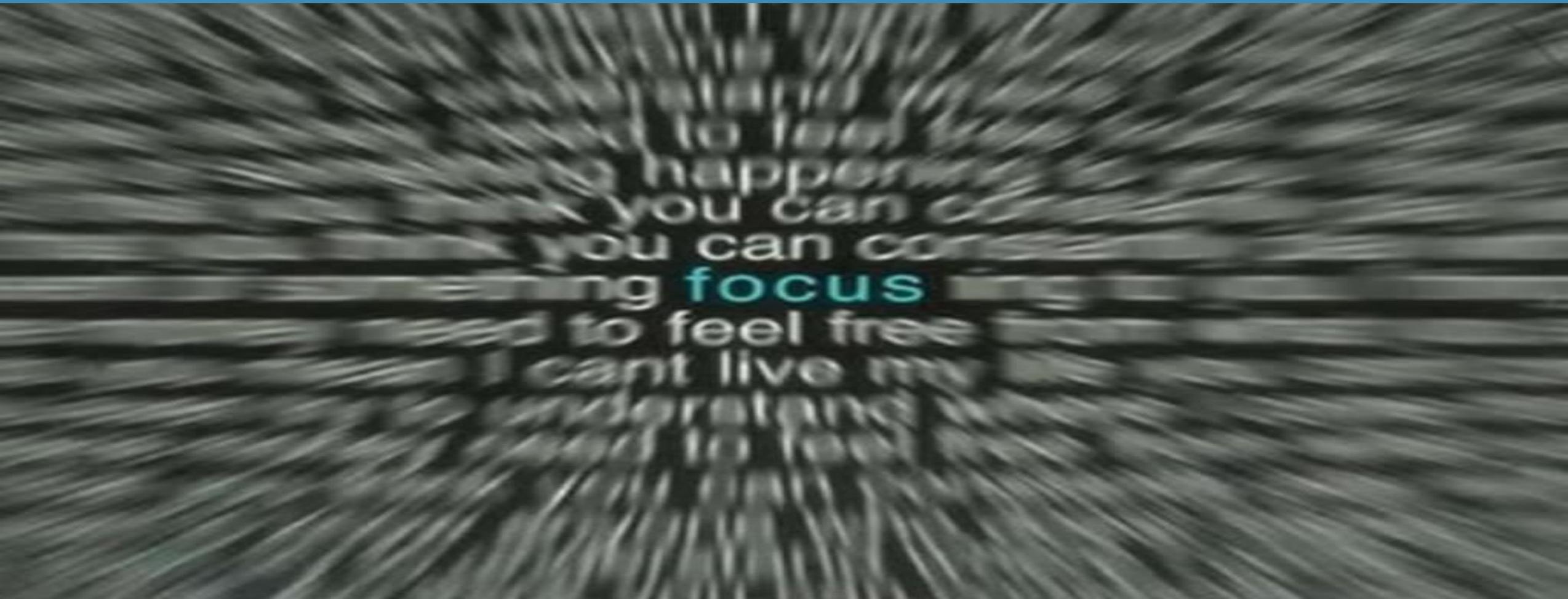


WORD FOR 2017



FOCUS – FEAR, FRUSTRATION OR FAITH

- Hebrews 12:2 [looking away from all that will distract us and] **focusing our eyes on Jesus**, who is the Author and Perfecter of faith [the first incentive for our belief and the One who brings our faith to maturity], who for the joy [of accomplishing the goal] set before Him endured the cross, [a]disregarding the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God [revealing His deity, His authority, and the completion of His work]. AMP

Fear

Organized

Communion

Utilize

Seeking

- Focus- a state or condition permitting clear perception or understanding, *the team lost focus*

- Exodus 14:10-14 As Pharaoh approached, the people of Israel looked up and panicked when they saw the Egyptians overtaking them. They cried out to the Lord, I I and they said to Moses, "Why did you bring us out here to die in the wilderness? Weren't there enough graves for us in Egypt? What have you done to us? Why did you make us leave Egypt? 12 Didn't we tell you this would happen while we were still in Egypt? We said, 'Leave us alone! Let us be slaves to the Egyptians. It's better to be a slave in Egypt than a corpse in the wilderness!'" 13 But Moses told the people, "Don't be afraid. Just stand still and watch the Lord rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. 14 The Lord himself will fight for you. Just stay calm."
- Exodus 15:23-25 When they came to the oasis of Marah, the water was too bitter to drink. So they called the place Marah (which means "bitter"). 24 Then the people complained and turned against Moses. "What are we going to drink?" they demanded. 25 So Moses cried out to the Lord for help, and the Lord showed him a piece of wood. Moses threw it into the water, and this made the water good to drink.

- Exodus 17:1-3 All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the Lord, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" 3 But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" ESV
- Numbers 14:1-4 Then the whole community began weeping aloud, and they cried all night. 2 Their voices rose in a great chorus of protest against Moses and Aaron. "If only we had died in Egypt, or even here in the wilderness!" they complained. 3 "Why is the Lord taking us to this country only to have us die in battle? Our wives and our little ones will be carried off as plunder! Wouldn't it be better for us to return to Egypt?" 4 Then they plotted among themselves, "Let's choose a new leader and go back to Egypt!" NLT

