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VOLUME 95 DECEMBER 2014
I WILL LIVE AND NOT DIE
THE SHADOW OF SHADDAI part three

Greetings my fellow “peace preachers” (i.e. ministers of reconciliation)!

Aren't you glad that the Lord is called the “God of peace?” Now while this certainly means that God is the giver of the peace that passes all understanding, it also means that He is our peace (see Ephesians 2:14). In other words, He has removed the enmity that separated us from Him, and has made peace with us through the blood of His Cross. So, glory to God, **He has not just given peace to us; He has made peace with us! Hallelujah!**

So, this month, as we enter into the celebration of the birth of God's Son, let's go into this holiday season with this understanding. Let's enter into this Christmas with the understanding that when the angels declared that His birth marked the new dispensation of “peace on earth and goodwill toward men”, this is not referring to peace and goodwill between men; it means that God has given us the “Prince of Peace” so that there would be peace and goodwill between Him and His creation. Glory to God! We have peace with God and His “will” towards us is to do “good” unto us. Praise the Lord!

Well, before we get into this month's Living Logos, I wanted to invite each of you to visit our newly revised and upgraded website @ www.treйдickerson.com!

We are very excited about this new look of LLM's website and also about its added capabilities. Among many new features, we have added several audio teachings on there to compliment the archived Living Logos newsletters and other articles we have written.

Specifically, I have put on there a few audio teachings that I taught at Charis Bible College in Chennai, India last year on the subject of the Holy Spirit. I highly recommend you get on there and take advantage of that particular series where the Spirit definitely revealed Himself in an awesome way!

So if you get a chance, check out our new website and the many different materials that we have made available on there. It is just one of the tools that the Lord has given us to help fulfill our vision here at Living Logos Ministries Inc. of making disciples of all nations!

Well, for the past two months, we have been teaching through the 91st Psalm and have covered some very important truths thus far. If you have missed either of these prior two Living Logos, you can go to our website and download them free of charge or simply contact us and we will be happy to send you a copy.

This month, I want us to conclude this three part series by starting out looking at verses 5 & 6...

YOU SHALL NOT BE AFRAID

Psalm 91:5-6 says, “You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day, nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.”

That sounds pretty much like we are not to fear anything, doesn't it? On top of that, it also sounds like we are not to be afraid at any point of the day. Yes, the psalmist says here that we shouldn't be afraid at night nor during the day; at the darkest point of the night, nor at the brightest part of the day. That's right: We are not to fear 24/7- 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! **365 days a year, we should not fear!**

In fact, did you know that the Bible tells us not to fear approximately 365 times? Isn't that an interesting and convenient number? This should prove to us beyond a shadow of a doubt that we are not to ever allow ourselves to fear- no, not one day out of the year!

And it is important to understand why fear is such a bad thing to allow in our lives. You see, most do not put worry and anxiety- all of which are products of fear- in the same category as lying, stealing, etc. I mean, some Christians would never dream of committing any of these "big sins", but the truth is, fear is just as much sin as these other things we shun.

The Apostle Paul said that whatever is not of faith is sin (see Romans 14:23). So we can conclude that fear, which is the exact opposite of faith, is in fact "sin." I do not bring this up to condemn anyone who struggles with fear, but rather to let you know just how intolerant you should be of fear. So we should shun and resist fear like we would shun and resist adultery because, really, it is just as bad in many ways.

You see, allowing fear in our lives is like telling God we don't trust Him. It is a direct violation of one of God's greatest desires which is for us to believe Him. And this is why fear is such a big deal to God that He would charge us to not fear 365 times in His Word; it is because faith is such a big deal to Him! The Bible teaches us without faith it is impossible to please Him. It says that we are saved by faith. It says that we are to walk by faith and not by sight. The Bible repeatedly shows us just how important it is that the child of God operates in faith. Why? Because this is how we receive everything from God!

FAITH IN THE DEVIL

Now, in all honesty, fear is nothing but faith in the devil. And **just as faith is the currency by which we obtain things in the kingdom of light, fear is the currency that obtains things in the kingdom of darkness.** My point is this: You open yourself up to receive whatever you allow yourself to be afraid of. Saints, this is obviously a very serious thing! And this has everything to do with abiding under God's protective umbrella too. Why? Because if fear opens the door to the devil, then it gives place to all of those things we seek to be protected from.

Just consider the testimony of Job for a moment... Didn't Job say that the thing that he greatly feared had come upon him (See Job 3:25)? Do you suppose that this had something to do with the things he ended up suffering?

