**NO FEAR FOR THE NEW YEAR**

**JOSHUA 1:1-9**

Job 3:25, “*For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.*” {the thing...: Heb. I feared a fear, and it came upon me}

 “Literally, the fear that I feared; or, I feared a fear, as in the margin. While I was in prosperity I thought adversity might come, and I had a dread of it. I feared the loss of my family and my property and my health; and now all 3 have occurred. I was not lifted up: I knew that what I possessed I had from Divine Providence, and that He who gave might take away.”

 Fear is a powerful force! It can paralyze you or it can propel you!

 It can cause you to freeze or it can cause you to flee!

 What is Fear?

 “Fear” is the feeling of anxiety and agitation caused by the presence of real or imagined danger, evil, or pain.

 Synonyms of “fear” would be: *dread*, *fright*, *alarm*, *dismay*, *terror*, *panic*.

 “*Fear makes the wolf bigger than he is.*”—German Proverb

 Everyone faces fear at some point in time.

 Julius Caesar, to whom the shouts of 1000’s of the enemy were but sweet music, was mortally afraid of the sound of thunder, and always wanted to go *underground* to escape the noise.

 Marshall (or Maurice) Saxe, who loved to look upon the ranks of opposing armies, fled and screamed in terror at the sight of a cat.

 Peter the Great could scarcely be persuaded to cross a bridge, and whenever he placed his feet on one would cry out in fear.

 We may have fears that *control* and *dominate* us and *drive* us into despair.

 Instead of peace that *passes understanding*, we may have fear that *exceeds description*.

 As a normal emotion, fear is a *physical* and *mental* reaction to danger.

 It stimulates our glands and puts our body in to a state of alarm and readiness to meet threatened danger.

 This is normal and beneficial.

 It is when it goes beyond that that trouble comes.

 And that is where we start coming to our text tonight!

 63 times the word “Fear not” is used in the Bible.

 The first time it is used on the Bible is Genesis 15:1, “*After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.*”

 This came after a battle when he freed Lot, and was residing in the Promised Land.

 Every time God uses the phrase “fear not”, He not only calms their fears but He also adds a blessing or promise at the end of it.

 He leaves us with some word that fills us with hope!

 I don’t know what kind of battles you faced in 2016!

 I don’t know what kind of devils you faced last year, and you have a dread for this coming year!

 Whatever you face He is going to protect you!

 What am I going to have at the end of this coming year?

 You are going to have God! He is what is going to fill your treasure chest.

 Sickness may take your *health*; problems may take your *wealth*!

 But God said, “*You are still going to have Me!*”

 We are still going to be rich with the blessings of God at the end of the year!

 **FEAR NOT!**

 The Old Testament ends with the verse, “…*lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.*”—Malachi 4:6.

 But after a 400 year silence Heaven once again speaks in Luke 1:13, and it is the voice of an angel to the priest Zacharias, “*Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.*”

 The angel also appeared to Joseph and said, “*fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.* 21 *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*”—Matthew 1:20,21.

 God’s “fear not’s” are bursting with blessings!

 Each day we have to decide if we are going to let the fear of what is before us keep us from living the way that God wants us to live.

 Or are we going to let our faith in the unseen allow us to reach heights we never thought possible.

 Every day we must decide if we are going to be *run over* by fear or be *ruled* by faith.

 We cannot allow ourselves to be afraid of everything that comes at us in life.

 We cannot be afraid to *step out* in faith because we are afraid to fail.

 Moses, the leader of the Israelites has died and God is speaking with his successor Joshua.

 God is going to encourage Joshua to “*Fear Not!*”

1. Joshua is going to be facing what would seem to be an almost impossible task, the task of taking the Israelites into the Promised Land.

2. His enemies in front of him were fighting on their *home court*.

3. The congregation behind him were *chronic complainers*.

4. Not only is he going to lead the people, he is replacing a legend in Moses who had taken them out of Egypt.

God keeps His promises, and because of that we can have:

**I. DIVINE CONFIDENCE (6)**

 Joshua 1:6, “*Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.*”

 I think he was a bit overwhelmed because you find in these 9 verses that God tells Joshua to be *strong* and *courageous* 3 times in verses 6, 7, and 9.

 After God tells Joshua what He wants him to do, God reminds Joshua that Joshua was going to take the people into the land which God swore to their fathers.

 God is reminding Joshua that God keeps His promises.

