

“Do Not Fear”

By Wendy Wood



So do not fear, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

When we are gripped by fear, when our palms are sweaty, our hearts are racing, and we are going from one distressing thought to another picturing worst case scenarios, we are so caught up with our emotions and being aware of how badly we feel, that we focus on little else. Fear is an emotion that is strongly felt. Fear can be paralyzing and can keep us from moving forward or making a decision and thereby we are not exercising faith or doing what needs to be done. Fear can also cause us to react to a situation in the way that will get us back to feeling safe and comfortable. In these moments we are more concerned about alleviating fear than honoring God. But, fear can also be a great help to us. Fear may bring the adrenaline and strength necessary to act heroically in a dangerous situation. Fear may be helpful in alerting us to desires in our hearts that have grown too strong. When we are commanded in scripture to “fear not”, God is commanding us not to give way to a negative interpretation of our

circumstances because He is already providing what we need. God is gracious and kind in providing for us 'arguments' for why we can trust Him and not give way to fear.

“Do Not Fear”

Reason #1. ***“I am with you.”***

Why do we not need to fear? God is with us. God, who is sovereign, all-powerful, all-wise, all-loving, good, just, righteous, and holy, is with us. When we stop and think about Who God is, and that He is always with us, we truly have nothing to fear. “I am with you” is the most often given promise in the bible. Just a few of the references are:

Isaiah 43:2 “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you”

Matthew 28:20b “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Genesis 28:15 “Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go”

Deuteronomy 31:6 “Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

When you are tempted to fear, stop and meditate on the ever-present God of the universe. He is with you! How does that change the way you view your circumstances?

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Reason #2 ***“I am your God.”***

Why do we not need to fear? God is personal. God is my God. God knows me and cares for me. God has set His love on me and has promised to dwell with me both now and forever. God has put His Spirit within me to guide me, teach me, remind me of His truth, and to convict and help me. I have no reason to fear when I am trusting that God is MY God. David knew God as a personal God.

Psalm 63:1

“O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you;

my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.”

Galatians 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

Zephaniah 3:17

“The Lord your God is in your midst,
a mighty one who will save;
he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will quiet you by his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing.”

God is the God who chooses to come to His people and dwell with His people. God didn't meet us half-way, He came to us, all the way to our sinful, dead state, and met every single one of our needs in Christ. God knows you and loves you as one of His children. When you trust God's heart is for you, you can rest in security and peace. You have no need to fear because the God who breathed out stars, who places the boundaries of the oceans, who knit you together in your mother's womb, is your God. How would your view of your circumstances change if you meditated on the truth that God is “your God” and is “for you”.

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Reason #3 ***“I will strengthen you.”***

Why do we not need to fear? God's strength is given to us as the third person of the Triune God. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ. He is described as both in scripture because the Trinity cannot be separated, yet is three distinct Persons (Is 11:2-3, Matt 3:16, Rom 8:9, Gal 4:6). The presence of the Holy Spirit in a believer is evidence that salvation is real. When Jesus was about to die and knew He would be returning to heaven, He promised His disciples that the Spirit would be even better because God would be dwelling in us and with us (John 14:17). God gives us power in wisdom through the Spirit as He helps us understand scripture and teaches us truth. The Spirit enlightens us to know and understand the hope we have in Christ. The Spirit is the power that enables us to display the fruit of the Spirit as we are progressively sanctified. Paul's prayer in **Ephesians 1** is a beautiful description of the Spirit's work in us.

Paul prays that they (and we) may have “the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, *that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe,* according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places...” (vs 17-20)

Later in **Ephesians 3** Paul again prays “that according to the riches of his glory he may *grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,* so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, *may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God*” (vs 16-19).

The Spirit allows us to know God and His love for us. The Spirit helps us comprehend how great God’s love is and to experience the fullness of God in our hearts. The Spirit helps us enjoy God and delight in Him which brings joy and peace.

Colossians 1:11 tells us that God has given us “all power” that helps us to endure with patience whatever circumstances we are facing. That power comes from the Holy Spirit within us. If we are walking in step with the Spirit, our response to difficult circumstances will put God’s power on display as we are patiently enduring whatever we are facing.

When God promises to provide a way out of temptation (1 Cor 10:13), He has in mind the gift of the Spirit to convict us and give us strength to fight the temptation. When God tells us we are sanctified in truth, His word is truth, (John 17:17) it is the Spirit who illumines His word to us to change us into His image.

The Spirit gives us power to love others and be self-controlled and to abound in hope in this difficult world (2 Tim 1:7, Rom 15:3)

When we are trusting that God will strengthen us, we don’t need to fear. He will give us the strength of wisdom, the strength to battle temptation, the strength to love others even when it is difficult, and the strength to fix our eyes on Him and the day when we will be with Him face to face.

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Reason #4 *'I will help you'*

God describes Himself as a “helper”.

Psalm 54:4 “Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.”

Hebrews 13:6 “So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”

To be a helper means to come to one’s aid, especially in time of need or difficulty. God is not a reluctant helper. His plan of redemption from before the foundation of the world, was to come to the aid of sinners and give life-giving aid. God’s very nature is to be a helper. He desires to shower us with mercy and grace (Eph 2:4-5). His heart is gentle and lowly (Matt 11:28-30). He is not stingy with kindness or compassion. He gives out of the abundance and riches of who He is at His very nature. Ephesians 2:4 says “But God, being rich in mercy...” came to give life to sinners who were dead in their sin. God’s very being is rich in mercy. God yearns to help us, especially in times of need and difficulty. He came to us while we were sinners and enemies of His, how much more, now that we are His children, will He help us.

If we trust that God’s very heart is to help us, we need not fear anything. God has secured our salvation with Him, what can man do to us?

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Reason #5 *“I will uphold you with My righteous right hand”*

The right hand in scripture signifies God’s power and strength. Jack Wellman on Patheos website says, “ This [phrase] ‘right hand’ occurs 166 times in the Bible so it is no accident that the [phrase] ‘right hand’ has significant meaning. God inspired Isaiah to write “For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, “Fear not, I am the one who helps you” (Isaiah 41:13). The right hand signifies strength, perhaps because most people are right-handed and that is the hand that normally has their greatest strength.” When God promises to uphold us with His right hand, we can have confidence that God is referring to His strength. As the all-powerful God, He promises to uphold us. In Exodus 15:6 God shows His strength in saying, “Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power, your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy” and often used His

right hand against His enemies as in Exodus 15:12 “You stretched out your right hand; the earth swallowed them.” Daniel 4 reminds us that “none can stay His hand”. God’s righteous right hand is determinative. Nothing is stronger. Nothing can break the grasp that God has on His children.

The right hand in scripture also refers to the hand of blessing. When Jacob is blessed by his father, it is the right hand that is placed on Jacob’s head to bestow the honor (Genesis 28:14). When God says that He will uphold us with His right hand, He is guaranteeing all the blessings promised to His children. Ephesians 1 tells us that we have “every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realm” as His children. God’s right hand holds our inheritance secure.

To trust God will uphold us in His righteous right hand is to rest securely in all His promises, because He holds them with strength and power. For those He foreknew, He called, He justified, He sanctified, and He glorified (Romans 8). The guarantee of our blessings and help are secure because they depend on God’s faithfulness and strength, not ours.

God gives us five reasons in Isaiah 41:10 to “**Do not fear**”. Meditate on these promises today. Find the peace that surpasses understanding by living like these promises are true - because they are!