

The Bulwark

FEBRUARY 25, 2024

“...RIGHTEOUS ARE AS BOLD AS A LION”

Have you ever noticed how fear is contagious? Parents can and do playfully scare their children. This being true even when the children have friends come to visit. The children know full and well one or both of the parents will playfully scare them and when it comes the visiting friend shrieks and runs off. But so do the children of the house, even though they knew it was only their parent.



Most people are easily influenced with respect to fear, as evidenced by the example noted above. While it is one thing to see it in children, it is something quite different when demonstrated in adults. Consider what is seen with respect to the twelve men that Moses sent to Canaan to spy out the land. Only Joshua and Caleb were unafraid, while the other ten expressed tremendous fear, which influenced greatly the children of Israel (see Numbers 14:1-9).

Why were Joshua and Caleb unafraid? The answer is found in the words spoken by Joshua, *“The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into the land and give it to us, a land which flows milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord nor fear the people of the land...”* (Numbers 14:7-9). Both Joshua and Caleb put their trust in God and therein found confidence and learned to overcome fear. No-

vice what Solomon penned in Proverbs 29:25 for it harmonizes so beautifully with what is seen in these two men. *“The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trust in the Lord is safe.”*

A fearful mind is a danger, it doesn't offer much in a positive vein. In fact it thwarts any viable spiritual growth. Notice the appeal seen in Joshua chapter one and verses seven and eight.

Make note that while the word “fear” isn't found, the word “courageous” is. *“Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. This book of law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your prosperous, and then you will have success.”*

Now factor in what is found in verse nine of Joshua, chapter one. *“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”* Unfazed by the fear and trepidation of others, Joshua and Caleb stood resolute. Centuries later Solomon would pen in Proverbs 28:1, *“The wicked flee though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion.”*,

which seems to capture to their mind set.

It is said that the phrase “fear not” is found 365 times in the Bible (one for each day of the year). Even if that is an “ambitious” number, as the actual number depends on which Hebrew and Greek words used, as there are a number of close synonyms in each language. One such passage is found in Psalms 46:1-2. *“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the world should change...”*

“For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.” (2Timothy 1:7) (wbe)

A Publication of the Winnetka Ave. Church of Christ

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