If we back up to Job 1:5, we see the fruit of this fear when we consider how he constantly made sacrifices for his children because he feared that they may have cursed God. You see, Job had this fear that his children "may" have cursed God. And this is where fear lives- in doubt and speculation. Those that deal with fear think negatively and oftentimes speculate wrongfully. And, friends, this is bondage! God wants us to live in the hope of something good happening, not in the fear of something bad happening.

So after all of those horrific things ended up happening to Job, he made that statement that the thing that he greatly feared had come upon him. And let me say this: As wonderful, perfect and blameless of a man that Job was, he had this wart that many in the church today still have- that he had an untrue fear of God. What I mean is that he was afraid of God and saw him as an intolerant and quick to judge Creator. This was the root to why he so feared the transgression of his children.

However, as we see in 1 John 4:18, it is in understanding God's perfect love that we cast out all fear. But if the enemy is successful in masquerading himself and his works as being from God, then fear will be the obvious by-product. Saints, we need to see and understand how perfect God's love is towards us and how Satan is the real thief that seeks to steal from us. When we truly understand this, all fear will be gone.

So my point is this: it is the devil who seeks to instill fear into us, not God! And if he is successful in doing so, we will give him place in our lives to potentially destroy us.

INTOXICATED BY FEAR

We see this in 1 Peter 5:8, when describing the devil, Peter said that we need to be sober and vigilant because our adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

What does this verse teach us? It teaches us that he is not able to devour just anyone. Notice the word “may” in front of the word devour. So who *may* he devour? He is able to devour only those who are not sober and vigilant concerning his schemes and tactics!

Did you know that one of the hunting tactics of a lion is to simply roar? If you have ever heard a lion’s roar, you will understand just how petrifying it can be. It is extremely loud and deep. And when a lion lets out one of these roars, it oftentimes strikes so much fear into its prey that they become discombobulated and end up becoming easier prey. In other words, the fear of that roar causes them to do things they normally wouldn’t do like leave the pack, stand still and quit moving, etc. And what does this do? It makes them easy game for their predator.

So what Peter was saying is that this is also a hunting tactic of the devil... He will breathe those same loud and thunderous threats into our mind with the intent of generating fear in our hearts. Just as he used this method of instilling fear in the armies of Israel through the Philistine champion, Goliath, he still uses this method against God’s children today! This is why Peter said that we need to be sober and vigilant...

Now isn’t it interesting that the Bible uses this word “sober” (i.e. the opposite of being drunk) here in conjunction with these fear tactics of the enemy? You know, when you are drunk, you see things that are not there. And essentially, this is what fear is: Fear stands for “**False Expectations Appearing Real!**” So, from God’s perspective, when you fear, you are being afraid of things that are not able to harm you (i.e. you are seeing things that are not there).

So I am here to tell you, saints, that there is something far worse than getting drunk on booze, and that is being spiritually drunk! What do I mean by that? Well, when the Bible gives us this admonition to “be sober”, it literally means to be mentally self-controlled. So being “drunk”, as Peter is referring to here, is allowing our minds to be intoxicated by fearful thoughts. Friends, I want you to understand that as bad as alcohol can be, **sippin’ on fear is far more destructive than sippin’ on beer!** 😊

Yes, we need to guard our hearts and minds from these intoxicating fears because they will impair our ability to think and see clearly. And, I can assure you, this is far worse than being physically impaired.

DEATH VERSUS THE WILL

Now this subject of fear leads us into another important passage here in Psalm 91...

But let me first ask you a question: What is it that is the root of all fears? What is it that people ultimately fear? Now we have all kinds of things that we specifically are afraid of such as the fear of heights, the fear of snakes, claustrophobia, arachnophobia, etc. But what are all of these phobias rooted in? I can tell you: they are all ultimately rooted in the fear of death.

Hebrews chapter two reveals this to us when it says that before we came to Christ, we were all subject to the fear of death and, therefore, were living all of our life subject to the bondage of this root of all fears. But the key phrase here is “were.” We *were* all of our lifetime subject to bondage through the fear of death. Therefore, living in fear should not be the case for a Christian! We should not fear death or anything else for that matter because, saints, even if the worst happens and we die, we still win! We are still going to heaven, glory to God! Therefore, we are more than conquerors through Christ Jesus who loved us!

Now in the last few verses of Psalm 91, we have several promises that should alleviate this fear of death even the

more. Yes, although we are all going to die if the Lord tarries, we have God's promise to provide us with a long and satisfying life and take care of us all along the way. Glory! Let's look at these verses...