**A. THE PROMISE OF VICTORY**

 Joshua 1:3, “*Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.*”

 God’s stated purpose was to give Israel the Promised Land.

 The Jordan must be *crossed*, cities must be *captured*, battles must be *fought* and the Canaanites *conquered* before Israel could enter into possession and enjoy their inheritance.

 God has victories to give, but you have to go after them!

 “It is impossible to stand still in Christian life and service; for when you stand still, you immediately start going backward.” (Wiersbe)

 Let us go on! Is God’s challenge to you and I!

 Years ago a certain Englishman moved to the US. Soon after he arrived he dropped out of sight. One day his uncle in England died and left him a 5-million dollar estate. Scotland Yard went about trying to locate the man whose last address had been in Chicago. They searched for him but never found him. Later he was found one morning frozen to death in an entryway of a cheap hotel. He could not afford a small amount for a room although he was heir to 5 million dollars! He did not claim what was his. He did not lay hold of what belonged to him.

 The Bible is so full of God’s promises, that it is not really possible to count them. Some people have tried and come up with about 3000. Others have counted 7000. Herbert Lockyer wrote a book called [*All the promises of the Bible*](http://books.google.com/books?id=vVdQUPzenvQC&lpg=PP1&dq=how%20many%20promises%20are%20in%20the%20bible&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q=how%20many%20promises%20are%20in%20the%20bible&f=false) and claims to list 8000.

 But not 1 of them has ever failed the person who clung to them like a drowning person clings to a rope!

 I am not preaching “*Name it and Claim it*”, but I am preaching HE NAMES IT; I CAN CLAIM IT!

**1. I still believe it is God’s will to fill people with the Holy Ghost**!

 Acts 2:39, “*For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*”

 I still believe…“*And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:* 18 *And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:*”

 You don’t have to be empty!

 You don’t have to dry up!

 You don’t have to be a has-been!

 That word “Baptized” in the street language of Jesus’ day refers to a piece of cloth that had been dyed. The fabric was placed in a container of dye and would emerge a different color, and now it was identified with the dye!

 God wants us plunged in a new environment!

 You can be a new person!

 You don’t have to go back to that old way of living!

 You don’t have to live in “defeatism.”

**2. I still believe God wants to use people in the** **Gifts of the Holy Ghost**!

Word of wisdom, word of knowledge, discerning of spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, faith, gifts of healings, working of miracles.

 Why are they needed?

 Paul said, “*For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me,* ***to make the Gentiles obedient****, by word and deed,* 19 *Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God;*”—Romans 15:18-19.

 People wouldn’t have a problem getting saved!

 People wouldn’t have a problem getting sanctified!

 People wouldn’t have a problem being faithful.

 People wouldn’t have a problem obeying the Word of God!

1643-1715: Camisards—A group of French protestants emphasized the ministry of the Spirit to baptize and divinely empower. Attempted to lead by *divine direction*, *prophecy*, and *tongues*. This was not acceptable to official policies that required all of France to be under Catholicism. Persecution of all Protestants was enforced.

 Adult Camisards were *executed*, *banished*, *forced to recant*, leaving only the youths and even young children.

 These courageous young people and children became the leaders attempting to move forward by divine direction expressed through gifts of the Spirit, such as tongues, interpretations, and prophecies, they became Pentecostal prophets of the Lord.

 10 year old Isabeau Vincent, who had watched soldiers come in and bayonet women and children who were worshipping, later on wound up preaching repentance in an unknown tongue.

 Children as young as 3 exhorted in religious discourses.

 For 3 years they withstood the government armed forces of France.

 Over 300 children were jailed who spoke in tongues.

**3. I still believe it is God’s will to heal!**

LOOK AT CHRIST’S COMMISSION FOR HIS CHURCH

 a. The first people Jesus sent out to minister was the 12 and the Bible says, “*And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.*”—Mt. 10:1.

 b. The second group to be sent out was the 70 and Jesus told them, “*And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.*”—(Lk. 10:9).

 How is the world going to know that the kingdom of God is upon them if they do not *see* the power of God?

 It was the miracles that Jesus did that convinced Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, that God was with Him.—(Jn. 3:2).

 It was the healing of his son, that caused the nobleman to believe.—(Jn. 4:53).

 The man born blind, after his received his sight was convinced when Jesus revealed to Him that He was the Son of God.—(Jn. 9:35-38).

c. The third group Jesus sent out is every born-again believer.

