**I'm Scared: Fear *of* God or Fear *From* God?**

***By Kris Swiatocho***

***Editor’s note:*** *Today's article is the ninth in a series about "fine line" areas of our lives. Areas where we struggle to discern truth from sin. Areas we prefer not to deal with so that we can continue living on the edge, where the "fine line" is. Click here to read about* [***Happiness vs. Joy***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/i-know-marriage-would-make-me-happy.html)*,* [***Judging vs. Accountability***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/can-you-believe-what-he-said.html)*,* [***Loneliness vs. Alone-ness***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/lord-why-have-you-left-me-alone.html)*,* [***Gossip vs. Venting,***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/my-pastor-drives-me-crazy.html)[***Lust vs. Love***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/a-hunka-hunka-burnin-love-or-lust.html)*,* [***Doubt vs. Questioning***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/questioning-god-there-s-no-doubt-about-it.html)*,* [***Worry vs. Concern***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/a-fine-line-don-t-worry-be-concerned.html)*, and* [***Righteous vs. Unrighteous Anger***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/what-s-anger-got-to-do-with-it.html)*.*

*Oh my, I hope he didn't see me*. "Why hello, Mr. Officer, Sir."

"How are you young lady?"

"Oh, I am fine."

"What are you doing?" he asks.

"Oh nothing, just waiting for my Mommy."

*Whew! He didn't catch me. I think I just swallowed my gum. I know what I did was wrong. If the officer caught me, what would have happened? But worse, what if my Mommy and Daddy found out? But also, what would God think? He would really get mad.*

When I was about 6 years old, I went to visit my aunt at her apartment. I got increasingly bored and asked my mom if I could go outside to play. As I walked around I noticed a line of mailboxes. I decided to open them up and pull out what was inside. I pulled out letter after letter, opening them up to try and read them. But each letter was written in cursive and I hadn't learned how to read that yet. While holding these letters, I saw a police office driving up. I quickly threw everything behind me into the bushes. The police officer knew I was up to something... but what? He eventually drove off. As time went by, even stretching into years, I would fear the wrath of my parents but even worse, the wrath of God.

**God is All-Knowing**

God is all knowing, all being, the first, and the last. Because of this, we should fear out of a respect of who he is and what he is to us. A fear of knowing that, with flair of his nostril, he can make the wind move, the sea dry up, cancer disappear and a child be born. Because this type of fear is expected and healthy, it will keep you loving God in a way that promotes growth in your relationship with him.

**God is Judge**

Because God is God, there is a natural, instinctive fear of his judgment against us. Even as a small child, I knew what I did was wrong because the letters were not mine. I knew that the police officer would be mad, my parents would be upset, and that God would not approve. But being fearful of an authority is normal if, in fact, you have done something wrong. I should be afraid of what punishment I might receive, what judgment man or God will make. This is a normal fear out of my actions, of my sin.

Fear becomes unhealthy *(the fine line)* when we walk around feeling like we have to duck a blow from God. We have a tendency to put attributes of our earthly authority figures on God. Because our parents or teachers would punish us for no reason, we sometimes believe God will do the same. Rest assured God does not sit in heaven waiting to pounce on you. He loves you. When we are bad, when we make mistakes, he offers repentance. But with all sin, there are consequences. When you have a healthy fear of God you will want to do what is right. You will understand and accept those consequences.

**The Fine Line Revealed: Healthy Fear of God Promotes Growth**

**When we fear God:**

* He will deliver you from all your unhealthy fears. Your fears that are man made, man promoted, and man driven.  [**Psalm 34:4**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=ps+34:4-4): *I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.*  [**Psalm 112:7**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=ps+112:7-7): *They will have no fear of bad news; their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the Lord.*
* You have peace and comfort, because God is with you.  [**Psalm 23:4**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=ps+23:4-4): *Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*
* He blesses you with many good things. How amazing is this?  [**Psalm 31:19**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+31:19&version=NIV): *How abundant are the good things that you have stored up for those who fear you, that you bestow in the sight of all, on those who take refuge in you.*
* He will instruct you in all ways. You will never have to worry about what direction to go.  [**Psalm 25:12**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=ps+25:12-12): *Who, then, are those who fear the Lord? He will instruct them in the ways they should choose.*
* He builds a relationship with you that includes private information, just between the two of you. How special is that? I mean God loves you so much that the fear, the respect of whom he is not about scaring you to death but instead about building a relationship with you.  [**Psalm 25:14:**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=ps+25:14-14)*The Lord confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them.*
* He will add years to your life.  [**Proverbs 10:27:**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=pr+10:27-27)*The fear of the Lord adds length to life, but the years of the wicked are cut short.*
* Others will see your witness and they will come to the Lord as well.  [**Exodus 14:31:**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=ex+14:31-31)*And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.*
* You will gain wisdom, you will learn.  [**Psalm 111:10:**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=ps+111:10-10)*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise.*
* His love for you is beyond measure.  [**Psalm 103:11:**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=ps+103:11-11)*For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him.*

When you fear God because you are running from the responsibilities he has given you, you literally stop growing. When you fear taking the next step in ministry, relationships, work, family, your relationship with God is affected. This type of fear does not trust God. Trusting God may take you to places you do not want to go. Trusting God may take you to the mission field, have you to change jobs that take less pay, get married, or give up a dream. Don’t allow this disobedience of your own will; the lies from the enemies and others stop you. Turn to God today, ask for forgiveness, and welcome what direction he has for you. Don’t fear because what he calls you to do, he will equip you. Your fear is in man, not God. God is with you.

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[***TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries***](http://www.thesinglesnetwork.org/) *helps churches,* [***pastors***](http://www.crosswalk.com/church/pastors-or-leadership/) *and single adult leaders evaluate, develop and support their single adult ministries through high-energy speaking engagements, results-oriented consulting and training and leadership development conferences and seminars. Click* [***here***](http://www.thesinglesnetwork.org/) *to request a FREE "How to Start a Single Adult Ministry" guide.*

[***FromHisHands.com Ministries***](http://www.fromhishands.com/) *is Kris' speaking ministry. If you've ever heard her speak, you know that Kris is the kind of speaker who keeps the crowd captivated, shares great information and motivates people to make a difference in the lives of those around them! She speaks to all church audiences on everything from "first impression" ministry to women's topics to singles and young adults. She can speak on a Sunday morning, at a woman's retreat or for a single adults conference. Bring Kris to your church today!*

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