



THE VOICE OF EVANGELISM INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

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PEACE IN THE MIDST OF THE STORM

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We want to take our Scripture text today from **John 14:27**, "**Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled (or agitated), neither let it be afraid (or timid).**" When Jesus used the word *peace*, He was not speaking of any ordinary peace He was speaking of His personal peace. The word *peace* here in the Greek is #1515 *I-ray-nay* (Strong's). It means a literal spiritual and physical quietness coupled with rest. Jesus Christ is the Prince or Ruler of Peace, according to **Isaiah 9:6**, "**And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.**"

At this present time, many Christians are enamored and caught up within a vortex of fear. I am saddened by my fellow Christians who are fearful as this virus permeates the world. Having been raised by my grandparents, I am an eyewitness to their testimonies. From the Spanish flu in 1918 to the Gulf War of 1991 God was faithful to them. For instance, my grandmother told me of a time during the Great Depression when God was faithful. While working in the garden and speaking with the Lord how she and granddad needed a new car. In the natural, it was virtually impossible to purchase one. She said the Lord spoke to her and said "I will help you with a new car on one condition: you must help others with a ride to church."

She quickly conveyed that word to my granddad and they soon cleaned up and went to town and bought a brand new 1934 Chevrolet. I remember as a young lad how every time we went to church, they would pick up others, such as widows like Sister Young and Sister

McCaskill and brought them to church. They never ceased to pick-up those who needed a ride to church until the early 1980's

For over fifty years, they helped so many, including widows, get to the house of God. What was seemingly impossible during the Great Depression was made possible through Jehovah because they had His peace and assurance. Tragically, the modern church lacks that kind of faith today. The world is incapable of giving the children of God any peace whatsoever though they search for it there. Today, we have Peace Societies and Temples of Peace pushing pacifism while nations are arming themselves to the teeth and preparing for a third world war.

The world crucified Christ Jesus who came to bring peace, but now the world talks of creating "*World Peace.*" Jesus admonished us: "Be not afraid." Christ was encouraging every believer to never allow the spirit of fear to permeate our hearts during any time of trouble. Further, Jesus said, in **Revelation 21:8**, "**But the fearful (the timid), and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.**" The word *fearful* in **2nd Timothy 1:7** means the same concerning those who are timid or afraid. We all know fear does not come from the Lord. Thus, we read in **2nd Timothy 1:7**, "**For God hath not given us the spirit of fear (or *timidity*); but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.**" This Scripture verse is clear;

fear does not come from God. So then where does fear come from? Fear comes from Satan and purveyed by his cohorts and minions. Fear is powerful and tormenting; it controls those in its grip.

One of the Greek words for fear is #5401 *Phobos* (Strong's), from which we get the word "*phobia.*" Sometimes those who possess fear will seek medical help through a psychologist or psychiatrist. The doctor may determine the individual to have a phobia or anxiety. Many times the doctor may attempt to chemically treat the fear or anxiety with pharmaceuticals. Other times, those who suffer with fear, turn to illicit drugs and / or alcohol.

Let me encourage everyone to put your faith in Jesus Christ and not turn to alcohol or drugs to ameliorate the pain, fear, or anxiety you may have within your mind. Remember that Jesus is the Prince of Peace and only He can grant absolute peace. The apostle John declared in **1st John 4:18**, "**There is no fear (or *timidity*) in love; but perfect (completed) love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect (or completed) in love.**" Let me assure you, the love of God is unconditional. Even though man is God's highest form of creation, man remains terribly inept. One of the greatest traits within our humanity is the ability to reason. We all have the ability to ruminate or contemplate any situation if we so choose. Regretfully, most people are reactionary rather than thinking through something and responding methodically. Such in the case as we navigate this pandemic. At this time there is much talk of poverty and

suicide during this economic slowdown. Fear abounds. As a result, alcohol sales are nearing a 100% increase, and only God knows the increase of opioids and other drugs. Such substances can never answer life's problems.

Just as a broken watch must be returned to the jeweler, and a broken arm to the physician, our lives must return unto the Lord who made us. No one doubts the reality of this economic downturn, nor the hardship that we are now facing. However, I do believe if we will turn to the Lord and put our faith in Him, He will help us in this particular hour of need.

As always, my greatest concern is the need for national repentance. The Word of God clearly states, if we will turn from our wicked ways (speaking to the church-- the body of Christ), He will forgive our sins and heal our land (2 Chronicles 7:14). Though we wish it were otherwise, sometimes it takes great tragedy to bring repentance. Because of our Lord's great love, He will get our attention just like He did Moses through the burning bush.

Jehovah truly has a way of getting our undivided attention. It is tragic that it takes calamity and sorrow for most people to turn to the Lord. After 9/11, churches exploded in attendance; even our small ministry doubled in the following months. However, soon afterwards it went back to normal. Once fear passed, so did people's passion for the Lord. It has been nearly 19 years since 9/11 and we now have another generation. Regretfully, this new generation of young people knows very little about true repentance and an outpouring of the Holy Ghost.

Our Lord is abounding in grace and mercy; His plans are always for redemption. Therefore, I am anticipating a divine move of God very shortly. There will never be a generation who will not know the mercy of God if a remnant possesses any measure of fear toward Him. We

read in *Psalms 103:17*, "***But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children.***" The key phrase is "*them that fear him.*" If anyone fears Him, He will grant them (and their children) mercy.

Lately I have heard much negative chatter and clamor concerning a plethora of subjects. There are those who have declared the president is no longer in power because he spoke several times from inside the White House at a podium which did not have the presidential seal upon it. However, a few days later he was outside in the Rose Garden, and he spoke with the presidential seal on his podium. While we do not know why this is true, it cannot be our focus.

We have also witnessed as the fear mongers declare that a vaccine may very well be the mark of the beast. I know today's vaccines are corrupt: however, I can assure you that no one will take the mark of the beast and not understand what they are doing. The God we serve would never seek to snare His children, as well as sinners, in a duplicitous manner and then declare "*gotcha!*" The devil is the snare and fowler-- not Jehovah?

While we hear of presidential seals and vaccines, a greater truth being that the fear mongers do not discuss, is the act of worship. We read in *Revelation 14:9-10*, "***And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.***" Jehovah will not only use preachers to warn men; He will also use angels to give divine warning concerning the mark of the beast!

One of the solemn truths about the mark of the beast is that they who take the mark worship the beast. Let us look at Revelation 13:15, "And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast,

that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." Let me assure you that no vaccine has nothing to do with worship.

In the third chapter of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar demanded everyone to worship an image made in his likeness. The Babylonian commandment was certain; all who did not worship the image you will be killed. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego did not walk blindly into that pagan worship service. Though they knew the truth that they might die, they would not bow down or worship that false idol; they worshipped only the true God. Since they would not bow down, they were sentenced to die. They were condemned to death in a fiery furnace.

God was with them. Suddenly, in the midst of the fiery furnace, a fourth man appeared. These young men, who had cast their lot with the God of Abraham, were spared and their faith caused even the king to follow the Lord. Nebuchadnezzar himself declared, "***Did not we cast three men bound in the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. (Daniel 3:24-25).***"

Hallelujah, so will it be with the redeemed of the Lord in this hour. We can have perfect peace. Don't allow the fear mongers to distract you. The Holy Ghost is with us. No matter what struggles we may face, He is the fourth man in the fire.

As always we thank you for your love, prayers, and your financial support. It is my prayer that in the very near future we can schedule another revival meeting because I do believe there is a fresh move of the Holy Ghost on the way.

Serving With You All,

Pastor / Evangelist David W. Lankford