



FAITH VS. FEAR

This morning I was pondering how our faith can be tested in times of crisis. My husband, Ray, and I were talking about fear this morning. We can fear so many things! Especially the fear of the unknown. We also fear greatly when we don't feel like we're in control. Ray thinks that our greatest primeval adamic fear – the root wherein satan can hold many of us in bondage – is the fear of death. And all of us right now (as we face COVID-19) are facing the fear of sickness and death.

I was personally confronted with this fear in June of 2017 when I was diagnosed with Melanoma. By God's grace, mine was not as aggressive as the Melanoma my husband would have removed in 2018. But, my every 6-month skin check brings back that little reminder that it could rise up again. But God gave me a great gift in 2017 -- From Psalm 39:

“Lord, make me to know my end and what is the extent of my days; let me know how transient I am.
Behold, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my lifetime as nothing in Your sight;
Surely every man at his best is a mere breath...And now, Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in You...”

I learned that I am never in control of my life, but God is always in control. I learned that every day He gives to us is a gift to give right back to HIM. He still has me here on this earth to live for and to serve HIM. When He decides my time is done, it's time for me to go to HIM!!! There is great peace and joy in that!

Ray and I were both confronted with the fear of death last July when Ray was diagnosed with Stage IV Metastasized Melanoma in his lungs. We have been walking the path of unknowns ever since... His aggressive Melanoma that he had [and that God graciously removed via immunotherapy] could rise up again at anytime and take over quickly. But, we do not fear. The truth is that death could happen to any of us at any time.

There is only one way to conquer fear and that is to place our absolute faith and trust in our Risen, Glorified, Omnipotent, Immutable, Omniscient, Eternal, Infinite, Risen Christ!!! If we have truly been born from above, we do not fear death!!! Hebrews 2:14-15 tells us that JESUS rendered powerless satan who had the power of death so that HE might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. **For the true Christian, there is no fear in death.**

AND – there is no fear in life!!!

Every day as God's adopted sons and daughters, we trust HIS Plan, HIS Purposes, HIS Power, HIS Promises for each and every day. In these days of CoronaVirus, do we follow good practices to stop the spread of the virus? Absolutely!!! But, at the same time – the reality exists that we may still get the virus. And as God's people, if we get the virus, we can trust our Sovereign God to work it out for eternal good! Abel was murdered; Joseph was falsely accused and suffered in prison; Isaiah and Jeremiah were persecuted; Daniel was thrown in the Lion's Den; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were thrown in the fiery furnace; Stephen was stoned; the Apostle James was martyred; Paul suffered MUCH for Christ's Name; and so on... **In the words of Job: Though HE slay me, yet will I praise HIM.**

We trust HIM. HE has given us the Holy Spirit Helper to help us know HIS Word, trust HIS Word, and live in accordance with HIS Word. **Will GOD test our faith so that we can see how we are doing in this life of faith?** You betcha!!! Testings are for our good and for HIS sanctifying work in our lives.

So, our prayer for believers in Christ during these strange, faith-shaking days is that we would all see the glory and the love of our great GOD and KING and that we would TRUST HIM – no matter what comes our way; no matter what season of life; no matter where we are... **LORD, Grant us, according to the riches of Your glory, to be strengthened with power through Your Spirit in our inner man. We ask this so that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith! We ask that we would be rooted and grounded in Your love and that you would grant us the ability to comprehend with all fellow believers what is the breadth and length and height and depth of your great love...that we would KNOW in our inner man the infinite, eternal love of Christ which surpasses our earthly knowledge so that we may be filled up to all the fullness of GOD – bearing MUCH FRUIT – even in times of crisis and turmoil – to the glory of Your Great Name. And, Lord, we thank You that You are able to do far more abundantly and beyond anything we can ask or think! It is Your power at work within us – help us to remember that – for our desire is that our lives bring You great glory so that the world may know that You are alive; You are real; You are able; You are worthy; You are GOD! Amen.** (Ephesians 3:13-21; John 15:5)

Keep running the race of faith, dear ones, with eyes fixed on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of faith (Hebrews 12:1-3).



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