

Hello Orange Cove Church Family & Friends of Orange Cove,

Pastor's Weekly Letter: March 3, 2016 – "Fear Not"

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Happy Thursday, March 3, 2016. We look forward to seeing you at church this coming Sabbath. Can you think of one Sabbath when you made it a priority to attend church that God didn't bless you in some way? God loves it when His people come together to worship and give thanks to Him.

This Week's Devotional – "Fear Not"

Of what, or who, are you afraid? From a young age, we grow up with fear—fear of the dark, fear of heights, fear of small spaces, fear of thunder, or fear of crowds. What is fear and where does it come from? The definition of fear according to www.dictionary.com is:

"A distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, evil, pain, etc., whether the threat is real or imagined; the feeling or condition of being afraid." Where did fear come from? If we turn to Genesis 3:6-10 we can see where fear came from:

⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. ⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" ¹⁰ So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

Fear entered when man fell into sin. Before sin was present in the perfect, newly created world, there was no fear. When man became separated from His Creator, he was afraid. Of what was man afraid? Of what are we afraid? Think about it—there are deep, underlying "root-fears," and there are also "surface-fears," which are connected to the root-fears. For example, the fear of death is a root-fear. It is one of the deep, underlying foundational fears that most of us have. The fear of sickness, or the fear of flying, is more toward the surface, but they are both connected to the root-fear of death. In the same way the fear of loneliness and isolation is a root-fear. The fear of rejection, or the fear of abandonment, is more toward the surface, but they are both connected to the root-fear of loneliness or being isolated.

Whether the fears are root-fears, or whether they are surface-fears, they are still fears that debilitate and disrupt our peace and joy. Jesus specifically told His followers to have no fear. In *John 14:27*, Jesus says, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." If we study both root and surface fears, we can see how Jesus provided the antidotes to them all. Could another one of root-fears be the fear of being without? Not having a home, not having clothes, not having food to eat? Let's look at the root-fears and how Jesus provided the antidotes:

Root-Fear	Jesus' Antidote
The fear of death	John 10:27 – "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand."

The fear of loneliness and isolation	Matthew 28:20 – “And lo, I am with you always, <i>even</i> to the end of the age.”
The fear of not having/loss	Matthew 6:8; 31-33 – “For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him; Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

When we trust God implicitly, we will not fear anything or anyone. We will be confident that God has everything we need for life and godliness. The apostle Paul says in Philippians 4:6,7 – “*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*” When we are afraid, we must immediately flee to the Word of God and accept the antidotes to fear that God has provided so we can be released from fear and experience peace.

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