

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church
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Sermon title: Satan's Limited Domains: Death and Fear of Death, Hebrews 2:14-18

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SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 2:14-15 ¹⁴ *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—* ¹⁵ *and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

INTRODUCTION: I assume everyone here today agrees with the fact Jesus shared in the humanity of people. We talk about it often. I talked about it Wednesday night. It is indeed a mystery, which has been pondered countless times.

Now, we also believe, Satan can also do only what God allows. This statement poses a lot of questions I cannot answer. I cannot answer why God gives Satan such a wide swath of jurisdiction over the things of the world. Think about the Islamic State military group, the Taliban, the Boko Haram, and the scores of other terrorist groups. Why God allows Satan to control these things, we do not know.

Why God allows injustice, poverty, and oppression, I do not know. Part of the answer is because we live in a fallen world, which is in no way perfect. Because of man's sin, God allows a large amount of things to happen, which someday he will no longer tolerate.

I know the skeptic listening to this message or possibly reading my notes at some time in the future, may consider my words trite. However, the truth is man's fallen state has brought judgment upon the world. We call it a fallen world. It is imperfect in many ways. At some point, in his timing, God will redeem it all.

There are five points to my message today. They are:

1. Fear of death is slavery.
2. Jesus did not die for angels.
3. God entered creation to be the ultimate helper.

4. The final authority over death is God.
5. Satan can only do what God allows him to do.

My first point is—

First, FEAR OF DEATH IS SALVERY.

EXPLANATION: Satan has some control over death. The main control he has over death is *fear of death*. Look in Verse 15. Probably no one here is actually looking forward to death. Probably no one here wants to die today. There is too much of the unknown we want to know. We know Jesus is there, and he makes it possible for us to go there. However, our minds have a hard time letting go of things here.

I cannot imagine anything worse than slipping into hell in fear. I cannot imagine anything worse than the final few hours, minutes, or seconds of a person's life captivated in fear. Let me say it this way—Satan loves it when people are afraid. Fear is his food.

I've only been afraid a handful of times.

ILLUSTRATION: As a little boy, I remember the UFO scare of the early 70's. One night, numerous neighbors were in their yards looking at something in the sky. Fear about UFOs seems silly to me now, but as a six or seven-year-old, that fear was real to me!

Another time I was afraid was when I was a teenager. We lived in the country, and we had the windows open one night. My brothers and sisters drifted off to sleep in their beds. I heard my mom and dad talking in their room. My brother and I had bunk beds, and I was on the top bunk near the window. I had a light on reading a book. I thought I heard something. Then, I heard it again. I heard footsteps approaching my window. I can't even begin to tell you what fear I felt. I froze and then slipped out of my room and went to my parents' room and told them someone was outside my window. One of my parents called the police, and my dad got his rifle and went outside and started shooting. Behind our house was a large hay field. The hay had just been baled into those large bales. Whoever this creep was went from bale to bale, until he disappeared into the night.

The most recent time I experienced fear was about two years ago after I had surgery. The pain medicine had several side effects, and fear was one of them. Another side effect was hallucinations. Fear and hallucinations is not a good combination. I hallucinated and saw this really ugly woman in our house. I did a double take, and she was gone. I decided I'd rather live with pain than have chemically induced fear and hallucinations.

APPLICATION: I tell you this because I've never really had many real fears. I know Jesus is my Savior, and I truly believe the future is in God's hands.

Verses 14 and 15 tell us Jesus' death broke the power of Satan who holds death, and Jesus frees those who are slaves to the fear of death.

I believe Satan's number one goal is to make people afraid. Fear leads to lack of trust, doubting, worry, and so on. How awful if anyone here today is living as a slave to the fear of death. How awful that people may live their entire lives as slaves to the fear of death. I've got a Savior who can help you with this fear! My question is, "*Have you been emancipated from the fear of death?*"

Second, JESUS DID NOT DIE FOR ANGELS.

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 2:16 ¹⁶ *For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants.*

EXPLANATION: He is not the Savior of angels. Angels are created different from man. Jesus is the Savior of people. Again, let me repeat myself—it seems I opened the box of confusion when I mentioned angels a few weeks ago. Folks, let me just tell you: The answers to your questions about angels are in your Bible. You're just going to have to search for yourself. Jesus died to redeem people, not angels.

