



# REPENT AUSTRALIA

*"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."*

*2 Chronicles 7:14*

VOLUME:9:11

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## FEAR NO EVIL

On 6 January 1941 President Franklin D Roosevelt delivered his famous "four freedoms" address to the U.S. Congress. As a basis for world peace the president proposed for all people freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear. To a large extent civilized society can provide the first three of these freedoms. But freedom from fear – that's another matter. Ever since September 11, 2001 the world has become a much more fearful place with the threat of terrorism constantly on the minds of both leaders and citizens of many nations. And justifiably so. We now live in a perilous age of bombings, kidnappings and general mayhem in various parts of the globe that could very well strike very close to home, even here in far-off Australia.

### **An Antidote to Fear**

But there is an antidote to fear. Three thousand years ago David the Psalmist revealed the secret of freedom from fear when he wrote these words in the beautiful 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me." The spirit of this verse is that of fearless courage going forward to meet the dark unknown. For each one of us it is not possible to avoid going down into our own personal valley, yet it is possible to be in it and not to fear, provided we realize the Divine Presence of God is always there with us, and remembering that "all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose".

### **The Tyranny of Fear**

Fear, of course is a natural instinct that is useful to us when it acts as a sentinel warning of danger. But when fear, which is a good sentry on guard, moves into headquarters and takes control it plays havoc with our lives. It weakens our efficiency, saps our energy and spoils our health. It can even lead to the disintegration of our personalities if it really takes over, as our reason becomes the first casualty. However, God helps us counteract the tyranny of fear by giving us "a spirit of power and love and self-control". The spirit of power strengthens our resolve to overcome the attacks of fear with the confidence of His divine support. The spirit of love comes from the sinless One who loves us enough to die for us and sent His Spirit to be our Comforter and Guide. The spirit of self-control is the virtue of healthy-mindedness. This comes from setting our minds, not on the ugly or the baser things of life, but on those things that are honourable, just, noble, lovely and gracious – truth, beauty and goodness.

### **Better Characters**

God also helps us by teaching us how to use evil as well as fear. Remember, David did not say, 'I will *meet* no evil; for Thou art with me'. No, he said "I will *fear* no evil; for Thou art with me." The misfortune may fall; the sickness may come; the calamity may strike. But God gives the grace and the strength to use what we call evils and transform them into servants if we put our trust in Him. Indeed, they become servants for they serve to strengthen our characters by having endured and overcome them. When we remember that God is primarily concerned to build up our characters above all else, we can see that He often uses the evils that befall us to help us faithfully grow toward maturity, "to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

### **Value for Foresight**

God also helps us to overcome fear by teaching us how to use His provision. Jesus never taught that the providence of God was an invitation to be lazy and let Him do all the providing. His parables teach the value of foresight and spiritual preparation. The Bible also stresses the reality of a Heavenly Father who is with us in Spirit going with us as far as our strength takes us, and then, when we have reached our limits, shows that He is "able to do more abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us." Ours is a God who inspires us to faithfully undertake tasks that are beyond our capabilities, and then in the tackling of them, He reveals His power to carry them through. We will never discover what God can do with us and for us until we undertake something beyond our natural powers.

## **Divine Companionship**

So God helps us to fear no evil by developing our characters with love as we experience our faith in action. By His grace we also learn to fear no evil because of His divine companionship. "I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me." This is the confidence of everyone who acknowledges Christ as Saviour and Lord. If God be for us, who can be against us? Moreover, "who can separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution – in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loves us." (Romans 8) Surely this is the answer to our fears. There is no need to fear the future. God is for us, now and forever. But one thing remains to be settled. In a critical hour in the American Civil War a somewhat fearful individual said to Abraham Lincoln, "Oh, Mr President, I am most anxious that the Lord shall be on our side!" Back came a typical Lincoln reply: "Well, strangely enough, that gives me no anxiety at all. The thing I worry about is to make sure *I* am on the *Lord's side!*"

## **The Crunch Point**

This is the crunch point. Are *you* really on the Lord's side? If not, now is the time to make firm your allegiance to Him. It is time to be still and know that He is God, to find His hand guiding and strengthening you in all the ups and downs of your life. So much so that when the darkness threatens to overwhelm you, you will be sure of His divine presence, "even though You walk through the shadow." Notice the word "through". Someone has likened it to passing through a European alpine tunnel. On this side the bleak hills, the glaciers and the solitude of winter; then – the darkness, on and on, until at last the travellers emerge from the gloom. Suddenly there bursts about them the light of Italy, the green sunny slopes, the olives and the vines, the brilliant flowers and the fertile plains rich with all kinds of crops. "Through" – they come through the valley of the shadow to the other, brighter side.

## **Beginning of Time**

Did you know that from the very beginning of time in the counsels of the Infinite when the story of mankind had its start, all who have accepted the sacrifice of Christ through faith were given a place in the eternal purposes of God? We, each one of us, are dear to God; we mean something to Him. We are even now the objects of plans that were made before the pyramids and we fit into His plans for the glorious future. Think about it. He gives us abundant life when we become His sons and daughters. "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery **to fall back into fear**, but have received the spirit of sonship." Just receive Jesus as your Saviour and Lord and all this is yours. What a heritage! Will you accept your coming King of Glory?

## **PRAYER**

Gracious Father, Creator of the Universe, God of infinite Love and Truth; Spirit of Life and Light; the Beginning and the End, Abba Father, we come united in faith to love You with all our hearts, minds and souls for who we **are** in You by Your Holy Spirit and through Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Sovereign Lord, we worship You in spirit and in truth and thank You that Your Word assures us that there is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. We thank You for setting before us Christ Jesus as the perfect object of our souls, recognizing that we are called to be like Him. Loving Father, we thank You for the sure foundation of truth in Your Holy Word to set us free from sin, pride, fear and death in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. We thank You too, Lord Jesus, for being our Great High Priest interceding for **all of us** to sincerely repent and have our souls cleansed in Your precious blood, to obey Your Living Word and to be committed to God the Father. Spirit of the Living God, we invite You into our midst to convict the world of unbelief, deception, disobedience, lawlessness, pride and self-righteousness.

Merciful Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ, we enter into Your presence in fervent prayer to ask for mercy on all who are bound by sin to be set free; for the sick to be healed; the blind to see and the deaf to hear. We humbly claim each one for Your coming kingdom of love, truth, righteousness, joy and peace. Blessed Holy Spirit, renew the hearts and minds of our leaders with a fresh anointing and set them free to believe Your Living Word. Thank You dear Father that Jesus Christ Your Son conquered evil and fear 2000 years ago on the cross of Calvary, and that He offers abundant life to everyone who will receive Him as Lord and Saviour. Thank You too, Lord Jesus, for helping us do the Father's Will on earth in Your victorious name through Your Holy Spirit of power and love, giving all glory and honour to God Almighty. Amen.

**R.A.:** Lead by our Lord Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit to glorify God with the Brotherhood of Man and in love and faithfulness to bring glory and honour to His Holy Name. Amen.

**REJOICE & SHARE IN FAITH THIS MESSAGE IN PRAYER WITH OTHERS & BE BLESSED TO BE ONE IN CHRIST JESUS.**