat ..."

### **2 CORINTHIANS 9:8**

**And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.**

### 2. **THE FEAR OF CRITICISM**

The heartbeat of this fear is '*What will THEY 'say - think - do - or believe'?*'

You know, I have yet to find who 'THEY' are!

### **PROVERBS 29:25**

**NLT -Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but to trust the Lord means safety.**

**MSG - The fear of human opinion disables; trusting in God protects you from that.**

The infamous 'they' are mostly non-existent except in our own minds. Nevertheless, 'they' have a severe ability to quench enthusiasm, curb initiative, destroy imagination and make it almost impossible to rise any higher than 'mediocrity' at best.

### 3. **THE FEAR OF ILL HEALTH**

It sounds ridiculous but fearing being sick will actually cause you to get sick. At the extreme it can actually cause the body to mirror the symptoms of illness.

There is a term for this: hypochondria - imagined illness: an excessive, usually long-term preoccupation with health and bodily sensations, accompanied by a deluded conviction of having a serious disease without objective evidence.

### **PROVERBS 18:14 (NLT)**

**The human spirit can endure a sick body, but who can bear it if the spirit is crushed?**

While there is a very real need to eat well physically ... what about spiritually? Is your spirit being sustained so it can endure a sick body?

There is an old saying that goes ... ‘You are what you eat.’ What are you eating: physically, spiritually, emotionally, and mentally? What are you feeding yourself?

#### 4. THE FEAR OF THE LOSS OF LOVE

This one is very close to the Fear of Criticism ... because it doesn’t just deal with the ‘loss of a relationship’ but actually expands into the fear of ‘loss of approval’.

**Many don’t actually believe that they can be wrong and still be loved unconditionally.**

How do you treat your own child? Why would God be different?

#### 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.**

Here is the very real need for us to be connected with God. Human love can only go so far. It doesn’t matter how much I love my wife and sons ... at some stage I will do or not do something that will hurt them, let them down and this produces the fear involved in relationships ... but God’s love – THAT’S PERFECT and fear cannot be near it!

#### 5. THE FEAR OF DEATH

Many people fear death so much that when they arrive at that time they realise that they haven’t really lived!

If you are a Christian, a Follower of Jesus, believing that He is Lord and Saviour then there is absolutely no reason to fear death.

Here’s what the Word of God says:

#### 1 CORINTHIANS 15: 45-57 (NLT)

**<sup>45</sup>The Scriptures tell us, “The first man, Adam, became a living person. But the last Adam—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit.**

**<sup>46</sup>What came first was the natural body, then the spiritual body comes later.**

**<sup>47</sup>Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven.**

**48 Every human being has an earthly body just like Adam's, but our heavenly bodies will be just like Christ's.**

**49 Just as we are now like Adam, the man of the earth, so we will someday be like Christ, the man from heaven.**

**50 What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These perishable bodies of ours are not able to live forever.**

**51 But let me tell you a wonderful secret God has revealed to us. Not all of us will die, but we will all be transformed.**

**52 It will happen in a moment, in the blinking of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, the Christians who have died will be raised with transformed bodies. And then we who are living will be transformed so that we will never die.**

**53 For our perishable earthly bodies must be transformed into heavenly bodies that will never die.**

**54 When this happens—when our perishable earthly bodies have been transformed into heavenly bodies that will never die—then at last the Scriptures will come true:**

**“Death is swallowed up in victory.**

**55 O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?”**

**56 For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power.**

**57 How we thank God, who gives us victory over sin and death through Jesus Christ our Lord!**

The best thing we can do to overcome fear and counter its actions is to remember the words of a song we used to sing years ago ...

Fear not! For I am with you says the Lord  
Fear not for I have called you, child you are mine  
When you walk through the waters I'll be there and through the flame  
You'll not be drowned, you'll not be burned  
For I am with you