

Message Extras

a little something extra to keep you connected to Jesus this week

Message Extras accompany the [weekly message](#).

Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious hand. (Isaiah 41:10)

Do not be afraid is a command the Lord gives His children through all generations. God said to Abraham, "Do not be afraid, I am your shield." To Abraham's son Isaac, the Lord said, "Do not be afraid, for I am with you." God spoke to Isaac's son, Jacob, whom He had given a new name, Israel, saying, "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you and your descendants a great nation there. I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring your people up again."

The nation of Israel became very great in the land of Egypt, and the Pharaoh became afraid of their size and strength, and he made them slaves of Egypt. Four hundred years after this, the people of Israel called out to God—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—and asked God to send a deliverer. And, God sent them Moses. God delivered His people, Israel, and Moses led them out of Egypt. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened against God and His people, and Pharaoh sent his army to capture Israel.

The army of Egypt assembled around the nation of Israel at the Red Sea, and the people of Israel were very afraid. Moses said to them:

Do not be afraid! Take your stand, be firm and confident and undismayed, and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today; for those Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you, while you only need to keep silent and remain calm. (Exodus 14:13-14)

Remain calm, and do not be afraid. This command is given again and again throughout the Word of God to the people of God, to those called by His Name.

Biblical scholars estimate that there were about 300 to 400 years between when Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt to when David became King of Israel. As King, David knew the history of Israel. In Psalm 1, David writes "blessed is the one who meditates on the Word of God day and night." The Word of God David is referring to here includes the writings of Moses inspired by God.

David understood the Lord God Almighty had commanded generation after generation to fear not. David knew of the salvation of the Lord that was given to the nation of Israel at the Red Sea. These were more than Bible Stories to King David. They were the history of Israel... David's history. And, they are the living Word of God. From this depth of knowledge, understanding, and his own relationship with the Almighty, David wrote, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" David's confidence was in his salvation, and he knew beyond a shadow of a doubt his salvation was in and through God Almighty.

Now fast forward about 1,000 years. Jesus has been crucified and placed in a tomb and the tomb has been sealed. The day after the Sabbath, the third day, Mary Magdalene and another woman named Mary went to the tomb. When they arrive at the tomb, they find the tomb empty, and they meet an angel sitting on the stone which has been rolled away. "The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.' So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.'" (Matthew 28:5-10)

The first words of Jesus after rising from the dead are, "Hello" and "Do not be afraid." Are you starting to see and understand, God does not want us to be afraid?

Now fast forward about 30 years. A man named Paul is writing a letter to a young preacher named Timothy and He writes something to the effect of... "Timothy, remember who you are! You have a sincere faith in God that was passed down to you from generation to generation. Now fan into flames the gift of God on your life. God has not given you a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control. Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord. Remember, Jesus has abolished death and in Him, we have salvation and eternal life. Therefore, I am not ashamed, for I know the one I believe in, and I am convinced that He will keep me until He calls me home to live with Him forever!"

Whether it is Moses saying, "Stay calm, and do not be afraid," or David saying, "The Lord is the stronghold of my life, I will not be afraid," or Paul saying, "God has not given us a spirit of fear," or Jesus saying, "Do not be afraid," again and again and again, we are commanded, **DO NOT BE AFRAID!**

Do not be afraid is a command, not a suggestion. We are commanded to live life free of fear. And the key to obeying this command is living every moment of every day in the power of the One who gives the command. As it is written, "Salvation is found in no one

else [only in Jesus], for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) Jesus gives the command, do not be afraid, and Jesus gives the power to obey the command.

- Read Psalm 27: 1-2 again. What encouragement can you take from the words of David about overcoming fear?
- When you read throughout the Word of God, that God has instructed us, "do not be afraid" – what is your response? What fears are present in your life that you need to stay calm and give to God Almighty?
- Personal Reflection / Small Group Discussion:
 - Read Isaiah 41:10. We are given the command "do not be afraid" with five promises from God:
 - I am with you
 - I am your God
 - I will strengthen you
 - I will help you
 - I will uphold you with my victorious hand
 - If you are struggling with fear, which of these promises do you need to claim daily to overcome fear in the Power of God?