In Psalm 91:14-16 we are told- "Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation."

I want you to notice how many times the Lord said, "I will" in this passage of Scripture: He says what He wills to do specifically 6 times and alludes to it a total of 8 times! Friends, that is a lot of things that God said He will do in just 3 verses, amen?

So what does this teach us? It teaches us that these are things that are God's will for us! If He said here that He will do these things, then these things are evidently His will, right? Yes, these are the things that he desires for us. Praise the Lord! We don't have to question what is God's plan for our life and what is His will for us. His will is that we be delivered from all things that would harm us or keep us from fulfilling His goodwill in our lives! His will is to set us on high as a nation of kings and priests unto our God! His will is to answer us when we call upon Him. Yes, He actually wants to answer our prayers, contrary to popular belief. His will is to also be with us in trouble. We can always be confident that God is with us no matter how hot the furnace gets! His will is to honor us- that is, to exalt us, to give preference to us, and to make our name great. Hallelujah! He will make you look good if you let Him, saints! His will is to satisfy us with long life. And, last but not least, His will is to satisfy us with a long life and to show us His salvation all along with the way. Praise the Lord!

Praise God, we can know His will, saints! We don't have to wander aimlessly around saying, "You never know what God is going to do." No, we do know what God *will* do! He will do what He said He would do in His Word! And here in Psalm 91:14-16, He tells us specifically what He will do, and that is deliver us, answer us, honor us, and satisfy us with a long life (among other things)! Praise the Lord!

WITH LONG LIFE

Now I want us to look at this final truth in more detail because I see this as the culmination of all that we see promised to us in the 91st Psalm. Again, the psalmist says in verse 16, "with long life I will satisfy Him and show Him my salvation."

Now an important point to understand here is that in order for you and I to live a long and satisfying life, God has to show us His salvation along the way, right? In other words, to get to this final verse of Psalm 91, we have to get through all of the rest of the challenges found in this world which are described in this psalm. For instance, we have to escape the snare of the fowler. We have to be kept under the shadow of His wings. We have to walk through the perilous pestilence, the destruction that lays waste at noonday, the terror by night, etc. We have to be delivered from evil and from the plague that tries to come near our dwelling. We have to experience His angels bearing us up throughout our days. And we have to be able to tread on some lions and serpents. All in all, in order to live a long and satisfying life, we have to be kept by the power of God along the way. So verse 16 is the culmination of living a protected life! Hallelujah!

Some do not see this as possible. They do not see how it is realistic to believe that God wants all of His children to live a long and satisfying life here on the earth. You'll hear Christians say things like- "Well, you have to die of something." Says who? Not God! God doesn't say that His children need to have their life shortened by sickness or tragedies. Now I understand that many of us have witnessed this or been touched by it some way or another, but, again, what does His Word say? Saints, we need to begin to elevate the truths of God's Word above our own experiences rather than elevating our experiences above the truths of God's Word. Amen? Indeed let God be true and every man a liar (Romans 3:4)!

Now to me the greatest example we have of this is our beloved Apostle Paul. He was a man who God brought out of darkness and into His marvelous light. He was also a man who endured many struggles and demonic activity throughout his life and ministry. His testimony is that he had been in prisons frequently. He had been shipwrecked. He had spent a night and day in the deep. He had been in various perils from the wilderness to the cities. Paul had a tough track record. But do you know what else was his testimony? He described in 2 Corinthians 1:10 how even in the midst of these despairing situations like the one they had in Asia, God delivered them out of so great a death, and did deliver them, in whom they trusted that He would still deliver them. That's deliverance past, present, and future, amen? Glory to God!

You see, Paul saw God's protective covering over his life from beginning to end. But ultimately it was his decision, not the devil's when he was going to depart. Let's look at something he said concerning this...

In Philippians 1:19-26, Paul was talking about his current imprisonment and in verse 19 he begins by saying, "For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance..." Notice the absolute certainty in this statement! Paul did not think *it might* turn out for his deliverance; he knew it! Glory! This is how faith talks because faith knows!

But I want you to notice something very interesting that Paul said in verses 21-22... After he begins to describe the options of both life and death through his current predicament, he then ends up telling the Philippians- "yet what I shall choose I cannot tell." Wow! Think about that statement for a second! Did Paul really have a choice between whether he died through his current imprisonment or whether he lived? Apparently he did.

This reminds me of that verse in Deuteronomy 30:15- "Behold I set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore, choose life." Amen! So God has given us the ability to choose to live and not die and declare the works of the Lord through living a long and satisfying life. Glory to God!

