

“Fear”

We are living in perilous times, there is no question about that. Never before have we seen an hour when there was such a universal absence of godly fear. It is very evident that Romans 3:18 is true, which says, *“There is no fear of God before their eyes.”* There has always been sin and apostasy, but we are seeing it on a global scale today. Not only is there sin, but the voices of sinful men against a holy God are being empowered globally by the “god of this world,” Satan. Ephesians 2:2 speaks to the saints of Christ’s Church (*ekklesia* – “called out ones”) who have been called out of the course of this world to walk in the light of the Gospel. In the same verse, it also refers to Satan as *“the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:”* Thus, Satan empowers or energizes those who believe not and refuse to obey the truth. He empowers their actions and their words of accusation and mockery. We are now seeing righteousness and godliness being despised, mocked, maligned, even within the Church. The Bible tells us that we are to both love and fear God in the keeping of His commandments, and that we are to be holy as our God is holy. This kind of talk is despised today, though. I Thessalonians 4:7-8 shows that this is a despising of God himself, saying, *“For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.”* Paul told Titus in chapter 2, verses 11 through 15, *“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.”* Worldlings will always hate holiness, because they do not see that they have a sinful self. They do not want to see that Christ came to call a people out of the world unto Himself that He might purify them. Thus, they are *“fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof:”* Satan knows that the man who truly fears God will not love the things of this world. He that loves and fears God will loathe the stench of the world.

The Tempter knows that if a man does not love the world, but he loves holiness, there is only one thing left to do, and that is to try to instill fear in that Christian. Satan knows that if he can’t tempt us to delve into sin and compromise with the world, he will have to try to terrorize us. We may have our loins girt about with truth, but for this we will also need to appropriate the helmet of salvation! Satan loves nothing more

than a defeated Christian, because this means less true opposition for him in his widely successful effort to blind the eyes of men. He doesn't even care if we live differently than the world, just as long as we fear the same things they do. Just as long as we do not have the peace of God **ruling** in our hearts, the Devil will be satisfied. There have been a number of Christians who have touted high standards of separation from the world and have denied themselves worldly pleasure, choosing to suffer loss for Christ's sake. However, these same men often lack victory in their spirit, for their love is not made perfect. I John 4:18 says, *"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."*

Dear brother and sister in Christ, is your love like that of Peter? Do you love the Lord when things are going well, but deny him when the trials come? Do you cower when Satan comes with his darts of fear, rather than rising with the helmet of salvation to claim the victory in Christ? Not only must we not love the world, but we must not count our own lives dear! We must love Christ supremely, above all else. We must love Him, because He first loved us! Let us not be cast down with fear, but may the love of Christ so fill us that any and all fear will be expelled. Then we can say with Paul, *"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Romans 8:38-39)