



# RESURRECTION CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

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*Paul and Gretel Haglin*

EVANGELIZING THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER

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## Letters of Faith

August 2017

**“And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of heaven will be shaken.**

**...But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”**

Luke 21:25-26 & 28

Dearly Beloved,

Webster’s New World Dictionary defines fear in two ways:

1. A feeling of anxiety and agitation caused by the presence or nearness of danger, evil, pain, etc.; timidity, dread, terror, fright, apprehension.
2. Respectful dread, awe, reverence. For Example: Fear or reverence of God.

The first definition of fear describes an insidious and infectious disease that tries to entrap us and paralyze our expectation, faith, and motivation. It nibbles and gnaws on the weakest links of our thoughts and rushes in like a flood on the heels of bad news, disturbing circumstances, and alarming lies. Fear attacks our faith. We must recognize it and be prepared to resist its advances.

Do you remember the fable about Chicken Little (Henny Penny in UK)? An acorn making its way to the ground glanced off her noggin and without taking time to discover the truth, off she raced, full of fear and assumption, to be sure that the king received the dire news that the sky was falling. On her way, she proclaimed to anyone who would listen that the world was ending, striking fear in their hearts as well.

There certainly is plenty of frightening news to be heard today—some true, some conjecture—from the lips of friends as well as the ever-present media “news presenters.” However, Beloved, we must examine each such message carefully with divine discernment before we spring into action. For example, although the specter of devastation from “man-made Global Warming” is now proven by the majority of respected geophysicists to be political fodder, it is almost impossible to dispute or calm “public concern” over it. We are ancient enough to remember the scare and hoopla just 30-40 years ago about a new ice age that was supposed to be forming quickly. My mother’s investment guru even suggested she buy stock in winter long underwear manufacturers—sigh! Memories and honesty are seemingly both still in short supply!

The important thing that we Christians must remember is that the Lord Jesus Himself exhorted us not to faint with fear but to **“straighten up and lift up our heads because our redemption is drawing near.”** He can be trusted with our lives.

In the midst of extraordinary earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, and fires, He promises to be with us—not necessarily to save us from suffering, but to strengthen and love us through it. He who is our redemption makes Himself known to us as our help in trouble whatever that trouble may be: **“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains quake at its swelling pride.”** (Psalm 46:1-3)

A dear friend of many years shared a remarkable story with us. Nancy, a widow, married a widower, and started a new and exciting life at the age of 60, which included learning to fly her new husband's company plane. They were flying home from a trip to California, cruising high in the clouds on autopilot, when she noticed the artificial horizon (an instrument that shows the flying attitude of the airplane) at a 45-degree slant earthward! Neither of them had felt anything strange immersed as they were in the clouds, but she knew their high-tech instruments were warning them of trouble.

Their autopilot had locked "nose down!" It took all of her husband's strength to override the autopilot. At the same time, he instructed Nancy how to disengage the power to the malfunctioning equipment. They were diving well over the redline airspeed (maximum structurally safe speed) before she could get the fuse out of the autopilot circuit. The gravity forces in his pullout popped the landing gear out of their nests in the wing and caused other structural damage to the wing, but they cleared the ground and were able to fly to the nearest airport for an emergency landing.

To her relief and surprise, she said she had felt no fear during those traumatic moments! "I knew that death was not the end. Faith flooded me and sustained me with a calming peace. I felt sadness for my daughter who would not have her mother at her upcoming wedding, but I knew that the Lord could and would handle that problem as well. I know now that I will never fear for my life again, for I have faced death and know that it has no hold over me."

That, Beloved, is faith tried in the furnace!

Jesus said, **"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."** (John 16:33) **"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."** (John 14:27)

The prince of the power of the air, Satan, has always tried to use fear to enslave us, to render us too frightened to function or too fearful to flee or fight his fabrications. He endeavors to persuade us that God does not really care about us. However, Jesus Himself said, "the very hairs of your head are all numbered. **Therefore do not fear; you are of more value than many sparrows.**" (Matt.10:30-31)

As Christians, on the resurrection side of His cross, we do not have to fear physical chastisement from our Heavenly Father. His discipline is forgiving, loving, corrective, and redemptive. The fear of the Lord that we read about in the Scriptures does not mean a frightened cowering, but to be overcome with reverence and respect for His holiness and power (definition 2 above). We cannot help but fall to our knees in His presence, for we **"...have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him... There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected [matured] in love."** (1 John 4:16 & 18)

The Lord Jesus predicted that there would be **"wars and rumors of wars"** (Matthew 24:6), yet we are not to panic. We are to seek Him for wise counsel and continue to **"believe the love which God has for us."** Disease "monsters" seemingly immune to medical weapons, lurk in the shadows threatening to pounce upon the unsuspecting. AIDS, hepatitis, chronic fatigue syndrome, Lyme disease, staph infection, and that old nemesis, TB, have some Christians shaking in their boots. Others are afraid to eat or drink certain things because of news that it might be harmful. Fear attempts to dictate your life instead of faith.

As you watch the days ahead unfold, set your mind to rejoice that *God is not nervous*—no one or thing is going to thwart His plan! Despite millenniums of severe financial, political, religious, and medical upheavals in the world, the human race has survived, because God is not finished with us yet.

Do you know that there were a third more people living in the world at the beginning of the 14th century than there were at the beginning of the 15th century? The Hundred Years' War, the two waves of Black Plague starting in India and sweeping all the way to Iceland, persecution and slaughtering of thousands of Jews, financial disasters, earthquakes and erupting volcanoes, plus another crusade or two, destroyed people from one end of the earth to the other. The church and the governments were corrupt, and lawlessness ruled the earth.

BUT GOD! God continued to call His people out of the darkness into His glorious light, and the good news of Jesus Christ survived to bless us and all of mankind who had ears to hear. Join us in shouting that we believe our God is more powerful than all the evil forces of the whole world put together!

Face fear and fight against it with faith in Father God. Pray with us: *Lord Jesus, grace me with the courage of the Lion of Judah! Help me to keep my mind set on the things of the Spirit, and not on the things of this world that are so scary! Help me to encourage my brothers and sisters to know that You are our God, and that all authority in heaven and earth has been given to You, and that You are always with us, and will never forsake us, even to the end of the age. Grace me, Lord, to fear not amidst all of the fearful, and to despair not amongst all the despairing. Release in me faith to overcome fear and declare: "...as for me, I trust in Thee, O Lord, I say, 'Thou art my God.' My times are in Thy hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me."* (Psalm 31:14–15) Amen!

Brave and Fearless Hugs,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul & Gretel". The script is cursive and fluid, with the ampersand connecting the two names.