

“Go Now in Peace”

By Al Reid

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Readings:

Psalm 46

Galatians 5:22-23

I find most days I am stressed by all that is going on in the world. It seems like things are getting worse every day. I can feel it in my gut. The world is in a mess! How am I supposed to enjoy life with so much depressing news every day?

I had an interesting reaction a few Sundays ago. We were having technical problems with the sound equipment that morning. I was not in a good mood. I had already had a sleepless night from worries that had come to the surface. I really didn't want to be in Church that day. I tried to ignore what was going on and just tune out the world. I was doing pretty well until we got to the final hymn: “Go Now in Peace”. It hit me what I needed to do.

It really spoke to me that morning. I finally realized what Shaun Venasse has known all along. We all know how much Shaun loves that hymn. This was Shaun's message to me and to all of us. Let us take a closer look at the words.

Go now in peace, never be afraid
In the Bible, "peace" goes beyond the absence of conflict to mean wholeness, completeness, and well-being, as expressed by the Hebrew word shalom. This concept includes internal harmony, soundness of mind and spirit, and right relationships with others and with God. (1)

The second part: "Never be afraid". Isn't worry just one type of fear. When we tune out the world aren't we just trying to escape the fears that surround us?

Isaiah 41:10 (MSG – helps us to hear things in a new way)

Don't panic. I'm with you.

There's no need to fear for I'm your God.

I'll give you strength. I'll help you.

I'll hold you steady, keep a firm grip on you.
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day
Well that means 24/7. Every day, every hour, every
minute. God never
tunes you out. He is there through thick and thin.
He celebrates the good
days and cries with you when you are suffering. He
is there in your darkest
moments. He is there even when you tune him
out!

1

Joshua 1:9 (NIVR)

Here is what I am commanding you to do. Be strong
and brave. Do not be
afraid. Do not lose hope. I am the Lord your God. I
will be with you
everywhere you go."

Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true
Faith in God is the belief, trust, and confidence in
God's existence, character,
and promises, often accompanied by a
commitment to live by His teachings
and the actions that follow from that trust. It goes
beyond simply believing
God exists, as even demons believe in His
existence, and instead involves a

life-changing reliance and commitment to God as revealed in the Bible.

(2)

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Know God will guide you in all you do.

God's guidance is the concept that God actively directs and influences human lives, but generally involves divine wisdom, leading individuals through circumstances, and offering direction through scripture and spiritual means. It is often found through divine revelation, prayer, circumstances, other people or scripture. (3)

Proverbs 3:5-6 (Msg)

Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track. Go now in love, and show you believe.

We must love others as Jesus did, demonstrate active compassion by practicing kindness, forgiveness, and generosity, especially towards those in need or those who have wronged you. This unconditional love is rooted in seeing others as valuable creations of God. It requires a selfless, humble attitude of putting others first and serving them through both small, daily acts of care and larger acts of service that push you out of your comfort zone.

(4)

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (Msg)

Love never gives up.

Love cares more for others than for self.

Love doesn't want what it doesn't have.

Love doesn't strut,

Doesn't have a swelled head,

Doesn't force itself on others,

Isn't always "me first,"

Doesn't fly off the handle,

Doesn't keep score of the sins of others,

Doesn't revel when others grovel,

Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,
Puts up with anything,
Trusts God always,
Always looks for the best,
Never looks back,
But keeps going to the end.

Reach out to others so all the world can see.

How do we do that?

Random acts of kindness.

Be a good neighbour.

Value every person you meet.

Helping strangers.

Love your enemies?!

(How!?)

To love your enemies, practice compassion by seeking to understand them, offering kindness and good deeds, and praying for their well-being rather than returning evil with evil. You can begin by practicing loving-kindness, meditation, acknowledging your own negative emotions and striving to find common ground, or even finding common goals to work toward, all while not returning hatred with hatred. (5)

Matthew 7:12 (Amp)

So then, in everything treat others the same way
you want them to treat
you, for this is [the essence of] the Law and the
[writings of the] Prophets.

God will be watching from above.

Psalm 121:7-8 (Msg)

God guards you from every evil,
he guards your very life.

He guards you when you leave and when you
return,

he guards you now, he guards you always.

Psalm 139:1-6 (Msg)

Lord, you have seen what is in my heart.

You know all about me.

You know when I sit down and when I get up.

You know what I'm thinking even though you are
far away.

You know when I go out to work and when I come
back home.

You know exactly how I live.

Lord, even before I speak a word, you know all
about it.

You are all around me, behind me and in front of
me.

You hold me safe in your hand.

I'm amazed at how well you know me.
It's more than I can understand.
Go now in peace, in faith and in love.
So that is the key in a nutshell!
Feel the Peace of Christ, Trust in Him to guide your
every step and share
God's love with everyone you meet.
"Look around and be distressed.
Look within and be depressed.
Look at Jesus and be at rest." (6)
Prayer (Together):
Lord, we thank You for being with us in all
circumstances. Even though we
don't know the reason for those circumstances we
trust and believe that You
do have a plan for us. During difficult times provide
us with the comfort,
strength and wisdom we need along with the peace
that passes all
understanding. In the precious name of Jesus.

AMEN

Footnotes:

- (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) these definitions were AI
generated using Gemini
(6) a quote from Corrie Ten Boom