

**Monday, June 12 - Read Isaiah 43:1-3.** The opening words of this passage are words that are repeated over and over in the Bible. "Do not fear." Those words are easier to say than actually do. But we must remember the closing words of our passage for the day. "For I am the Lord your God....you Savior." As we heard from the beginning of our series, Jesus is our giant slayer. And since Jesus has already defeated the giant of fear, our focus needs to be on our Lord God, our Savior! So maybe the first step for you to 'fear not' is to look to Jesus. Spend a few minutes reading about Jesus. Pick some passages from the ending chapters of Matthew and John to refresh your perspective. And know, He IS our Savior - why should we fear?

**Tuesday, June 13 - Read Isaiah 45:3-4, 10, 13; Isaiah 49:8-9.** God has always desired to save us. The nation of Israel received the benefit of God's limitless ability. God reminds us he always has a plan. He is bigger than anything the world can throw out at us. Even though we are afraid and might start wondering if a problem will ever be solved, there is no other God like our God. Faith kicks in here. Faith must grow. Work on your humility. We can't make it in life by ourselves and we aren't entitled to anything. Work on your prayer. Dialogue with God. Ask and it will be given to you. We have to do our part. There is a balance between our part and God's part in faith. As our faith grows, we must wait patiently. Surrender to God's timing. And lastly, for our faith to grow, we must stay in relationship. Jesus stayed in relationship with his closet friends. Is your faith growing? Do you believe God is able?

**Wednesday, June 14 - Read Psalm 111:7-10; Proverbs 2:2-6; 2 Corinthians 7:1.** We have been looking at the giant of fear. There is one kind of "fear," however, that the Bible fully endorsed: "the fear of the Lord." Proverbs 3:6-7 gave a concise definition of the life-giving kind of "fear" today's readings called us to: "Know him in all your paths and he will keep your ways straight. Don't consider yourself wise. Fear the LORD and turn away from evil." While we tend to associate the word 'fear' with a 'hair standing on end' or 'fight or flight' feeling, 'the fear of the LORD' is better understood as reverent awe. Indeed, the Lord is 'fearsome,' but not in the sense that some want to run away from or escape from God's presence. Rather, we are called to approach the Lord with a sense of awe while in the presence of the holy. Can you recall times when you have experienced this healthy, life-giving kind of fear in particularly vivid way? Why would this type of fear cause you to want to draw closer to God, rather than to shrink away?  
Prayer: O God, let me never lose a sense of awe at the privilege you offer me to accept your love and to walk through my life in your presence, with you as my Lord and guide. Amen

**Thursday, June 15 - Read Exodus 3:10, 4:13; Joshua 1:1, 5b, 9b; 2 Timothy 1:7.** What great thing would you do if you knew you could not fail?  
This question was originally posed in Robert H. Schuller's book *You Can Become the Person You Want To Be*. So many times fear keeps us in a small box and leads to small living. People stay in jobs they dislike because they are afraid of trying a new career. Some stay in abusive relationships because the fear of being alone is too great. Sometimes we avoid going to the doctor because we fear the diagnosis. Fear makes us think irrationally and isolates us. Left unchecked it can paralyze and immobilize us. We weren't created to live in a constant state of fear. Joshua 1:9 says, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Spend some time in prayer with God asking what great thing he is calling you to do. Then trust in him to give you the strength to do it.

**Friday, June 16 - Read Galatians 3:26-28; 1 John 4:18-21.** At the foundation of all Christian faith is the trust that God loves us, that God created human beings out of love and for love. This was (and is) quite extraordinary. Egyptians, Canaanites, Greeks or Romans—none of them believed their gods loved them. But Christians believe Jesus embodied that belief, and showed us how it shapes life for the better. And that belief makes a real difference in how we relate to all other people, those who are close to us and those who are "other." Paul told the Galatians that in Jesus ethnic, economic/social and gender distinctions all lost their power to divide us and cause fear and separation. Why would perfect love drive out fear? Have you ever experienced a situation in which as love developed for another person, fear of that person decreased and disappeared? 1 John 4:20 got blunt, and may make us uncomfortable: "If anyone says, I love God, and hates a brother or sister, he is a liar." To what extent do you agree that hate for human beings rules out genuine love for God? Why would that be the case? Can you think of practical steps that move you in the direction of caring about "others," about people that you may see as dangerous enemies, as deserving of fear and distrust rather than of love?