

Crossroads Community Church

Sunday September 14th, 2014

Our hearts were eager to join together to praise God for bringing us through another week of ups and downs. Pastor Don shared announcements and prayer needs, then he prayed "Dear Heavenly Father we thank You today for your almighty power on which we can depend on to lead us away from fear, deliver us from anxiety and help us through every struggle, we cast our cares upon you in Jesus name, Amen."

"What are we afraid of? There are many things that cause fear, like spiders, snakes, thunderstorms, heights, needles just to name a few and the most common are falling and death. Other fears can come from circumstances such as health changes, loss of income, moving or change of job. We can all agree that fear of the unknown has a tendency to leave us with unsettled feelings and that fear can lead us to procrastination. When we allow fear to grip us we become inactive. God does not want us to remain fearful; He wants us to overcome and He wants us to trust Him and be our strength, "The Lord is my light and my salvation" so why should I be afraid? The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so why should I tremble?" Psalms 27:1. Fear holds us captive; we become imprisoned by our own feelings of worry which prevents us from enjoying life to the fullest. God commands us to move forward in faith, (Joshua 1:9).

When we read the story of Jesus walking on the water we can see all the emotions Peter went through, the lesson to take from it is how to overcome fear. Jesus had just miraculously finished feeding the 5000, he told his disciples to get back into the boat and Jesus had gone away by Himself to spend precious time with the Father. Later in the evening as the disciples were on the boat a storm was rising and they saw a man appear at a distance walking on water and they were afraid thinking it was a ghost. Peter took a risk and asked that if it was Jesus to ask him to walk towards him, pretty bold of him, and as long as Peter focused on Jesus, he was able to do just that walk on water. But as soon as Peter started noticing the deep waters and wind around him and took his focus off Jesus he began to sink, then he called out to Jesus and Jesus pulled him up. They got back into the boat and the storm stopped. The disciples were amazed and praised Him, (Matthew 14:22-33).

So Peter went from feeling fear, to courageous faith, then to doubt and back to faith admitting to Jesus he was afraid then praising God for being saved! In life there will be times of fear and we may question our faith but the best solution is to get closer to God, admit our fears to Him and he will lift us out of them. This will require risk on our part, just like Peter, if He wanted to walk on water he had to first get out of the boat, and when fear gripped him again he was humble enough to call out to God and trust him. What kind of uncertain venture lies before you? Is it a new job, a new relationship, or simply just sharing your faith with others? Whatever the uncertain moment we are called to face, it is human to fear but God wants us to trust him with our hearts, to walk away from the illusion of safety we create for ourselves to avoid facing our fears. He wants to set us free from fear and anxiety and give us courage to move forward in faith even when we are afraid. The more we take a chance on God the more our faith in Him grows, for He always shows us His love, his strength and surrounds us with His presence. As Hebrews 13:5 says, "He will never fail us. He will never abandon us."

Beloved we know fear steals our joy and peace, and God wants us to live a full life, He wants to set us free from the bondage of fear and anxiety and all we need to do is shift our focus on Him, draw closer to Him and be filled with His presence. The more His presence increases in us the more fears decrease in our lives. The more we allow Him to be part of our lives the more He gives us strength to do all things He calls us to do, (Philippians 1:21, 4:13, Ephesians 3:12). When we experience His presence we will see incredible things happen in our lives because we put our trust in Him and this will cause us to rejoice and praise Him just like the disciples did. Whatever the challenges this upcoming week we can be certain that God is with us and that He will relieve all our fears for He walks with us and protects us? Psalm 23:4, Asherey Shalom!

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