 Jesus said, “*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.* 16 *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.* 17 *And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;* 18 *They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.* 19 ¶ *So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.*”—(Mk. 16:15-19).

 That was Jesus’ last command to His church!

 30 years after Pentecost we find Paul laying hands on Publius’ father and him being healed. The record of the first 30 years of the church was one where they believed God had delegated the ministry of healing to the Church.

d. We also know that when Jesus ascended to heaven; He let some gifts descend.

 Ephesians 4:8, “*Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*”

 I Corinthians 12:28, “*And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*”

 We are warned in the book of Revelation to not take away anything from Scripture. If healing is gone then so are teachers and governments in the church.

 The fact that a gift is absent in the church is an indictment on the church and not on Scripture and God.

 It is God’s will to heal!

 Are you willing to push back your fears, and by faith grab ahold of the promise of God?

 A poor criminal stood before an Eastern monarch, trembling for his life. A moment later his head was to be severed from his body. He asked for a drink of water. They brought it, but his hand trembled so that he could not drink. The king cried to him, “*Do not be so alarmed; your life is safe till you drink that water.*”

 In an instant the glass was shattered on the pavement and the water untasted, and looking boldly up to the king, the condemned man claimed the royal word. The monarch smiled bitterly, and said, “*You have fairly won your life: I cannot break my word even to you. You are saved.*”

 One of the things Joshua needed to understand if he was going to let his faith have victory over his fears was understanding that God is the ultimate promise-keeper!

 If God has promised to do something you can count on it being done.

 An elderly Christian was in much distress as he lay dying. “*Oh, Pastor,*” he said, “*for years I have relied upon the promises of God, but now in the hour of death I can’t remember a single one to comfort me.*”

 Knowing that Satan was disturbing him, the preacher said, “*My brother, do you think that GOD will forget any of His promises?*”

 A smile came over the face of the dying believer as he exclaimed joyfully. “*No, no! He won’t! Praise the Lord, now I can fall asleep in Jesus and trust Him to remember them all and bring me safely to Heaven.*” Peace flooded his soul, and a short time later he was ushered by the angels into the light of God’s eternal day.

 We have a promise!

**B. THE PROCESS OF VICTORY**

 **God was going to do it through Joshua.**

 **Joshua wasn’t going into this alone!**

 Joshua 1:5, “*There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life:*”

 Isaiah 54:17, “*No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.*”

 It doesn’t matter what diabolical plan!
 It doesn’t matter what form the temptation comes: *envy*, *strife*, *jealousy*, fornication, *drugs*, the *flesh*, the *devil*, or the *world*!

 Maybe you failed last year, this year is different!

 Our failures need to become our mentor, not our master!

 A farmer never sorted his potatoes, but he made more money than others.

 “*What’s the secret?*” asked a neighbor.

 “*I load the wagon,*” he said, “*and I take the roughest road to town. During the trip, the* **little** *potatoes fall to the bottom, the* ***medium*** *potatoes land in the middle, and the* ***big*** *ones rise to the* top.”

 That’s true with people!

 The road of life is rough.

 The suffering does the sorting.

 Demas fell to the bottom, but Paul rose to the top.

 Demas resigned *from* the will of the Lord and fell.

 Paul resigned *to* the will of the Lord and rose to the top.

--Michel Guido, “Seeds From The Sower,” Vol. 29, #12, (c) 2009.

 Romans 8:35-39, “*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?* 36 *As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.* 37 *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.* 38 *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,* 39 *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.*”

 Pleopidas (Pleo/pi/das) hearing that his enemy was coming to give him battle with double the number that he possessed himself, replied to his informant, “*So much the better for us: we shall beat so many the more.*”

 You can overcome through Christ which strengtheneth you!

**C. THE CLOSE VICINITY OF HIS PRESENCE**

 Joshua 1:5, “*as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*”

 Someone stated: “*To be forsaken of God implies utter loneliness, utter helplessness, utter friendlessness, utter hopelessness and unutterable agony.*”

 Wasn’t He with our forefathers?

 He is not going to leave us comfortless!

 In the valley, up the mountain, in the fire, through the water.

 He is better than the Marines! He has never walked away from one of His soldiers!

**II. DIVINE COURAGE**

 Joshua 1:6-7, “*Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.* 7 *Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.*”

 God had already given them the land; all they had to do was step out by faith and claim it!

 God has already given us “every blessing of the Spirit” in Christ (Eph. 1:3).

