

Hello Orange Cove Church Family & Friends of Orange Cove,

Pastor's Weekly Letter: December 1, 2016 – "Fearless Focus"

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Happy Thursday, December 1, 2016. Our weeks are flying by. Soon, we will be entering 2017, and once again wondering what the year will hold for us. We are living in an every changing world and we need to be alert and aware of how those changes impact each of us in both the short and long terms.

This Week's Devotional – "Fearless Focus"

If a thief held you at gunpoint, how would you want to be freed from the danger you were in? Let's say you screamed and a person wielding a knife showed up, would you be relieved? Of course not! Let's say that after you scream, I fully equipped S.W.A.T team arrived dressed in body armor and carrying high-powered automatic weapons. Would you then feel relieved? Of course you would. When armored vehicles, tanks and heavy-duty weaponry confronts a handgun, there is no contest, right?

So what do you and I focus on when we are held at gunpoint by the devil? Do we focus on the guy coming to help us who has a knife, or do we focus on the fully equipped S.W.A.T. team? Human help is like the guy showing up with a knife. A knife evokes fear when a person is unarmed, but when a person has a gun, like the devil, we need the "big guns," to save us.

The bible repeats the words, "fear not," over and over. The bible tells us that in James 4:7 that if we resist the devil, he will flee from us. How do we resist him? We don't resist him by called a knife-wielding defender. No, we resist Him by focusing on the Divine S.W.A.T team and calling them to come to our defense. Notice all the scriptures just in the book of Isaiah and Daniel that tell us not to fear:

[Isaiah 41:10](#) - **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.'

[Isaiah 41:13](#) - For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, Saying to you, '**Fear not**, I will help you.'

[Isaiah 41:14](#) - "**Fear not**, you worm Jacob, You men of Israel! I will help you," says the Lord And your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

[Isaiah 43:1](#) - But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "**Fear not**, for I have redeemed you; I have called *you* by your name; You *are* Mine.

[Isaiah 43:5](#) - **Fear not**, for I *am* with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, And gather you from the west;

[Isaiah 44:2](#) - Thus says the Lord who made you And formed you from the womb, *who* will help you: '**Fear not**, O Jacob My servant; And you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.

[Daniel 10:19](#) - And he said, "O man greatly beloved, **fear not!** Peace *be* to you; be strong, yes, be strong!" So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."

When do we fear? We fear when we perceive the threat to be bigger than our protection, right? Do we fear if a teacup Poodle runs out yapping at us? No, of course not. We know we can protect ourselves from a teacup Poodle. But, when a Pit-bull runs out to get us, do we fear? Of course we do. We aren't sure if we can protect ourselves from a Pit-bull. So, shouldn't we focus on the powerful protection God has promised to us? Shouldn't we look how believers survived in the past through the protection God gave to them.

How do you feel when you read the story of Daniel's three friends who stood up against the idolatrous decree of Nebuchadnezzar? They faced certain death, but yet they stuck to their principles. In the end, the king tried to execute them, but instead, the flaming furnace did not even singe a hair on their bodies. How do you feel when you read how God delivered the Israelites from the Egyptian army that was threatening to destroy them? God opened up the Red Sea so the Israelites could escape. How do you feel when you read how God shut the mouths of the lions when Daniel was thrown into the lion's den?

You see what happens when you focus on God's mighty works of protecting and saving people in the past. It gives you boldness and confidence that He can protect and save you today, now, no matter what you are facing.

Orange Cove Seventh-day Adventist Church
Pastor André Van Heerden