

Under the Influence: The Spirit of Fear

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2 Timothy 1:6-7 - Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷ For **God has not given us a spirit of fear**, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

- Paul encourages Timothy to stir up the gift – it had gone dormant
- 1 Timothy 4:14 – Timothy neglected the gift
- The spirit of fear will stifle your gift

Luke 21:25-28 - “And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, **with perplexity**, the sea and the waves roaring; ²⁶ **men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth**, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”

Romans 8:15 - "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.”

2 Samuel 23:20-21 - Benaiah *was* the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man from Kabzeel, who had done many deeds. He had killed two lion-like heroes of Moab. He also had gone down and killed a lion in the midst of a pit on a snowy day. ²¹ And he killed an Egyptian, a spectacular man. The Egyptian *had* a spear in his hand; so he went down to him with a staff, wrested the spear out of the Egyptian’s hand, and killed him with his own spear.

An example of fearlessness: Benaiah

- God has called us to be radical Christians – being radical is synonymous with fearless
- If this is the case Benaiah was definitely fearless! This man chased a lion into a pit on a snowy day.
- Usually, when the image of the King of the jungle wanders into the optical nerve and registers on the cerebral cortex it inspires one primary reaction: RUN!!!
- **NORMAL PEOPLE DON’T CHASE LIONS**

LION CHASERS REALIZE:

1. Lion chasers realize the greatest OPPORTUNITIES are usually the SCARIEST lions!

- Taking no risk is the GREATEST risk
- David Whyte said, “The price of our vitality is the sum of our fears...”
 - i. Life is not valued by the amount of your POSSESSIONS, but the amount of your EXPERIENCES!
- Irrational fears and misconceptions keep us from abundant living
- Faith is the process of unlearning your irrational fears!

2. Lion chasers realize the spiritually mature SEEK and SEIZE God-ordained opportunities!

- What sets lion chasers apart isn't the outcome, but the courage to chase God-sized dreams despite the difficulties
- Courage is:
 - i. Doing what is right regardless of the CIRCUMSTANCES
 - ii. Doing what is right regardless of the CONSEQUENCES
- G.K. Chesterton said, “How much happier you would be, how much more of you there would be, if the hammer of a higher God could smash your small cosmos...”
- At some point in your life you have to make a choice between fear and boredom

3. Lion chasers realize the courageous DEFY the ODDS!

- He was a 2 to 1 underdog when fighting the Moabites
- The odds were against him with the 7 ½ ft. tall Egyptian – He had a club compared to the spear
- The odds were against him with the Lion, the snow, in a pit, etc...
 - i. A lion runs 35 miles per hour
 - ii. An average lion weighs 350-450 lbs
 - iii. Has a bite force of 950 lbs per sq. inch
 - iv. Lions teeth are perfectly placed as to fit between the cervical vertebrae of its prey to snap its neck
- He didn't focus on his disadvantages, he didn't make excuses.
- There is a pattern in the scripture: ***sometimes God won't intervene until something has become humanly impossible.***
 - i. In Judges 6 – Gideon's army of 32k is vastly outnumbered by the Midianites, but God said, “your army is too big...”

4. Lion chasers realize that you don't let what's WRONG with you keep you from worshipping what's RIGHT with God.

- When I hit an emotional, spiritual slump it is usually because I'm more focused on the snow, the pit and the lion than I am on the opportunity to see God do the

miraculous.

- Worship keeps us focused on the big picture!
- The most important choice you make every day is your attitude.
- **JOY is mind over matter!**
- Worship:
 - i. Changes the atmosphere
 - ii. Charges the atmosphere
- **The OUTCOME of life is always determined by the OUTLOOK of life!**

Conclusion: Its time to turn you faith on in adversity!

The ***adversity effect***: For most of us, landing in a pit with a lion on a snowy day would be bad luck. But, it is adversity that gave Benaiah an opportunity to distinguish himself as a warrior. Without this adversity he would have faded into the script of scripture. Now everyone is telling the story of his courageous adventure.

When you die is there going to be a story told about your adventurous life, or will you gently slide off into the sunset without leaving anything memorable for others to recount?