

Facing the Future Fearlessly, Pt. 2
Series: God Is Good All the Time
Psalm 23:6; Next Steps Devotional Guide
December 27, 2020
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1. There are three main reasons we do not need to fear the future. The reason reason is God's unlimited goodness is enveloping us in this life. Read Psalm 23:6a from your sermon notes under point #1 as well as the explanation of the Hebrew word translated as "follow" under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* This Hebrew word is typically refers to something hostile, such as a predator overtaking its prey. How conscious are you that God's goodness and mercy are enveloping you, chasing your or pursuing you?
2. Read Romans 8:28 from your sermon notes under point #1 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* One of the ways we see God's goodness and mercy following us in how God takes the bad and evil and turns it into good for those who love Him with all their heart, soul, mind and strength and are fulfilling God's purpose for their lives. People who ignore God's plan for their lives or go in the opposite direction of God's plan for their lives still want God to turn the bad that happens into good. Why do you think they expect this from God?
3. A second reason we do not need to fear the future is because God's unlimited mercy is working in and through us. Read the explanation of the Hebrew word translated as "mercy" under point #2 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."*
 - a. Read James 1:17 a from your sermon notes under point #2 under the heading, *"The Difference Between God's Goodness and God's Mercy."* God's goodness is when God gives me what I do not deserve. What is that for you?
 - b. Read Romans 6:23 and Romans 6:23 from your sermon notes under point #2 under the heading, *"The Difference Between God's Goodness and God's Mercy."* God's mercy is when God doesn't give me what I deserve. What is that for you?
4. A third reason we do not need to fear the future is because God's unlimited glory is waiting for us in heaven. Read Psalm 23:6b from your sermon notes under point #3 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* Even if we live 60, 70, 80, 90 or 100 years here on this earth – death is not the final curtain call.
 - a. When you think of death, what comes to your mind?
 - b. We don't have to fear death because death is not a termination; it is a transfer. We're going to heaven. God saves the best for last. If you love and know Jesus, if the Lord is your Shepherd, it just gets better and better, because even if I have a tough life here on earth. I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever where there's no more sorrow, no more suffering, no more sin, no more sickness, no more sadness, no more problems, no more pain, and no more pressure. With Jesus, it keeps getting better and better. The best is yet to come. Why do you think people fear death so much?
5. We can live fully and fearlessly in this life and in order to do that we must be grateful and generous to others because God is so good to us. Read Psalm 118:29 under point #1 under the heading, *"To Live Fully And Fearlessly I Must Consistently and Intentionally . . ."* Continual mercy deserves continual thanks. This means I must develop for the rest of my life an attitude of gratitude. Would you say that describes you? If so, how? If not, why?
6. When your life is grateful, you can't be fearful because they oppose each other. Why? Because fear focuses on self and gratitude and generosity focuses on others. Read Hebrews 12:28 from your sermon notes under point #1 under the heading, *"To Live Fully And Fearlessly I Must Consistently and Intentionally . . ."* Where is your focus typically? On fear (self)? On gratitude and generosity (others)?
7. Take some time to fill out the "From A-To-Z: My Personal Daily Gratitude Reminder of God's Spiritual Blessings To Me." Once filled out, use this to remind you daily of God's goodness and mercy to you.
8. Read Matthew 10:8 and Psalm 112:5-9 from your sermon notes under point #1 under the heading, *"To Live Fully And Fearlessly I Must Consistently and Intentionally . . ."* How generous are you in your time, your

talents, your treasure, your money, your motivations, your praise, your compliments and etc.? What do you think keeps a person from being gracious and generous with others?

9. How about for the next 30 days, we make a commitment together, that we're not going to complain about anything. Instead of complaining, you are going to be grateful and generous. Would you commit to this challenge? If so, how do think this would impact your life and the life of others?
10. What mental, emotional and spiritual barriers can make it difficult for a person to be both grateful and generous? List some ways these barriers can be broken down. How does generosity and gratitude reflect a person's confidence both in God and in their future?
11. Read Ephesians 4:32 from your sermon notes under point #2 under the heading, *"To Live Fully And Fearlessly I Must Consistently and Intentionally . . ."*
 - a. Now read the explanation of the Greek New Testament word translated as "kind" from Ephesians 4:32 under point #2. Would you say this describes you to the people you like as well as to the people you know (i.e., family members, people who attend church with you, co-workers, people who go to school or class with you and neighbors) who get on your nerves?
 - b. Now read the explanation of the Greek New Testament word translated as "tenderhearted" from Ephesians 4:32. Would you say this describes you to the people you like as well as to the people you know (i.e., family members, people who attend church with you, co-workers, people who go to school or class with you and neighbors) who get on your nerves?
 - c. Who is it in your life you still refuse to forgive? Who do you refuse to let off the hook? Who do you refuse to let go? Who do you refuse to just wipe the slate clean, say, *"Okay, you're off the hook."* If you say no one, then listen to the last part of *1 Corinthians 13:5*, *" . . . love does not keep a record of the wrong others do."* Think of the people who have hurt you either intentionally or unintentionally. When you see them or their name comes up, do you remember or think about the wrong they did to you? Why? To live fully and fearlessly, you must learn to forgive others.
12. Read Proverbs 15:1 and 1 John 4:18 from your sermon notes under point #2 under the heading, *"To Live Fully And Fearlessly I Must Consistently and Intentionally . . ."* How much grace would you say God would say you extend to others? People who are gracious understand and appreciate God's forgiveness to them. People who are not gracious do not realize how much they have been forgiven by God. List ways you think God has had to forgive you?
13. Read Matthew 5:16 and 1 Peter 1:3 from your sermon notes under point #3 under the heading, *"To Live Fully And Fearlessly I Must Consistently and Intentionally . . ."* To do this, you have to be living your life for God's glory now because you are going to share in His glory one day. What do you think it means to live for God's glory?
14. You don't get to choose what's going to happen to you the rest of your life, but you do get to choose how you respond. You can face the future as a cynic, as a critic, as a pessimist, as a doubter. You can face the future experiencing the worst and expecting the worst. You can face it being ungrateful. You can face it being stingy. You can face your future being ungracious, discourteous and unmerciful to other people, and you can live for the glory of yourself. Or you can face the future with gratitude, and generosity, and graciousness, courteousness, mercy and the glory of God. Which one do you think will make you happier? Which one do you think will make you more successful? Which one do you think will bring the smile of God and the reward of heaven? If you choose to respond how God says you should, what differences would that start making in your life right now? Be honest — who is your shepherd?