



**What Are You Afraid Of? (Part 2)
(The Danger of Naïve Optimism)**

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Statement: For years, Christians have been taught the importance of walking by faith (2 Cor 5:7). However, during this difficult season, many Christians have developed a culture of **naïve optimism**. Jesus modeled a balanced approach that gives us victory over fear but **deep respect for danger**.

Fear Defined: Phobos, to be terrified or deeply alarmed or reverential

Review - My Testimony: I recently had a moment of surprising fear and intimidation

Text: Matthew 4:1-11

- Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. (NIV)

I. Three Ways to View Fear

- 1. Reverential Fear** (Deuteronomy 6:13)
 - 13 Fear the Lord your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name.
- 2. Wise Fear** (Proverbs 22:3)
 - 3 The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty.
- 3. Damaging Fear** (1 John 4:16-18)
 - 16 God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. 17 This is how love is made **complete (mature)** among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. 18 There is no fear in love. But **perfect love drives out fear**, because **fear has to do with punishment**. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

II. Three Temptations Fear Brings to All of Us (Brief Review)

- 1. Fear can tempt us to listen to unwise counsel (brief review)**
 - 3 The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”
 - **The Best Solution:** Listen to God’s Voice
- 2. Fear can tempt us to take foolish risk (or fall victim to naïve optimism)**
 - 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”
 - **The Best Solution:** Don’t test God!
- 3. Fear can tempt us to seek short-term status (brief review)**
 - 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him **all the kingdoms of the world** and their splendor. 9 “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”
 - **The Best Solution:** Think long-term and worship God



III. Examples of Our Seasons of Naïve Optimism

1. We assumed naively we could do great ministry without great resources (savings, people, and facilities)
2. We assumed naively we could last for years working at an exhausting pace (sometimes we did too much)
3. We assumed naively we would stay young and never really grow old (aging was for other people)

IV. Three Smart Steps We Should Take Immediately

1. Work to build more **small groups** (We need army like squads)
Note: Army organizational structure graphic
2. Work to build stronger **cash** reserves and **assets**
3. Work to build a stronger **youth** department (We need to invest more in youth and young adults)
4. Work to build stronger **believers**

Next Time: What Maturity Demands

Big Question: Are you a Mature Person?