

A soliloquy on FEAR

Fear and trust do not go together.
Fear and honesty do not go together
Fear and courage do not go together

I was motivated to write on this topic after an excellent fellowship meeting last evening with a group of Christians. We were invited together to hear about the formation of the movement, 'The Vineyard'. It started in America and spread to the UK. There are now 120 branches of this Christian – some would say 'Charismatic' – movement in the UK. Overall there are over 2,500 branches world-wide. More details can be found on their website, [here](#).

I would like to look at fear from the Christian and secular perspective. What exactly is fear? I like the part definition "state of being afraid, uneasiness caused by possible danger". There is a positive aspect of fear. We can be afraid of having an accident, a fear of being robbed, even a fear of death. We are equipped with the survival instincts necessary to respond with fear when we sense danger or feel unsafe. Fear helps protect us. It makes us alert to danger and prepares us to deal with it.



He who has overcome his fears will truly be free.

~ Aristotle

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At the gathering (there were 13 of us assembled in the above-mentioned group) there was in my opinion a comfortable and secure atmosphere where even people who did not know each other would be emboldened to speak out about what was on their mind. The log fire further engendered a pleasant atmosphere.

When the speaker, David, had run through the history of the Vineyard movement he asked for questions whereupon there was a silence, not a deathly silence but a silence nevertheless. This I found slightly embarrassing because of the wealth of information that had been given and the implications that arose from such conversations. Maybe there were no questions to ask because people knew everything anyway but as I understand the human spirit it is like a wind and it is curious and it always wants to know the answers to things in order to advance itself.

I tried to break the ice by suggesting that people were worth shy about asking because they didn't want to fall into the trap of being the only one who doesn't know the answer to a particular question which has been lingering on their mind for some time. There is no such thing as a stupid question so why the silence? Maybe it is a thing of ego that people don't want

to be seen as ignorant. Or maybe it was Just pure and simple laziness or lack of interest in the subject matter. Why did they come?

It is said that the fear of public speaking is a fear greater than death for most people. According to psychiatrists, the fear of public speaking is caused by the fear of ostracism, the fear of standing out, the fear of criticism, the fear of ridicule, the fear of being an outcast. The fear of being different prevents most people from seeking new ways to solve their problems.

I should be making it as part of my mission next Monday, the second out of four planned meetings, to challenge people why they are so silent if indeed that comes to pass. People do not do advance in spirituality automatically but because they examine themselves and see what their strong or weak points are. Silence cannot be explained by English standoffishness.

Fear is a bitch