

Chanelle Haswell

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Option 1.

'Know Fear'

'Fear out of a Life of Love'

The King's Chronicle

~ Chanelle Haswell

Have you ever walked out onto a busy street downtown constantly looking over your shoulder while clutching your bag? Have you ever layed awake at night watching the shadows on the walls? People in our society are suffering from anxieties like these as well as many others. We can ask ourselves why and question what has driven us to live in such a culture of fear but can the answer ever truely be discovered? It seems that realizing why fear grips our lives and why we give it authority, is a journey of individual enlightenment.

Throughout the IS conference we looked at different people's perspectives on fear and I found that we all see it essentially in the same way. Fear carries with it a sense of overwhelming negativity whether its something as simple as the fear of spiders or the far more encompassing fear of death. When we are asked what we are afraid of many people say things like viruses, natural disasters, crime, even the fact that the news is biased but no one ever asks why. We never dig deeper to unearth the real reasons as to why we carry this fear around. Scott Bader-Saye shed some light on this question in his session, "The Culture of Fear and the Ethic of Security". Once again, he brought us back to the Creation story, a story we all know very well, and continued to show us how fear began with the fall of man. It has been apart of humankind ever since those first days when the earth was shaped and formed. Since we cannot

escape this fear we have had to adapt and make it apart of our lives in a positive way and I feel that everyone's eyes were opened through this conference as to how we can accomplish this.

Taking St. Thomas Aquinas's view on fear saying that it is born of love is a more optimistic way of seeing fear. So much emphasis has been placed on eliminating fear from our lives but we dont need to.

According to Scott Bader-Saye there is a right way and a wrong way to fear. Allowing the fear within us to become debilitating that we can no longer live our lives is unhealthy however having fear in us proves that we have love too. If we never fear anything then we never truely love something. The fear of losing a loved one can only be felt and experienced if we truely loved that person first, without this love for them we would never fear losing them. We can also fear rightly when there is a threat of great magnitude against us or a threat that is imminent. Here is a quote that really struck me and explained this concept of fear coming from a place of love, `When we fear rightly, our fears serve to alert us to our loves`.

By knowing where fear comes from and how to handle it better we are open to learn how we can live with this fear and not let it control every aspect of our lives. In another session with Scott Bader-Saye, `Courage and Hospitality`, we looked at the importance of doing good in the world and how we cannot let fear of people stop us from doing what God has called us to do. God wants us to be a people of hospitality, showing kindness and love towards others. A feeling of suspicion and fear of others can cause us to stumble and not fulfill this calling. We see courage as a virtue, it is a habit that inclines us to do good but it is not nessecarily the absense of fear. Scott showed us how it is a mean between recklessness and cowardice, it is the pinnacle and we can fall to either side. With this courage comes a willingness to do good to others even when faced with danger, even when all we see is our fear. We also

saw that having this courage required being surrounded by a community. We cannot be alone and isolated as our fears will overcome us. Being connected with a like-minded community is essential in living our lives, not overcome by fear.

Here at King`s we are blessed to have that community. We all feel fear in our own way but being university students we face similar anxieties. The stresses of school being the main one. Of course, we are all individuals as well so we suffer unique worries but one thing every student at King`s should know is that we are never alone. There is always someone willing and ready to just lend an ear, if thats all you need, as well as offer sound Christian advice to get you through those tough times. A few familier names that are here to help would be our on campus ministers Tim Wood and Julianne Gilchrest as well as our student counsellor, Christina Ferber.

Being part of the bigger picture is of great importance at King`s. God calls us all parts of one body, we are never just our own being floating out there isolated from the rest. We all serve our function and are needed for the whole body to survive this journey. What I have learnt from this conference is that we cannot let the fears we face stop us from serving that function and being part of the whole. I hope that everyone managed to glean as much from this experience as I have.