- Joshua 7:6-9 Joshua and the elders of Israel tore their clothing in dismay, threw dust on their heads, and bowed face down to the ground before the Ark of the Lord until evening. 7 Then Joshua cried out, "Oh, Sovereign Lord, why did you bring us across the Jordan River if you are going to let the Amorites kill us? If only we had been content to stay on the other side! 8 Lord, what can I say now that Israel has fled from its enemies? 9 For when the Canaanites and all the other people living in the land hear about it, they will surround us and wipe our name off the face of the earth. And then what will happen to the honor of your great name?" NLT
- I Samuel 17:4-11 Then Goliath, a Philistine champion from Gath, came out of the Philistine ranks to face the forces of Israel. He was over nine feet tall! 5 He wore a bronze helmet, and his bronze coat of mail weighed 125 pounds. 6 He also wore bronze leg armor, and he carried a bronze javelin on his shoulder. 7 The shaft of his spear was as heavy and thick as a weaver's beam, tipped with an iron spearhead that weighed 15 pounds. His armor bearer walked ahead of him carrying a shield. 8 Goliath stood and shouted a taunt across to the Israelites. "Why are you all coming out to fight?" he called. "I am the Philistine champion, but you are only the servants of Saul. Choose one man to come down here and fight me! 9 If he kills me, then we will be your slaves. But if I kill him, you will be our slaves! 10 I defy the armies of Israel today! Send me a man who will fight me!" 11 When Saul and the Israelites heard this, they were terrified and deeply shaken. NLT

- John 6:43-44 Jesus answered them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. 44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. ESV
- John 6:61-64 Jesus was aware that his disciples were complaining, so he said to them, "Does this offend you? 62 Then what will you think if you see the Son of Man ascend to heaven again? 63 The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing. And the very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 But some of you do not believe me." NLT
- Matthew 8:23-27 Then Jesus got into the boat and started across the lake with his disciples. 24 Suddenly, a fierce storm struck the lake, with waves breaking into the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. 25 The disciples went and woke him up, shouting, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!" 26 Jesus responded, "Why are you afraid? You have so little faith!" Then he got up and rebuked the wind and waves, and suddenly all was calm. 27 The disciples were amazed. "Who is this man?" they asked. "Even the winds and waves obey him!"

- Matthew 14:24-33 Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. 25 About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, "It's a ghost!" 27 But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!" 28 Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water." 29 "Yes, come," Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted. 31 Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. "You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?" 32 When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. 33 Then the disciples worshiped him. "You really are the Son of God!" they exclaimed.

It's all
about



FOCUS

Fear is a big deal in the story of us and God.

Fear grips us whenever we believe that apart from, or in spite of, our best efforts, something undesirable is going to happen and we can't stop it. Sometimes fear is irrational, and sometimes it's rational. But no matter what kind of fear it is, **it always affects us.**

The command to “fear not” fills Scripture — and we've got to ask why this commandment is so widespread.

The answer must be that a lot of us have a lot of fears.

- **Fear doesn't always look like fear. And this is where this giant gains a buy-in from huge amounts of people.**
- Sometimes fear is flat-out terror. It's shake-in-your-boots fright.
- But at other times this giant exhibits itself less overtly. It shows up as anxiety or nervousness or worry or stress or dread or tension or stomach problems.
- Fear chews away at our lives and erodes our sense of confidence and well-being.
- It robs us of sleep and rest. Fear blinds us and steals our praise.
- An exorbitant amount of prescriptions in the developed world are written for worry, stress, anxiety, despair, and terror — all cousins of fear.
- People in the Western world take more medication to sleep at night than the rest of the world takes in a lifetime. The medications aren't all the same. Some people get their medication from a doctor, and some people get their medication from a bottle. But the end goal is always the same. We want to take the edge off. We want to decompress. We just want to forget about the things that are troubling us for a while. We want to not be afraid.

Fear is a giant

- Fear can taunt us and harm us.
- Fear can get a foothold in our lives and begin to dominate us.
- Fear can demoralize us and ultimately diminish God's glory in our lives.
- It never diminishes God's glory within God Himself, because God's intrinsic worth cannot be changed.
- But the way we reflect God's glory gets diminished. The way we show the world who God is and the way we show ourselves who God is — that's what is lessened.

Fear and Faith are polar opposites but share a common denominator -
FOCUS

Fear seeks to obscure our view of God and crush our confidence.

The opposite of fear is faith.

And faith begins by us saying, “I have confidence in God that He is bigger than this giant.”

We must hear Jesus and we must see Jesus. We must keep the focus of our hearts on Him. That’s because hearing Jesus and seeing Jesus and focusing on Jesus builds up our faith, and faith is the antidote to fear.

Developing faith isn't an overnight fix. **It might have taken a long time for us to fall into the hole of fearfulness, so it can take a while to get back out.** The answer is seldom as simple as saying, "Fear, go away in Jesus' name." Fear is a symptom of a deeper cause. We need to dig down and get to the root of the matter.

- 1. Fear comes from our conditioning. (Can be generational)**
- 2. Fear comes from our concealing. (Nature of man is to hide)**
- 3. Fear comes from our controlling. (Self-Protecting or Pride)**

The antidote to fear is faith, and *the soundtrack of faith is worship.*

Developing Faith:

- 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, ESV
- I. **Focus** - Hebrews 12:2 [looking away from all that will distract us and] **focusing our eyes on Jesus**, who is the Author and Perfecter of faith [the first incentive for our belief and the One who brings our faith to maturity], who for the joy [of accomplishing the goal] set before Him endured the cross, ^[a]disregarding the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God [revealing His deity, His authority, and the completion of His work]. AMP
- Hebrews 11 – Examples for us to follow who inherited the promises by faith!

2. Word - Romans 10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. ESV

- Matthew 4 – Jesus dealing with the devil – “it is written”

3. Prayer - Jude 20 But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit;

- Romans 8:26-28 And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. 27 And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will. NLT