

WHAT NOT TO WEAR

WILLIS 9/5/10

Lk12:35-40

We began a series last week entitled “Make Ready,” a title taken from a verse in Rev19 which speaks to the highest good of man in relation to eternity... the good of the Bride making herself ready.”

- **Life is circumstantial and every circumstance in life is the means by which God prepares us as an eternal Bride for His son Jesus Christ.**
- Likewise, barriers are broken and boundaries are expanded for the purpose of making ready the Bride of Christ.
- **Understanding the role readiness plays in preparing the Bride, Jesus commands in Lk12, get dressed in it.**

In the past 7 years a reality based television show has been aired on the Learning Channel called “What Not to Wear.” What Not to Wear features poorly dressed participants who have been nominated by family or friends because of their extreme need of a fashion makeover.

- When someone has been nominated the show secretly follows them and videotapes them for 2 weeks. Then the show’s co-hosts Stacy and Clinton are brought in and they lead the nominee through a caustic makeover.
- In keeping with the show “What Not to Wear” and Christ’s command to get “Be dressed and ready,” I would like to nominate the Church for a wardrobe makeover. Would you welcome Stacy and Clinton?

Notice v.37. **Apparently, this posture of readiness and alert is so close to the heart of God that when he sees it, it provokes a role reversal where He serves us.** Live dressed and ready and God will go to work for you.

- One of the ways He goes to work for us is through the breaking of barriers and the expanding of boundaries. Just as we are to be dressed in readiness there are many mindsets we need to take off.
- These mindsets we must take off are the same barriers that are to be broken. So we want to turn our attention to What Not to Wear or what are the barriers that need to be broken?

Fear: Is54:2-4 Contained in these verses are both the breaking of barriers and the expanding of boundaries. Fact of the matter is **you can’t possibly expand your boundaries until you have first broken the barrier of fear.**

- Being that “Fear Not” is the most often repeated command in the Bible, fear must be our greatest barrier. Someone aptly said, “Fear is a little death that brings total obliteration.”
- **365 times “fear not,” “be not afraid” or some similar command appears in the Bible...one command for each day of the year.** In fact, nearly every book of the Bible has at least one “fear not” in it.
- Fear turns excuses into reasons. As someone coined the acronym, fear is nothing more than **False Exaggerations Appearing Real**. Fear is without a doubt something not to wear. Don’t put it on. Don’t agree with it false exaggerations.
- **In a fallen world fear is real, don’t waste your energies denying it...believe God to overcome it.** To overcome fear you face it, stand up to it, and blow right through it.
- Lk8:50 “Fear not, only believe.” Makes it sound pretty simple. Fear and belief cannot mutually exist. The moment we choose to believe is the moment fear must flee. Fear you won’t have time and you won’t. Believe you will and you will.
- **Fear is the evidence of unbelief; Belief is the evidence of no fear.** Increase is a Biblical command but the extent of our increase will be limited to the level of our fear. The man with only 2 talents said, “I knew you to be a hard man...” Fear

Those in the know tell us the “fear of loud noises” is the only fear we are born with, every other fear is learned behavior. Studies show family and close relationships are the #1 teacher of fear. Experiences and imaginations are #2. (Not having a Harley is #3.)

- **According to Dr. Michael Duckett 84% of what we fear never comes to pass.**
- **96% of a person’s fearful future is within their control to change.**
- Unfortunately man has become an expert at imparting fear. By the time a child reaches early adolescence a multitude of fears have been added to their only fear of loud noises (which by this time they have grown out of.)

Author Marianne Williamson in her book “A Return to Love” said:

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you *not* to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

- I may not believe with all of her theology but this statement on fear hits it right on.

So how do we break the barrier of fear?

1. Perfect Love: 1Jn4:18 “Perfect love casts out fear.” It is not just His love for us that casts out fear it is also our love for Him. As our love for Him matures and becomes more complete, fear is cast out.

- **Perfect love casts out the fear of correction.** The fear of correction is a readiness barrier. **Perfect love puts correction in the context of transformation therefore in the mindset of advance.**
- Ours is a mandate of reformation, therefore we are in a remodeling context not new construction. In new construction a correction is considered a move backward. In a remodel, correction is considered an advance not a loss.
- Because reformation is the mandate I am trying to correct something every week. **But in the context of reformation correction is not a sign of rejection but a sign of God’s goodness to reform what is broken and establish what is new.**

2. Trust in God: Gen4:7 “Sin crouches at your door, it desires to have you, and you must master it.” We live in a fallen world where fear is an all consuming reality. More than expecting fear to just go away we must expect fear to be mastered.

- Sin is mastered in a posture of perfect love, deep seated trust and courageous faith.
- **When we live in the superior reality of trust, God can even use fear to ready us for mastery.** When we live in the superior reality of trust then we run into every opportunity to be made ready not run from them.
- When we live in the superior reality of trust we face our fears and remain in the process till we are delivered. We don’t Jacob our way out or opt for an easier way that circumvents our process of readiness.
- **The superior reality of trust casts out the fear of surrender.** The fear of surrender is a readiness barrier. God can be trusted so don’t revoke your trust.

3. Take Courage: Is35:4 “Say to those with fearful hearts be strong, do not fear, God will come. He will come with vengeance, with divine retribution He will come and save you.”

- Courage is an act of the will that casts out the fear of action. Procrastination is a readiness barrier. **Courage activates, courage mobilizes, courage doesn’t deny fear it overrides fear.**

Let me close by reading some powerful quotes on the relationship of fear and courage:

“Courage is not the absence of fear but the judgment that something else is more important than fear.” Ambrose Redmoon

“Courage is doing what you are afraid to do. There can be no courage unless you are scared.”
Eddie Rickenbacher

“Courage is contagious. When a brave man takes a stand the spines of others are stiffened.” Billy Graham

“Courage is not the lack of fear but the ability to face it.” Lt. John B. Putman Jr.

“Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conqueror fear don’t stay at home and think about it, go out and get busy.” Dale Carnegie

I want to close this morning by praying a prayer of deliverance over the spirit of fear. If you are here today and you know the fear you deal with is not the ordinary garden variety, the fear you deal is a power you have not been able to break alone

- Come up here and let’s agree together for your deliverance.