So, yes, we can choose to live and continue on the path of living a long life, and this shows us how the will to live plays a huge part in whether one lives longer or dies earlier. You hear of stories of people fighting through certain sicknesses and diseases and winning but then you hear of those who maybe lose a spouse of many decades and then they soon follow them. Why is that? Well, that is generally because they lose the will to live because they lost their life partner.

So our will (or, desire) to live is so, super important. We must want to live this long and satisfying life and then choose to fulfill our days through maintaining a fighting spirit to finish our race. Amen!

FINISHING OUR RACE

And we can look ahead to the future in the book of 2 Timothy and see Paul's final testimony... He says in 2 Timothy 4:6 that during this final imprisonment, he knew that the time for his departure was at hand. In other words, he knew it was the time for him to go home to be with the Lord.

Now notice that Paul knew the time for his departure was at hand. Did you know that you can know the time when you are supposed to depart and be with the Lord? Apparently, you can because Paul did! Many think that you just never know when your time is going to come, but you can! I said, you can! You can know when your appointed time is at hand just like the Apostle Paul did!

But I can guarantee you that one's "appointed time" is not at 10, 20, 30, 40, or even 50. No, God's will is that everyone live a long and satisfying life. We can be persuaded of this based on this promise in Psalm 91:17! Thank you Lord! Much of God's church thinks otherwise. They will quote Scriptures like Hebrews 9:27 saying that it is appointed unto man a specific day to die. They refer to this "appointed day" in an attempt to indicate that this might be at an early age- but that is simply not true. What does Hebrew 9:27 really say? It says, "And as it is appointed for men to

die once, but after this the judgment.” Did you see that? The writer of Hebrews is not saying that there is a specific day for everyone to die. Rather, he is saying that every man is appointed to die *once*. In other words, death is inevitable for us all (unless, of course, Jesus comes back while we are still living). None of us will escape death because it is the last enemy left to be put under our Lord’s feet.

But, no, there is no scriptural precedence to believe that God would appoint someone to die at an early age from some disease or tragedy. Now that does not mean that God does not know the day in which we will die. He certainly does know this through His foreknowledge. But that does not mean that this is His perfect plan and He wills it. No, just as it is with the doctrine of predestination, this does not mean that God is picking and choosing those who will be saved; it just simply means that He knows who will respond to that call for salvation through His foreknowledge.

Do you know why else we should know that there is not an appointed day on which God is going to “take us” before a ripe old age? Because the Bible repeatedly makes reference to things that we can do to either prolong our days or cut them short. (Take a moment to look up the following Scriptures and consider them: Proverbs 3:1-2, 3:13-16, 10:27, 9:10-11; Psalm 34:11-14, 55:23; Ecclesiastes 7:17; Ephesians 6:2-3). So from these verses we should be able to clearly see that there are things we can do that will prolong our days and there are things we can do to cut them short. There are things we can do to “multiply” our days on this earth, and there are things we can apply to our lives that will “lengthen” our days. Thank you Lord!

So going back over to 2 Timothy chapter 4, I want you to notice verses 7-8... In them, Paul says, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished my race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness...” You see, Paul knew it was time for his departure because he knew he had finished his race.

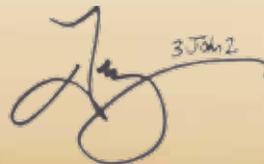
I used to be afraid of death before I was born again, but when I got saved, all that fear was gone. But in the midst of totally embracing any prospect of dying, I learned that there was something I should fear about death and that is dying before my time (i.e. dying before I have finished my race). Why? Because to not finish our course is to not complete our purpose and destiny on this earth. Of course, I don’t mean that we need to be afraid of that, but you know what I mean- I mean we should not accept an early departure from this earth when we know we have not accomplished all that God created us to accomplish in advancing His kingdom during our lifespan.

And this is the bottom line concerning living a long, satisfying life... Our desire should not be to live long on the earth because we are either afraid of dying or are too attached to the things of this world. That should not be our motive. Our motive should be to see this promise fulfilled in us because we want to finish our course and declare the works of the Lord on this earth as long as we can. Hallelujah!

So let’s begin to boldly declare in the face of death, death that is before our time of departure- “I will live and not die and declare the works of the Lord!” (Psalm 118:17) Praise God, we will endeavor to live out our full length of days and even have them multiplied! Thank you Jesus!

Until next month, in the words of Spock from Star Trek- “Live long and prosper!” Maranatha!

Victoriously,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Trey Dickerson', with the text '3 John 2' written in smaller ink to the right of the signature.