Baylor Athlete: Personal Journal Entry

Yesterday, I was able to do a ropes course at the Ultimate Training Camp with other Christian athletes. We had to jump from a very small platform onto a bar about 8 feet away from us. The Challenge Course Guide told us that this is a standard high ropes initiative and that we would not get hurt; what we were doing was completely safe. "We had nothing to fear." Yet, as I climbed to the top of that platform, and it was shaking, I found myself 30 feet from the ground. Instantly, everything that the guide told me left my mind and I was inundated with fear.

It was difficult for me to trust the guide just as it is difficult for me sometimes to trust my Creator, Reconciler and Redeemer who radically loves and enables me to love others.

Why was I (and others) filled with so much fear? Why do we fear the unknown, fear being truly known, fear rejection, fear death, fear giving and receiving love, fear trusting God, and fear of failure? Fear gnaws at our very existence which in this 30-foot moment I was reminded.

1 John 4 talks extensively about love. In verse 18, it says there is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. God is the only one who can perfectly love us. Going back to verse 12, it says no one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

The path to address our fears is the practice of love. We don't really know if God is here (in the way that we know we are reading this), we can't prove it, but when we are able to love someone who doesn't deserve it, when we are able to extend grace to someone around us, when we are able to embrace someone who sees the world differently than us, when we are able to give our lives away for the people around us, then, I believe we know and experience the one true, living and loving God. (We know that God is love in how God in Christ's love is lived and practiced as Christians.) Fear starts to dissipate as we respond to God's love in our community's way of doing love. And with this love we become who we were created to be. We are finally free. Free indeed to love God and our neighbor as we love ourselves. Wow! Who would have guessed that standing 30 feet high above the ground would point me to God's love!