

The Bully

When I was in elementary school there were two girls who constantly bullied me. They would threaten to fight me after school and after two years of continuous threats, they managed to place a great fear in my heart. The fear was so detrimental that I would run home everyday as soon as the bell rang. It was a pitiful sight to witness me; this quiet, friendly, non threatening little girl dragging her classical cello instrument down a dusty road. I would frantically look over my shoulder all the way home. It wasn't until I graduated to middle school that I finally got rid of the Bully in my life. So I thought.

Today I am way past my elementary years and yet a new bully has manifested in my life. This bully has managed to fill me with a dysfunctional fear and I am once again looking over my shoulder. I am fearful of having a car accident, of being alone, of taking chances, of roller coasters, or of failure. Science has proven that some people have a predisposition toward fear and anxiety, but I believe otherwise. I can't be so gullible into thinking that this is the way I am suppose to exist for the rest of my life. How am I suppose to walk in "God Confidence" if I can't trust in the Lord or rest in His word?

The NEW bully that I am referring to is Satan. Satan interferes with our trust and faith in God and he makes us question God's availability and ability. This deformed mindset creates our fears and it is Satan's way of bullying. Jesus new this and that's why he instructs us to "Fear not". In fact, there are 366 "fear not" verses in the Bible- one for every day of the year, including one for leap year. According to John Ortberg, "Fear disrupts faith and becomes the biggest obstacle to trusting and obeying God". If Satan can bully us into living in a constant state of fear, he can steal our joy and destroy our relationship with God. Fear robs us of our God given destiny.

Isaiah 43:1 says, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord your God...your savior."

We are all living in tumultuous times and there are many uncertainties. It's very easy to let Satan bully you into thinking that God will not redeem you or rescue you in your time of distress or need. I can't distort reality. There are people who are living one paycheck from homelessness. Others are living without health care, and many are unemployed. It's going to take courage to overcome, but more important, it's going to take trust in God and faith in His word. Fear is the number one reason beings are tempted to avoid doing what God asks them to do. If you don't stand up to the bully, Satan, you will not come out victorious. You will constantly be running away and looking over your shoulder. The "bully" will try to convince you that God is not really big enough to take care of you. He will tell you that you serve a limited, finite, partially present, semi-competent God. Don't fall victim to his bullying lies.

*Isaiah 41:13 For I am the LORD, your God,
who takes hold of your right hand
and says to you, Do not fear;
I will help you.*

Courageously seek to trust and have faith in God,
Major Yvette Villafuerte