Third, GOD ENTERED CREATION TO BE THE ULTIMATE HELPER.

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 2:17-18 ¹⁷ *For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins*

of the people. ¹⁸ *Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

EXPLANATION: Verse 17 says he was human in every way. As God incarnate, Jesus helped man by becoming one of them. My dad was famous for asking questions as he drove the car. *“I wonder what those cows are thinking. There are so many cars; I wonder where everyone is going.”* The only way to know what a cow is thinking would be to become a cow. The only way to know where every car is going would be to be in each car. The only way to help man was for God to become a man and be tempted in every way man was tempted. The only way for him to remain God was to remain sinless.

APPLICATION: When I am tired, I remember the scripture says Jesus was tired. When I walk, I remember Jesus walked. When I am hungry and thirsty, I remember Jesus ate and drank. When I am tempted, I remember Jesus was tempted. When I sin, I remember Jesus, **STOP!** never sinned but took upon himself my sin. So, while I am reminded of the humanity of Jesus, I am also reminded of his deity.

Now if Jesus took upon himself my sins, died, and rose from the dead, and if he serves as my high priest, can't I give him my fear of death and other fears? Can't I trust him with my worries? Verse 17 says he is our merciful and faithful high priest. Circle those words: merciful and faithful!

Fourth, THE FINAL AUTHORITY OVER DEATH IS GOD. It's in his hands.

SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 32:39

*“See now that I myself am he!
There is no god besides me.
I put to death and I bring to life,
I have wounded and I will heal,
and no one can deliver out of my hand.”*

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 10:28 ²⁸ *Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.*

SCRIPTURE: Revelation 1:18 ¹⁸ *I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.*

Fifth, SATAN CAN ONLY DO WHAT GOD ALLOWS HIM TO DO.

SCRIPTURE: Job 1:12 ¹² *The LORD said to Satan, “Very well, then, everything he has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger.”*
Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

SCRIPTURE: Job 2:6 ⁶ *The LORD said to Satan, “Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life.*

EXPLANATION: So, we see the Bible supports the truth that God is ultimately in control.

I could have approached this scripture from one of several angles, but I chose the angle of fear and the fear of death.

Fear will paralyze you from your hopes and dreams. Fear will keep you from trying something new or from making a new friend. Fear makes you board up the doors and avoid the world yet to be discovered. I’ve read where one of the characteristics of successful people is they do not live in fear. Therefore, they are not afraid of risk the way other people are afraid of risk.

Fear will render you ineffective as a Christian. I mean, think about it, if you have a friend who is not a Christian and this friend knows you well and this friend knows you are a slave to fear, then why would your friend want to become a Christian? What’s to be gained?

Fear will keep you from growing in your faith in Christ. It’s a bit childish to just memorize a few favorite scriptures and let that be all you know of your faith in Christ. But, it is safe isn’t it? *Memorize John 3:16 and a few other scriptures. It’s safe isn’t it.*

ILLUSTRATION: I think about it like this. It’s like dating someone. It’s safe to only know a few select things about each other. But, there comes a time when you

have to make the choice either to risk it all and hope the person you love still loves you when he or she learns more about you.

APPLICATION: When you grow in Christ, you might very well learn something you did not know, either about yourself or about this Savior of ours. There is some risk in this revelation, isn't there?

Fear keeps us from learning more about our Savior.

CONCLUSION: Remember fear is the food of Satan. When you claim victory because of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, then you can cut off Satan's food supply!

If you are not fearful person, perhaps this message isn't really for you. But, I am quite certain there are people here who are slaves to the fear of death and slaves to just plain old fear itself.

I challenge you today to begin claiming your victory over fear.

- Fear of death is compared to slavery.
- Jesus did not die for angels.
- God entered creation to be the ultimate helper.
- The final authority over death is God.
- Satan can only do what God allows him to do.

I want you to listen to what I am about to say, because if you believe it, I am going to ask you to repeat it after me:

*Because of the death, burial, resurrection of Jesus Christ,
I can live a victorious life,
and there is no reason
to live as a slave
to the fear of death.*

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I use the NIV translation of scripture because of its conversational nature. Feel free to go to Bible Gateway and copy and paste whichever translation you want to use. This transcript has been edited to an outline format that improves readability and therefore may not exactly follow the video edition.

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Sincerely, Paul Gunn
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