

FACING FEARS

That Ruin Relationships

BY RICK WARREN

God wants to transform every area of our lives, including our relationships. But sometimes fear can get in the way of relational health. In fact, there are three fundamental fears that can ruin our relationships.

What are those fears?

Fear of Exposure

One of our deepest fears is the fear of being seen for who we really are. When we're afraid of being open and honest, we can become distant from God and others.

Fear of Disapproval

The more we fear disapproval, the more defensive we become. Sometimes even the hint of disapproval can make us point the blame at others.

Fear of Losing Control

The more out of control we feel, the more controlling we can become—and the more likely we are to demand our own way.

What's the antidote to fears that could potentially ruin relationships?

It's learning how to live in God's love. The Bible says, *"No fear exists where [God's] love is. Rather, perfect love gets rid of fear"* (1 John 4:18 GW).

How do you live in God's love?

Surrender Your Heart to God

Ask God to control your mind and emotions and let him fill you with his love.

Job 11:13-18 says, *"Surrender your heart to God, turn to him in prayer, and give up your sins—even those you do in secret. Then you won't be ashamed; you will be confident and fearless. Your troubles will go away like water beneath a bridge, and your darkest night will be brighter than noon. You will rest safe and secure, filled with hope and emptied of worry"* (CEV).



Remember What God Thinks About You

Every day, pause to remember what God thinks about you, not what the world thinks—not what even you think about you. Here are four things God thinks about you:

- **He completely accepts you.**
"[Jesus] made us acceptable to God" (Titus 3:7 CEV).
- **He unconditionally loves you.**
"My love for you will never end" (Isaiah 54:10 GNT).
- **He totally forgives you.**
"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1 NIV).
- **He considers you extremely valuable.**
"You have been bought and paid for by Christ" (1 Corinthians 7:23 TLB).

Offer God's Love to Others

Jesus said, *"I'm giving you a new commandment: Love each other in the same way that I have loved you"* (John 13:34 GW).

God wants you to accept others completely, love others unconditionally, forgive others totally, and consider others extremely valuable.