# How to Overcome Fear as a Single Parent by Dawn Walker

 “Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love”([**1 John 4:18**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=nlt&q=1jo+4:18-18), NLT).

The opposite of love is not hate. It’s fear.

Fear is the greatest thief of our life, and no stranger to us as single parents. It is the loudest voice that competes with God’s, the invisible enemy that keeps us trapped in defeating patterns and at the root of every sin we pick. Just look at how much of our lives is built around fear, and how many choices we make that are fear-driven.

Fear of what will happen.Fear of what won’t happen.Fear of being hurt again.Fear of missing out.

Just think of some situations that single parents have to face that tend to catapult us into fear mode. We may be dealing with domestic violence, financial crisis, homelessness, or may even be facing the loss of our children. These are legitimate crises that cause us to question our security at a core level. In these circumstances, a healthy fear can sometimes be a good thing that prompts us to initiate a protective response. But what about when fear gets an unhealthy foothold in our everyday lives because of sins we haven’t confessed or wounds we haven’t dealt with, and ends up driving many of our choices without us even realizing it?

Where is fear winning the day in your life?

**Is it worry?** Do you overanalyze and work yourself into a state of anxiety over circumstances—like when the ex is not cooperating or the child support doesn’t come—that are out of your control? Do you obsess about things that don’t go exactly as you’d want them to, and does every little storm toss you around like a ship with no anchor? Where fear wants to bring worry, God’s love wants to bring peace and rest.

**Is it in your**[**parenting**](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/parenting/)**?** Do you tear down your child’s other parent because you’re afraid your child might love them more? Do you find yourself criticizing or yelling at your kids because their behavior or choices make you feel like a failure? Where fear wants to make you a reactive, controlling parent, God’s love wants to make you a grace-filled shepherd of your child’s heart.

**Is it in relationships with the opposite sex?** Have you ever made relationship decisions based on fear? When we rush into relationships and give ourselves away sexually, we might be really communicating, “I’m afraid you won’t love me for who I am, so at least maybe you’ll want me for what I can give you sexually,” or “I’m afraid if I don’t give you sex, you’ll go find someone who will.” When we settle for relationships that are outside of God’s plan and protection, don’t bring out the best in us, or encourage us in our spiritual walk, aren’t we really just yielding to the voice of fear that says, “I’m afraid of being alone,” or “I’m afraid nobody better will come along or want to marry me”? Where fear wants to keep you insecure, dissatisfied and uncommitted, God’s love wants to make you secure, fulfilled and faithful.

Fear and love cannot coexist. If fear dominates our entire life, or even one area of our life, it’s a big red warning light that God, who is Love, has not been allowed in and given authority there. Ultimately, every voice of fear is an echo of the serpent in the Garden. The message of fear then and now is that God’s plan can’t be trusted, that he is withholding something good from us, and that if we don’t take control we’ll miss out. The action step that fear always recommends is to bypass God’s instructions and take matters into our own hands.

I can speak truthfully about fear because I spent so much of my life in bondage to it…fear of not being wanted for who I really was, fear of being hurt, fear of failure, fear of being alone…I even feared surrendering my life to Jesus because I feared losing control (that I never actually had).

The reality is, we have an enemy of our soul who wants to plant fear in our hearts or keep us living in a fear that was planted long ago so we can never experience the fullness of a life of love that God has for us. But the good news is that when we receive Jesus we also receive the power that overcomes that enemy! His love dwelling in us, nourished daily in our time spent with him, breaks the fear cycle in our lives once and for all, replacing it with the love cycle, which works like this:

We open our hearts to receive and experience his perfect love. Secure in his love, fear is expelled, which frees us up to love others fearlessly. And once we learn to love fearlessly, we will find ourselves loved perfectly.

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