

## **"NOT THE SPIRIT OF TIMIDITY"**

**"For God hath not given us a spirit of timidity; but of courage, of love and of a sound mind." – 2 Tim. 1:7.**

THERE is one kind of fearlessness which is begotten of self-esteem, lack of humility. This is not the kind enjoined upon the Lord's people. They are to be both tender-hearted and humble-minded. The spirit of courage possessed by the saints is based largely upon their faith in the Lord. Realizing the divine love and providential care, these can apply to themselves the gracious assurance that "The Father himself loveth you" and that "All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose." It is this realization of divine all-wisdom and all-power that gives the strength of heart referred to in our text. It will be readily seen, then, that this courage is based upon faith, though of course the faith must have a foundation of knowledge. The proper relationship of our growth is primarily knowledge: faith, courage, activity, and all of these continue to grow, and in their maturity make us wise, faithful, courageous overcomers in respect to the spiritual matters to which we have been called.

Sometimes we realize our deficiencies and are not able to locate the cause. Some one says, I want to be an overcomer, to gain the victory over the spirit of the world, over the tendencies of my own fallen flesh and over the wiles of the Adversary, but somehow I cannot; I fail. Such should learn to look for the source of failure, the deficient element, and should fortify himself in respect to the same. Let him ask first, Is my failure to overcome due to a lack of courage? Am I fearful, and hence unable, to fight the good fight of faith and, by the Lord's assistance, to gain the victory? If he has the courage he may find that he has not been

sufficiently trusting the Lord, but leaning too much on his own [R4379 : page 122] strength. Such should remember the Apostle's words, "When I am weak, then am I strong"; reversely, "when I am strong in self-assurance, I am then weak," because the Lord wishes me to rely not upon myself, but upon him, his strength, his grace. If the courage be found deficient the reason evidently is that the faith is lacking, and if so, there is a reason for it: either a lack of knowledge on which to build faith, or a lack of exercise and development of faith. The knowledge is to be sought from the right quarter, in harmony with the Lord and his Word, and the faith is to be exercised, continually recognizing the Lord's interest in us as his children, as testified to by his Word and by noticing the leadings of divine providence in our daily affairs.

### **LOVE CASTS OUT FEAR**

There is a proper fear or reverence and disinclination to offend our heavenly Father and our Redeemer, which we wish never to lose. Perfect love will not cast out this fear, but rather intensify it. The fear which love casts out is timidity, a servile fear or dread of the Lord or of Satan, or the fallen angels, or of men and what they might do unto us. Perfect love cannot be attained without knowledge, faith, courage and overcoming. It is the result of the exercise of all this divine arrangement that brings us nearer to God and makes us truly thankful and appreciative of his gracious purposes and omnipotent power for their accomplishment.

The spirit of courage needs special cultivation by the Lord's people. And this cultivation means growth in all the graces. For instance, if calamity befall us or threaten us we should immediately think of the fact that our Lord assures us that an insignificant sparrow cannot fall to the ground without the Father's notice and that we are of much more value than many sparrows. This thought at once strengthens the heart, nerves the arm,

quicken the pulse of endeavor, provided we can realize that God is for us, that no earthborn cloud intervenes between our souls and the love for us which he has declared. If a cloud does obscure the Father's love we must the more earnestly, the more persistently get from behind it by getting our hearts right with the Lord, by going to him in prayer, by confessing our trespasses and by requesting mercy and grace to help and to restore us to his favor.

"Be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart," is one of the blessings assured us in his Word. In the divine order courage is necessary in order to strength and **[R4379 : page 123]** victory. Some one has said, "One with God is the majority." With the courage to grasp this thought and to hold it things almost superhuman seem possible to the Lord's people, while without this courage they may naturally be weak and easily vanquished.

### **COURAGE IN THE EVIL DAY**

Never before, perhaps, was courage so needed as it will be needed in the evil day just before us; but the Prophets' descriptions of the great trouble time before us are very figurative when they speak of fire and clouds and pillars of smoke, saying of this time, "I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke," etc. But the consecrated children of God need have no timidity in respect to these matters if they have the proper courage, developed by proper exercise and built upon proper faith, founded upon the knowledge of divine revelation. His attitude of heart will be, "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." Whether, therefore, storms financial, political, religious or demoniacal, come his way, the child of God may rest secure and be of good courage. The Lord is both able and willing to care for his interests and bring him off victor. Should the fallen angels be permitted to again materialize and personate either the dead or the living, this class need have no fear. Their perfect love for the Lord, based upon a knowledge and

appreciation of his Truth, will lead them to triumph courageously over all the wiles of the Adversary and his hordes.

## **THE ELECT TO BE UNDECEIVABLE**

The Scriptures abound with testimonies to the effect that the severe trials of the near future will be along the lines of deception. They speak of lying angels and deceivableness of unrighteousness and "lying wonders" and tell us that the Lord will send or permit a strong delusion that they may believe a lie. If we gain the right conception of the matter these deceptions are to affect the whole world, including its wise men, and indeed practically everybody except the "very elect"; and the "very elect" will be preserved, not through their own wisdom or superiority, but through the power of God, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." – Matt. 24:24.

Our Lord in the parable of the wheat and tares tells of the harvest work and how in the present time he would gather "together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matt. 24:24.) It is by thus gathering them that they will be protected in the time of strife and trouble when others will be deceived. But they are not to be gathered physically into one place, but spiritually; their minds, their hearts, their affections are to be gathered together, centered. Our text tells us that our Lord is this great Center to which his Elect must all be gathered if they would have rest or peace, if they would overcome the world, the flesh and the peculiar snares of the Adversary, which will now be laid for the feet of all and will more or less entrap all except the Elect class.

