

FOLLOWING CHRIST . . . THE MAN OF GOD

Overcoming Fear

John 14:25–31

SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES
STUDY



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Can you imagine life without fear? Without fear, most of the problems we face personally and in society would disappear. In the trash would go all those medications we take to calm our nerves. Nights of peaceful rest would replace sleepless nights of tossing and turning. Worry would wisp away from hearts like steam from a calming cup of tea.

In the beginning of creation, fear didn't exist. But when Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate the forbidden fruit, the creeping vine of fear entered Eden and entwined itself around our original parents' hearts. Genesis records humanity's first expressions of fear:

When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees. Then the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

He replied, “I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked.” (Genesis 3:8–10)

When sin planted the first seed of shame, fear sprouted. And from fear grew a host of thorns and thistles: cover-ups, hiding, blaming, broken relationships, rejection, envy, treachery, and, ultimately, death. Fear truly is the most troublesome of the fall's fallout. But the good news is Christ's fruitful vine of peace can replace fear and its weedy outgrowths. Jesus lived without fear, and He generously offers His peace to all His disciples *today*. Let's study His words and find four guidelines for overcoming fear.

Quotable

*The world has no
peace to give.
But Jesus offers
His peace as
“a gift the world
cannot give”
(John 14:27).*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

What fears have been crowding out your peace lately? As we launch our study, share below your list of anxieties and worries with the Lord in a time of confessional prayer.

Jesus preached a kind of peace that can be experienced only by citizens of His kingdom. Let's enter His realm of peace as we study His Word together.



Observation: Jesus Offers Peace

Observation is the *Searching the Scriptures* process of seeing what's in the text—the flow of thought, contrasts and comparisons, emphases, repetition, and context. John 14:25–31 continues Jesus' Upper Room Discourse, which began with Jesus washing the disciples' feet and issuing what command (John 13:34)?

Jesus washed His disciples' feet to illustrate the kind of love that would brand them as His disciples (13:35). Not only would the *love of Jesus* set them apart, so would the *peace of Jesus*. According to John 14:1, what command launched Jesus' discussion of peace, which He repeated in 14:27?



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The disciples must have felt like sailors on a sinking ship when Jesus announced He was leaving (John 13:33; 14:12). But Jesus promised to send them a lifeboat, the Holy Spirit.

In John 14:16 and 26, Jesus called the Holy Spirit “Advocate,” a translation of the Greek word *paraklētos*. How do other Bible versions translate this Greek term? Multiple versions are available at biblegateway.com.

We’ll dig into this Greek word in the interpretation phase. Until then, continue observing by circling each time you see the pronoun “I” in John 14:26–31. Write down what Jesus said He was doing or was going to do, and identify the promises He made to His disciples and us.



Interpretation: Four Ways to Overcome Fear

The *Searching the Scriptures* method of interpretation seeks to uncover golden nuggets of truth that apply to all people in any era and every culture. We can identify at least four principles for overcoming fear today.

Depend on the Person of the Holy Spirit—John 14:25–26

Jesus intended His followers to depend on the Holy Spirit just as they had depended on Him. Read pages 276–277 of Chuck Swindoll’s *Insights on John* to learn more about the Greek title, transliterated as “Paraclete.” The online resource *Baker’s Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* includes an [article](#) on the Holy Spirit’s ministry. What additional insights into *paraklētos* did you discover?



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What did Jesus say the Holy Spirit would do in His place (John 14:26)?

The Spirit not only helps us learn truths of Scripture but also recall them when our knowledge is put to the test. It's as Chuck Swindoll says in his message:

How marvelous an experience it is when you're all alone and . . . suddenly you get just the truth you need, and it calms your nerves. That's the work of the Holy Spirit.

Claim the Peace of Christ—John 14:27

Read John 14:27, and write this verse, restating in your own words the rich meaning of Jesus' words.

The peace of Jesus is a gift more valuable and more lasting than an inheritance from a rich uncle! Commentator William Barclay elaborates on this part of Christ's heart freely given to us:

In the Bible the word for *peace*, *shalōm*, never means simply the absence of trouble. It means everything which makes for our highest good. The peace which the world offers us is the peace of escape, the peace which comes from the avoidance of trouble and from refusing to face things. The peace which Jesus offers us is the peace of conquest. No experience of life can ever take it from us and no sorrow, no danger, no suffering can ever make it less.¹

How is the peace of Christ different and better than the peace offered by the world?



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Accept Christ's Plan for the Future—John 14:28–29

Jesus had informed the disciples of His planned departure (John 13:33; 14:2–3). According to John 14:28–29, what positive perspective about His leaving did Jesus want His disciples to understand?

Jesus could see beyond His death to the glory on the other side. Our future is equally glorious because we are fellow heirs to His promise (Romans 8:15–17). Read Chuck's comment, and explain the reason we need never be fearful about our future.

The arrangement that the Father has laid out of the events of the future is as clearly defined as the arrangements of history that we can read in books. It is impossible to really accept the plan of the future and stay pessimistic—impossible!

Follow the Pattern of Obedience—John 14:30–31

Even while facing death and Satan himself, Jesus exuded a calm obedience that set an example for the disciples and us. How did Jesus connect obedience with love in His relationship with His Father (John 14:30–31)? How is that a model for our relationship with Him (14:21, 23)?



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Correlation: The Holy Spirit's Role, Our Response

Correlation is the *Searching the Scriptures* study tool that compares Bible passages to aid our understanding. What light does 1 Corinthians 2:10–12 shed on the Holy Spirit's role as the One who teaches and reminds us of truth?

According to Hebrews 12:1–3, how does keeping our eyes on Christ as we run the race of obedience help us follow His example of obedience?

As the Holy Spirit brings to our minds Christ's teaching during our storms, Jesus can calm our inner tempest as we take steps of obedient faith.



Application: The Mind at Peace

Chuck summarizes the four points:

Children of God, you have the Spirit of God upon whom you can depend. You have the peace of Jesus Christ to claim. You accept the plan of God for the future. And now, it falls to the matter of doing what you know the Scriptures say to do.

What *can* you do? These four ideas will get you started.

- Acknowledge your source of power.
- Begin your day with prayer.
- Correct your habit of pessimism.
- Devote yourself to persistence.



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Which of these suggestions do you want to put into practice? Or what other ideas would you like to apply? Whatever steps you choose, take one this week.

Now, spend a few moments worshiping our Savior who faced death and Satan with determined obedience and a heart full of peace. Pray in the name of Jesus for God to supplant whatever fears you confessed to Him with the *shalom* of Christ that is like nothing this world can give!



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, I claim at this moment the peace Jesus offers. Give me the part of Jesus' heart that was so connected in love to You that He could face Satan and death undaunted. Send me into the storm, not with the guarantee of smoother seas but with the assurance of peace amidst the storm. Amen.

ENDNOTE

1. William Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, vol. 2, rev. ed., The Daily Study Bible Series (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), 171.



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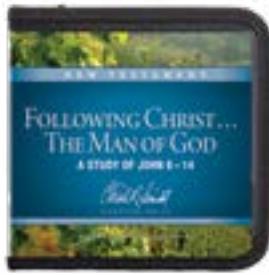
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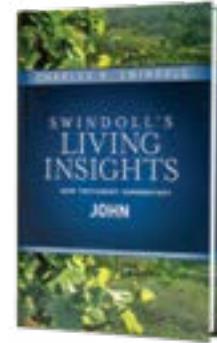
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For the 2018 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and sermon transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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