

Ordered Fears: Putting Fear in Its Proper Place

Introduction

Everyone experiences fear. The question is not whether we will fear, but whether our fears are rightly ordered.

When fear is in the wrong place,

It brings dysfunction, but proper fear brings function.

1. What Is Fear?

Biblical

“Fear” in Scripture is not a single phenomenon. Some fear is rebuked: fear of enemies, scarcity, shame, punishment, or circumstances that displaces trust in God.

Other fears are commanded: fear of God as wisdom’s beginning, covenantal loyalty, reverence, and worship. ; Matthew 10:28 and Luke 12:4–7 explicitly contrast fear of human power with fear of God and then reassure disciples of God’s care.

Often the Bible’s remedy for disordered fear is rightly ordered fear

Biological

The amygdala is central to threat detection and fear learning; the hippocampus supplies contextual memory; and the prefrontal cortex supports regulation, appraisal, and extinction learning.

Amygdala: “Something might be dangerous.”

Prefrontal cortex: “Let’s check: is this actually dangerous right now?”

A feared cue becomes associated with danger; attention narrows to threat; catastrophic interpretations inflate probability and cost; safety behaviours and avoidance reduce distress in the short term but prevent corrective learning;

2. Why Proper Fear Is Important

When fear is disordered, it brings dysfunction. It makes us avoid what we need to face, control what we need to surrender, and obey what we should resist.

The fear of man can keep us from telling the truth.

The fear of failure can keep us from obeying God.

The fear of suffering can keep us from loving sacrificially.

The fear of uncertainty can trap us in control.

But ordered fear brings function.

The fear of the Lord Brings wisdom to our lives

Order Fear bring courage to our lives

Ordered Fears making our relationships better

Order Fear Makings how a more meaningful life

Order Fears reduces anxiety and brings peace

Orders fear produces love

3. How Do We Apply This in Our Lives?

1. We need to cultivate trust and courage in the small things before often then big things.
2. Send one encouraging text as soon as someone comes to mind.
3. Pray, "Lord, I'm afraid, but help me obey You anyway."
4. Write down one time God carried you through something hard.
5. Make the phone call or start the conversation you've been avoiding.
6. Do one task without overchecking, over-rehearsing, or asking for reassurance.
7. Tell the truth kindly even if someone may not like it.
8. Before bed, name one thing you cannot control and pray, "Father, I give this to You."

