

No. 28 BAPTISM: "Do Not Give In to Fear"!

[PLEASE NOTE: This talk includes interviews. Follow instructions in assignment letter]

TODAY YOU ARE TAKING A VALIANT, FEARLESS STEP (5 min.)

All who choose to serve Jehovah must be courageous

We live in a hostile, aggressive world ruled by Satan

Satan is determined to bully, intimidate, and terrorize all who break free from his cruel, oppressive rulership (1Pe 5:8)

He wants to scare lovers of God away from a life of dedication to God

He uses fear, hoping that it will paralyze and confuse anyone determined to serve Jehovah

There is no reason to fear the attacks of Satan or his world

Your presence here today and the step you will take very soon prove the Devil woefully wrong! (Jas 4:7)

Jehovah's holy spirit has made you strong enough to resist this wicked world and its ruler

Worshipping Jehovah is not for cowards! (2Ti 1:7)

You candidates for baptism are about to join a group of people who are bold in their determination to serve Jehovah (Ps 27:1)

It is my pleasure to extend to you a warm welcome!

GO ON THE OFFENSIVE AGAINST PARALYZING FEAR (7 min.)

[Read 1 Peter 3:6, and focus on the expression "*continue doing good and do not give in to fear*"]

We can combat fear by strengthening our love for Jehovah

Doing so can lessen, mitigate, or even eliminate our fears (1Jo 4:18; w12 1/1 18)

[Read 1 Peter 3:14] Because of our love for Jehovah, we can overcome our fears

Fear of Satan (Eph 6:11)

Fear of man, such as pressure from family or from peers (w14 12/15 31 ¶17-18; w01 2/1 13 ¶17-18)

Fear of ridicule (2Ti 1:8)

Fear of making sacrifices or of missing out on what the world views as a good life (Mt 19:29)

Fear of not being good enough to continue serving Jehovah or of not being worthy of doing so (Hag 2:7; 1Jo 3:20)

Fear of persecution (Re 2:10)

We might be persecuted because we refuse to stop preaching

If our Christian meetings are banned, we may suffer because of refusing to stop gathering together

We might suffer because of our Christian neutrality (Joh 17:14)

Yet, Jehovah promises that we can be happy if we endure persecution (Jas 1:12; w07 8/15 30 ¶13-14)

Fear of death (Heb 2:14, 15)

THE ANTIDOTE TO FEAR IS RELIANCE ON JEHOVAH (6 min.)

Fear should not prevent someone who loves Jehovah from serving Him —why?

[Read 1 Peter 3:12a] You are under the watchful care of Jehovah, and he hears your supplications

Your heavenly Father will protect you (Ps 46:1, 2)

Jehovah has "awe-inspiring power" (Isa 40:26)

Jehovah has made abundant provisions to strengthen you (Ps 28:7)

A primary provision is regular prayer

Speak to Jehovah often (Ro 12:12)

Pour out your heart to him as you would to a loving parent or a close friend (w06 5/15 16)

There is a strong link between the intimacy of your prayers and how you feel about Jehovah

Jehovah understands your particular fears; keep making specific requests for the wisdom and courage that you need (Jas 1:5)

As you discern how Jehovah responds to your prayers, you will come to realize as never before that "Jehovah is near to all those calling on him" (Ps 145:18)

Thank Jehovah and praise him when you observe the answers to your prayers or sense that he has strengthened you so that you can face your fears with courage

Other provisions include personal Bible study, Christian meetings, and the ministry

If you regularly take advantage of all that Jehovah provides, you will never become a helpless victim of fear (Ps 54:4)

INTERVIEWS (3 min.)

[Interview a youth who was baptized recently and an older publisher who was baptized years ago. Ask each one: (1) What specific fear has at times challenged you in your service to Jehovah? (2) How has Jehovah helped you to overcome that fear?]

PRESS ON UNDAUNTED AND CONFIDENT (5 min.)

At times, faithful servants of Jehovah have become fearful in the face of overwhelming odds; this is normal (2Ch 20:12; 32:20)

Such situations tested the limits of their trust in God's power to save and protect; yet, they remained confident (2Ch 20:15-17; 32:7, 8)

Your baptism today gives you good reasons for confidence

Baptism brings you into an intimate relationship with Jehovah

You have severed your ties to the world alienated from God

You will now have an unrestricted privilege of prayer (Heb 4:16)

You can now enter "the secret place of the Most High" (Ps 91:1; w10 2/15 26 ¶10)

May Jehovah always prove to be 'your refuge and your stronghold, your God in whom you trust' (Ps 91:2)

PUBLIC DECLARATION OF YOUR PERSONAL DEDICATION (3 min.)

[Invite candidates to stand]

Please answer the following two questions in a *loud* voice:

(1) On the basis of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, have you repented of your sins and dedicated yourself to Jehovah to do his will? (Your answer, please)

(2) Do you understand that your dedication and baptism identify you as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in association with God's spirit-directed organization? (Your answer, please)

Your clear, affirmative answers to these questions indicate that you are qualified for baptism as ordained ministers of Jehovah God

[Prayer by speaker, after which he invites the audience to stand and join the candidates in singing the song indicated on the printed program. Session chairman will take speaker's place on the platform during the song]

TO BE COVERED IN 29 MINUTES