## **"GATHER MY SAINTS UNTO ME"**

Figuratively all of these "very elect" ones are gathered, and the place is thus described, "I will say to the Lord, he is my refuge;

in him will I trust"; and again, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." (Psa. 91:1.) Ah! no wonder that we also read, "No harm shall come nigh them." How could harm come to any who are thus close to the Lord? A thousand shall fall at thy side; ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee; because thou hast made the Lord thy refuge; thou hast made the Most High thy habitation." – Psa. 91:7.

This nearness to God, into which his "very elect" will be gathered, will be the source of their protection. And the dangers to others will be in proportion to their distance to this great citadel of strength, this fortress, this refuge or tower.

"Then let our songs abound,  
And every tear be dry;  
We're trav'ling through Immanuel's ground,  
To fairer prospects nigh."

### **"ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME"**

These were our Lord's words after his resurrection. They were true then. They have been true throughout this age and they are still more completely true today, because we are now living in the time of which it is written, "He shall take unto himself his great power and reign." His reign has in some senses of the word already begun. He has already marshaled forces which will complete the overthrow of everything opposed to his Kingdom and its righteous laws. And we may be sure that the members of his Body still in the flesh this side of the veil are no less subjects of his providential care than is the world and its affairs. We may be sure that nothing is transpiring, either in the nominal Church or amongst the kingdoms of the world; amongst socialistic or political parties or in the financial world contrary to what will best serve our Lord's purposes in connection with the events just before

us and the outworking of the same in fullest accord with the prophecies.

Oh, that we could get this thought rightly settled in our minds! Yea, as the Scriptures say, "Settle it in your hearts" – that our Lord is at the helm superintending all of earth's affairs at the present time in a much more practical sense than ever in the past. And have we not seen his graciousness towards the Church in the thirty-four years of the harvest period that are already past? And can we doubt his continued supervision of the affairs of his betrothed to the grand consummation? "He who hath begun the good work in us is able to complete it," and he who has thus far conducted the Harvest work is able still to direct it, order, bless it and use it to his own praise and to the blessing of his people.

"Who led thee first will lead thee still;  
Be calm and sink into his will."

Let us not be timid either as respects the affairs of the harvest work in general, or as respects our own personal relationship to it and to the Lord. Let us learn more and more to be on the lookout for the leadings of his providence and utilizing knowledge which he has given us from his Word. Let us not be surprised concerning the fiery trials which may try us and the stormy billows which may at times seem about to overwhelm us, "For greater is he that is on our part than all that are against us" – however numerous, however strong, and whether demons or men. Let us remember that we are called to be overcomers and that the victory that overcometh the world is our faith.

"Resist the devil and he will flee from you" is the Lord's testimony. This implies an assault by the Adversary. It implies that he should be resisted and can be resisted and that in the end he will flee from us, not because of arrogance or power on our part, but, as our Master said, "He hath nothing in me"; so if he finds it useless to continue his assaults he will probably flee also from us

to other fields of service. We remind all of our readers that whoever comes under the influence of Spiritism, Christian Science, Hypnotism or any other form of Occultism is thereby endangering himself, not only for the moment, but also for the future, because the evil spirits operating through these various channels seek, some in one way and some in another, to delude, bewilder, confuse the reason and bring into subjection the minds of those **[R4380 : page 123]** with whom they have to do. Hence, any of the Lord's people who have had affiliation at any time with any of these are specially warned of liability to intrusion by these spirits. We remind all that the special channel through which they have had special success is human curiosity. We urge all of the Lord's people to restrain their curiosity and rely on the Lord's Word and have no dealings whatever with any of these occult systems.

One dear sister told us recently that before coming into the Truth she had dabbled with Christian Science and Spiritism and had been entrapped with mediumship. She was a writing medium and could distinctly feel something take hold of her hand and guide her pencil while she wrote on topics of which she had no personal knowledge. After coming into the Truth, and realizing the source of this power, she resolutely repelled it in every way, asking the Lord by prayer for assistance. She gained strength to resist this influence, but has again been annoyed by the spirits taking her hand and endeavoring in various ways to arouse her curiosity so that **[R4380 : page 124]** she would yield her hand to them to learn their message for her. She remarked that she has now a fear and a dread of the evil spirits and a strong desire to be free. She finds herself freer from their influence when in the company of other people. We advised her against fear and against refusing to remain in a room by herself. By so doing she would be cultivating fear and subserviency and bringing herself into a condition of mind much more amenable to their intrusions. We advised her, and now advise all similarly affected, to resolutely

set their wills in opposition, to refuse all communication, to ask no questions, receive no answers in any manner, but in the name of the Lord to command the evil spirit to depart, meantime going to the Lord in prayer "for deliverance and grace to help in every time of need."

In conclusion, then, dear friends, be of good courage, of strong faith, of heroic determination, and see that your faith is not in yourself, nor in your vows, nor in your very best endeavors, but in the Lord. Trust in the Lord and the practise of your faith to control your thoughts and words and deeds and to bring you closer to our Father and Redeemer. We live in a time when worldly wisdom is taking hold of this need of courage and is advising people that it should be based upon self-confidence, self-assurance, self-esteem. This is the world's counterfeit, the Adversary's counterfeit of the true courage which the Word of God inculcates and through which we may not only rejoice in all of the present experiences of life, but ultimately "come off conquerors; yea, more than conquerors through him that loved us."

