When I Am Afraid
Week 5 — The Loving Father Woos You from the Fear of Man

What is the “fear of man”? How would you describe it?

“Whatever you think you need will control you. If you need something from other people—love, acceptance, approval—they hold the keys to something very valuable to you. You will live in fear that they might not deliver. You will fear those who are the gatekeepers to the fulfillment of your needs. Why do adults fear a little extra weight? Health is rarely the issue. The real issue is what you will think of me. Why do so many people fear public speaking more than death? The opinions of other human beings are by far the scariest things on the planet… The fear of other people is so common that it can be assumed; it sits in the background of all of our lives” (Ed Welch, *Running Scared*, 173-174).

**DO NOT TRUST IN MAN**
Jeremiah 17:5–8

**LOVE EXPELS FEAR**

**God’s Love for Us Expels Fear**

How would you describe the love of God?

Romans 5.6-11
What effect does this love have on you? How does his love expel our fears?

How do your actions & fears show that you don’t really believe this?

**LOVING OTHERS MORE EXPELS FEAR**

**GOAL**: to love other people more than you want to be loved by them

How do we see this in the earthly life of Christ?

1 John 4.7-10; Philippians 2.1-11

If you were to do this, by God’s grace, how would the opinions of other people become less controlling?

“When we see ourselves as kings who need affection, we are highly vulnerable. But as children and servants, we owe a debt of love to others. We were loved by God more than we loved him; there will always be that imbalance in our relationship. The only appropriate and healthy response is to treat others the way God has treated us. The result? People’s (perceived) opinions don’t have the same power to crush us anymore. Instead, we are less concerned about how we are treated and more concerned with how we treat others. Rejection may still hurt, but it won’t control us” (Welch, *Running Scared*, 188-189).

**FIGHT FEAR WITH FEAR**

What is the fear of the Lord?
What does the fear of the Lord have to do with our fears and anxieties?

If we are learning to fear the Lord, then he is becoming increasingly important to us. We treat worries by pursuing what is even more important and valuable.

Do the opinions of other people control you? What you love and value is showing. You love reputation, love, respect, adoration. As yourself, “Why am I so concerned about myself?” Then consider what God asks of you. What he requires is that you walk humbly with him, showing love and mercy as you have received love and mercy.

Ed Welch, *Running Scared*, 199

What can you do in order to grow in the fear of the Lord?

Suggested Exercise: read Psalm 34 every day for the next week and make it your own. Use it to help you write out a prayer for this lesson. Confess your sin, knowing that he forgives and restores. Bring your fears and worries to him. Ponder anew his character and his mighty deeds. Praise him. Then bring your needs and petitions to him. Open your heart to him.