

What If – Fear Always Costs Something

Message 2 of 7 in the series: "If I Could Tell You Just One Thing"

Opening Question: *What if* fear is the only thing standing between you and full surrender to God?

Surrender = saying yes to God even when it costs you something.

"Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If any of you wants to be my follower, you must **give up your own way**, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.'" Matthew 16:24-25 (NLT)

A. Fear tells a story that is not always true.

Fear Defined: "an unpleasant emotion caused by the belief that someone or something is dangerous, likely to cause pain, or a threat."

"For **God has not given** us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind."

2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)

IMPORTANT! God did not give you fear. He gave you power, love, and a sound mind.

Fear makes you **feel powerless**. Fear makes you **hateful**. Fear makes you **panic** and spiral and **shut down**. But God's word says, "That's not from me."

"...casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing **every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ...**" 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV)

THINK: If fear is the loudest voice in your thoughts, it's probably controlling your steps too. - "What consumes your mind controls your life."

The Question: Am I answering the calls of God on my life, or am I wandering in places leaving me unfulfilled and desperate?

B. Gideon's obedience in the face of fear shows us what full surrender looks like.

By the time of Gideon, the Midianites were severely oppressing Israel. They raided the land during every harvest and left the people impoverished and terrified. Israel hid in caves and cried out to God.

"**They abandoned the Lord** to serve Baal and the images of Ashtoreth. This made the Lord burn with anger against Israel, so he handed them over to raiders who stole their possessions. He turned them over to their enemies all around, and they were no longer able to resist them." Judges 2:13-14 (NLT)

Gideon faced several fears:

1. Fear of the enemy

"Gideon son of Joash was threshing wheat at the bottom of a winepress **to hide the grain** from the Midianites." Judges 6:11b (NLT)

2. Fear of inadequacy

"'But Lord,' Gideon replied, 'how can I rescue Israel? **My clan is the weakest** in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and **I am the least** in my entire family!'" Judges 6:15 (NLT)

3. Fear of whether God was really with him

"'Sir,' Gideon replied, '**if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us?** And where are all the miracles our ancestors told us about? Didn't they say, "The Lord brought us up out of Egypt"? But now the Lord has abandoned us and handed us over to the Midianites.'" Judges 6:13 (NLT)

4. Fear of making a mistake

"Gideon replied, '**if you are truly going to help me**, show me a sign to prove that it is really the Lord speaking to me.'" Judges 6:17 (NLT)

5. Fear of opposition and consequences

"So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the Lord had commanded. But he did it at night because **he was afraid** of the other members of his father's household and the people of the town."

Judges 6:27 (NLT)

FEAR & FAITH COLLIDE: Gideon gathers and then the Lord scatters, the true test of surrender.

"The Lord said to Gideon, "You have too many warriors with you. If I let all of you fight the Midianites, the Israelites will boast to me that they saved themselves by their own strength. Therefore, tell the people, "Whoever is **timid or afraid may leave** this mountain and go home." So 22,000 of them went home, **leaving only 10,000 who were willing to fight.**" Judges 7:2-3 (NLT)

God wasn't done. He had another test:

"When Gideon took his warriors down to the water, the Lord told him, 'Divide the men into two groups. In one group put all those who cup water in their hands and lap it up with their tongues like dogs. In the other group put all those who kneel down and drink with their mouths in the stream.' **Only 300 of the men drank from their hands.**" Judges 7:5-6a (NLT)

Imagine how that felt for Gideon. He had to be thinking, "God... really?" ...However, he obeyed.

"The Lord told Gideon, 'With these 300 men I will rescue you and give you victory over the Midianites. **Send all the others home.**" Judges 7:7 (NLT)

Gideon led the 300 men with trumpets, torches, and jars—and God brought confusion and defeat to the Midianite army. Spoiler alert—they won. (*Read Judges 7:15–25 for the full story.*)

Note: Your obedience in the face of fear speaks louder than your excuses.

IMPORTANT! – How did God help Gideon surrender his fear?

- God's **presence**. "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior." Judges 6:12b (NIV)
- God's **patience**. God did not rebuke Gideon for his doubts.
- God's **power** displayed through weakness. He started with 32,000; he was victorious with only 300.

C. Surrender will cost you — but fear will cost you more.

Note: Your fear doesn't just affect you, it affects everyone around you. Is fear keeping you from full surrender to what God wants to do in your life and how He wants to use you? You cannot defeat what you cannot define.

THINK: I'm not trusting God with _____.

"When I am afraid, I **put my trust in you**. In God, whose word I praise— **in God I trust** and am **not afraid**. What can mere mortals do to me?" Psalm 56:3-4 (NIV)

THINK: When was the last time you were silent enough to listen?

"I **sought the Lord**, and he answered me; he **delivered me from all my fears.**" Psalm 34:4 (NIV)

The Question: Are you willing to surrender, even if it costs you something?

Remember - Don't let fear stop what God wants to start.

Surrender costs something—but fear costs you everything.

Kurt Corcoran • 06-15-25 • Kurt@centeringlives.com

Connect Group Questions:

1. Read 2 Timothy 1:7. What kinds of fear tend to hold people back from full surrender to Jesus?
2. In Judges 7:1–8, why do you think God kept reducing Gideon's army? What does that teach us about trust?
3. Jesus said in Matthew 16:24–25 that we must give up our lives to truly find them. What has that looked like in your life so far?
4. Where is God currently asking you to surrender something—and fear is making it difficult?
5. What would your life look like if you fully trusted God's power, love, and self-discipline? (2 Timothy 1:7)