

7/24/18

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Franklin Roosevelt said during his first inaugural address, “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” The words inspired the American people during the darkest hours of the Depression. But what about today? Is our greatest fear simply fear?

It is hard to tell a person not to be afraid. There may be real, deep-seated, and identifiable reasons to be afraid. So what is the solution?

Jesus puts fear into the proper perspective. *“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”* *Matthew 10:28*. His words are to the point, “Don’t be afraid of those who can kill the body but cannot kill the soul.” Enemies of the faith, false teachers, persecutors, agents of the devil, none of these should cause me to fear. They may threaten. They may be relentless and furious in their attacks. Still they cannot rob me of my soul. Through the working of the Holy Spirit through the gospel message of Jesus, I remain the Lord’s. I am his, and his promise is that nothing will be able to separate me from his love (Romans 8:39). Since I belong to Jesus, I do not have to fear those who can take my physical life but cannot rob me of spiritual life.

My greatest fear should be that I might turn away from my God and Lord. He is the “One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” I need to be on my guard. While my enemies cannot tear me from his hands, I can leave. My actions and my choices may lead me away from him. The Scripture reminds me to go about my salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12). God will never fail, but I might.

This is why I need to hold tightly to my Savior. In Jesus, I find courage. In Jesus, I find strength. In Jesus, I find faithfulness. Even more important, in Jesus I find forgiveness and peace. It is only through Jesus I can overcome all my fears, and even my greatest fear.

Prayer: *O blessed Lord, keep me safe through your holy Word. When I am afraid, remove that fear with your power and your presence. Then, strengthen me to live to your praise and glory. Amen.*

(WELS E-Devotion, adapted)

**Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.
A Proverbs 1:3**

Remember in your prayers:

...See you in worship.

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

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