 All we need do is step out by faith and possess our possessions.

 God had committed to a cause and He would not let His promise fail.

 The promise was that Israel will possess the land.

 Spurgeon put it, Joshua “*was not to use the promise as a couch upon which his indolence might luxuriate, but as a girdle wherewith to gird up his loins for future activity.*”

 In short, God’s promises are prods, not *pillows*.

 Martin Luther was at the Diet of Worms. There was demand for him to recant and he replied: “*Unless I am convinced by Scripture or by right reason, I neither can nor will recant anything, since it is neither right nor safe to act against conscience. Here I stand! I can do no other! God help me, Amen!*”

 T.B. Maston said, “*The Christians who have turned the world upside down have been men and women with a* ***vision*** *in their hearts and the* ***Bible*** *in their hands.*”

 One only has to think of such giants as Martin Luther, John Calvin, William Carey, Jonathan Edwards, D.L. Moody, and Billy Graham to realize the significance of these saints came only because of their devotion to the Word of God.

 It has been said that “*Christians drink deeply at the fountain of God's Word; others only gargle.*”

 It is time for us to become intoxicated with the Word of God!

 The times demand this of us if we are to dare hope to make an impact upon our world for Christ.

 Sir Leonard Wood once visited the King of France and the King was so pleased with him he was invited for dinner the next day.

 Sir Leonard went to the palace and the King meeting him in one of the halls, said, “*Why, Sir Leonard, I did not expect to see you. How is it that you are here?*”

 “*Did not your majesty invite me to dine with you?*” said the astonished guest.

 “*Yes*,” replied the King, “but you did not answer my invitation.”

 Then it was that Sir Leonard Wood uttered one of the choicest sentences of his life. He replied, “*A king’s invitation is never to be answered, but to be obeyed.*”

 If you will be obedient this year you will be successful wherever you go!

**III. A DIVINE CHOICE**

 Joshua 1:9, “*Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.*”

**CON:**

 I don’t know what this year holds for you!

 But God has a purpose and a plan for you!

 John Henry Newman wrote these words on a memorial card for the father of a young man who died of cancer in 1877: “*God has created me to do him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have a mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. Therefore, I will trust Him. Whatever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him. If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me—still He knows what He is about.*”

 In Hebrews 11, we read of some people who forsook fear for faith:

 Abel worshipped in faith.

 Enoch walked in faith.

 Abraham went out in faith.

 Isaac was perceptive by faith—he saw the future.

 Jacob was preserved by faith.

 Joseph was persuaded by faith—he made mention of his bones.

 Moses’ parents were made worriless by faith.

 By faith Moses refused royalty and received the recompense.

 To conquer fear we must remember the Christian position.

 II Timothy 1:7, “*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*”

 There was a survey of 4,000 worriers.

 The survey found that 40% of what we worry about has already passed and nothing can be done about it.

 Another 30% will never happen.

 22% of what we worry about, when it comes, will be so minor it won’t be worth worrying about.

 Only 8% of our worries will be worth the worry.

 With that average that is not even worth the worry!

 An old Scotsman operated a little rowboat for passengers. One day, a passenger noticed that the old man had carved on one oar “Faith” and the other oar “Works.”

 Curious, he asked the reason.

 The old man, being a Christian, said, “*I will show you.*”

 So, he dropped one oar and used the other “Works”—and the boat went in circles.

 Then he dropped that oar and use “Faith” only, and the little boat went in circles—other way around, but still circles.

 Then he used both oars, and the boat swiftly sailed over the waters.

 He explained: “*One without other will get you nowhere. But faith and works pulling together makes for progress.*”

REMEMBER EVERY FEAR NOT ENDS WITH A PROMISE!

 When the enemy steals something.

 Genesis 26:24, “*And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father:* ***fear not****, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.*”

 When the enemy is breathing down your neck.

 Isaiah 35:4, “*Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong,* ***fear not:*** *behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.*”

 When you have an impossible task to perform.

 Isaiah 41:13, “*For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee,* ***Fear not****; I will help thee.*”

 When the enemy tells you that God has forgotten you.

 Isaiah 43:1, “*But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel,* ***Fear not:*** *for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.*”

 Luke 12:7, “But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.”

 When you are tempted by things you used to do.

 Isaiah 54:4, “***Fear not****; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.*”

 When prayers don’t seem to be heard.

 Daniel 10:12, “*Then said he unto me,* ***Fear not****, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.*”

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