

FEAR NOT--ONLY BELIEVE

The Words of the beautiful Hymn 'Only Believe' have been going through my mind the last while. This beautiful Hymn, written many years ago by Paul Raider, has been a great blessing to many. The words of this powerful Hymn, as we shall see, are based on Biblical truth.

“Fear Not, Little Flock, from the cross to the throne,
From death into life He went for His own;
All power in earth, All power above,
Is given to Him for the flock of His love.

CHORUS

Only believe, only believe;
All things are possible, only believe:
Only believe, only believe;
All things are possible, only believe:

Fear not, little flock, He goeth ahead,
Your shepherd selecteth the path you must tread;
The waters of marah He'll sweeten for thee,
He drank all the bitter in Gethsemane.

Fear not, little flock, whatever your lot,
He enters all rooms, 'the doors being shut'
He never forsakes; He never is gone,
So count on His presence in darkness and dawn.”

“Only believe, only believe, all things are possible, Only believe...”

Jesus said in Luke 12:32: “Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom,” Jesus also said in Luke 8:50, “Fear not; believe only...” In Romans 1:17 we read, “The just shall live by faith”. Compare: Habakkuk 2:4; Galatians 3:11; and Hebrews 10:39

We were justified by faith in Christ's finished work on our behalf at Calvary, and as believers in Christ we are exhorted to continue to live and walk by faith. We must guard against fear and unbelief. Compare Hebrews Chapter 11 & Hebrews 12:1-3. In Hebrews 11:6 we read, “But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he who comes to God must believe that He is; and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him”. In Hebrews 12:1-3 we are exhorted to “lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us, and let us run with patience (endurance) the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith”. The enemy of our soul uses fears which lead to unbelief to hinder us in our spiritual progress. These must be laid aside.

There are however two kinds of fear spoken about in the Bible; the one is a HEALTHY FEAR, the other HARMFUL.

HEALTHY FEAR:

Psalm 34:8-11: “Oh taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him. Oh fear the LORD, you his saints! There is no want (lack) to those who fear Him.Come you children listen to me; I will teach you of the fear of the LORD”:

Psalm 25:12 and 14: “Who is the man that fears the LORD? Him shall He teach the way He chooses”...The Secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him and He will show them His covenant”.

Hebrews 12:28: “.Let us have grace by which we may serve God acceptably With reverence and godly fear”.

Proverbs 1:7; “The Fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Proverbs 1:10: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One understands.”

Proverbs 14:26-27: “In the Fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, and his children will have a place of refuge.

The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to turn one away from the snares of death”.

Job 28:28: “And to man He said, ‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.’

Acts 5:11 “So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

The passages of Scripture listed above and many others speak of a healthy and often lacking kind of fear.

This fear speaks of a reverent trust in the Lord and His Word, and a respect for His presence and His holiness which will result in a departing from evil and walking in faith in a way which is pleasing in the sight of God. We need this kind of healthy fear in our hearts & in the church today.

In the natural realm, there is a healthy fear which helps protect us from harm and danger: so also in the spiritual realm; 'the fear of the Lord' will help guard and protect us against the pitfalls and snares of the enemy, and cause us to walk pleasing in Gods sight.

HARMFUL FEAR:

In both Old and New Testaments there are many examples of Harmful fear:

In Numbers Chapters 13 & 14 (compare Deuteronomy 1:21-32) we have an example of how fear led to unbelief and rebellion resulting in Israel failing to enter the promised land and becoming wilderness wanderers for 40 years. Fear and unbelief can also hinder us today from entering into the abundant life in Christ (John 10:10) also described as our 'spiritual rest in Christ'. "There remains therefore a 'rest' for the people of God...let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest..."Hebrews 4:9-11.

Forty years later the Nation of Israel were once again at the border of the Promised Land (the land of Canaan); The LORD exhorted Joshua who was now the new leader; "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go". Joshua 1:9; Compare Joshua 1:1-11.

Leaders today must also guard again discouragement and fear. Our enemy Satan still uses these same tactics to try to frustrate and hinder God's servants in the work of the Lord. In Isaiah 41:10 we read, "Fear not for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand".

After Elijah the Prophet had been used by God in such a mighty way, (as recorded in First Kings Chapters 17 & 18), we then see him fleeing for his life and wanting to die, because he allowed the enemy to put fear in his mind and heart. But the Lord ministered to His discouraged servant in an amazing way encouraging and reassuring him and then continuing to use him in His service for a further period of time. Read 1 Kings Chapter 19.

May the Lord also encourage all who read this message, and may renewed faith and vision fill your heart so that you may arise and go forward into the purpose and plan of God for your life!

When rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem after the return of the exiles, the leaders were exhorted to not be afraid. Compare Haggai 2:1-5; Compare the Books of Ezra and Zachariah. The enemy tried to use fear tactics to frustrate and hinder the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem, but the Prophets Haggai and Zachariah encouraged them to be strong, and guard against fear. May God raise up today many like Haggai and Zechariah who will be true encouragers! There seem to be those today who discourage rather than encourage. In Acts 4:36 we read of a man called Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), who had a true ministry of encouragement; May we today also by Gods grace, help to minister faith and encouragement, rather than fear and discouragement.

Then later when Nehemiah and others working with him were rebuilding the broken down walls of Jerusalem, their enemies again tried to put fear into their hearts and minds, and thus hinder and prevent the rebuilding of the walls. Compare Nehemiah Chapters 4 & 6; But Nehemiah, who was a man of prayer, went to the Lord in prayer and the Lord encouraged them and gave them great victory and the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt and the Lord also sent a time of spiritual revival in Jerusalem among the people. Compare Nehemiah Chapters 8 & 9. We today also must guard against fear and discouragement as we work together with the Lord in His Work. He promised "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:20. In 1 Corinthians 15:58 we read; "Therefore my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord".

The Psalmist said in Psalm 34:4: "I sought the LORD and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears". I can certainly relate to this Psalm. In 1962 I was lying in a hospital bed in Zambia very sick with a disease called bilharzias near death. In my weakened condition the enemy tried to attack me with fear. But the Lord encouraged me with this Psalm as well as with Isaiah 41:10 and other Scriptures, and He also spoke to intercessors to pray for me. The Lord ministered faith and courage to my heart, dispelling fear, and touched my body, and He raised me up again! I do give Him all the Glory. He will do the same for you if you are struggling with fear. As you "Look to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith," and meditate on His promises in His Word, fear will leave and faith will once again fill your heart. He will minister to you at your point of need for He who promised is faithful. Hebrews 10:2 &. Hebrews 12:1-3;

1 John 3:18-19: "There is no fear in love: But perfect love casts out fear. Because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us". As you allow the Holy Spirit to fill your heart with the love of God, fear will have to leave. Compare Romans 5:5;

The Apostle Paul said in 2 Timothy 1:7, "For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind". Paul also said in Romans 8:15 "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again the fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out 'Abba Father'"

In 1 John 4:18: we read that fear involves torment. Many people are tormented with this harmful kind of fear. This type of fear hovers over them like a dark cloud. This type of unhealthy tormenting fear is not from God, but from the enemy of our souls.

Jesus said that in the last days "men's hearts will fail them for fear" (Luke 21:26): but as Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we should be strong in faith. We read in Psalm 46:1-3: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the sea; though the waters roar and be troubled." Read also Psalm 91

During Jesus' earthly ministry there were many who saw His miracles and heard His word, but because of the fear of man they did not openly speak of Him or confess Him. Compare John 7:13 - John 9:22 - But the Bible says in Proverbs 29:25 "the fear of man brings a snare. But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe". The Bible clearly teaches us that we are to believe with our hearts and confess with our mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord Romans 10:9-10

We need to hear again the words spoken by the Angels that first Christmas Eve "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:10-11. The Shepherds who received this message and came to the Christ Child believed and then they made known abroad the message concerning the Christ Child. Verse 2:17 We also need to share with others about Jesus and His great Salvation.

In John 20:19-21 we read that the disciples of Jesus had gathered behind closed doors for 'fear of the Jews' when the Resurrected Lord Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, 'Peace be to you!' When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, 'Peace to you'; As the Father has sent me, I also send you;' Then He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit..." The Resurrected Lord Jesus continued to appear to them and speak to them of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God (Acts 1:1-8) and after our Lords ascension to the right hand of the Father, he shed forth upon His praying disciples on the Day of Pentecost the promise of the Holy Spirit, filling them with spiritual power and boldness; All their fears were gone. Read Acts Chapter 2 . They became bold witnesses for their Lord and spread the good news about Jesus throughout Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria and then to their entire known world. Acts 1:8; Acts 4:31; Acts 17:6. Colossians 1:5-6.

Is your mind and heart tormented by fear? The same living Lord Jesus who spoke peace to the troubles disciples, speaks peace to you today saying, "Peace be to you!"

In Revelation Chapter 1 we read of the amazing vision that John received of the living glorified Lord Jesus Christ while he was exiled on the Island called Patmos, for the Word of God. In Revelation 1:17-18 The Lord Jesus "Laid His right Hand on John" saying to him, "Do not be afraid: I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the Keys of Hades and of Death".

As we go forward into the New Year, may we all be encouraged to 'fix our eyes on Jesus the author and finisher of our faith'; May we once again hear His reassuring words, "Fear Not little Flock; It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom" Luke 12:32; " Fear Not ..Only Believe." Luke 8:50

"I'm free the fears of tomorrow;
I'm free from the guilt of the past;
I've traded my shackles for a glorious crown;
I am free praise the Lord, free at last".

Fear not, believe only,
GOD BLESS

Lloyd Schuetz