**Jesus is Our Victor over Fear**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**1 John 4:17-19**

**Sunday Morning**

**April 5, 2020**

**1 John 4:17-19**

17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us.

**Sometimes we believe that God is leading us in a certain direction, but as we continue down that path, we become discouraged and uncertain because it’s not working out as we expected**

Saints, maybe it isn’t as easy as we thought it would be, or it isn’t leading where we want to go. Therefore, we decide to make a course correction, thinking that we have obviously gone the wrong way.

Yet once we start down the new path, we soon discover that we’ve made a terrible mistake. One of the reasons we change routes and disobey God is because our faith gives way to fear.

**Psalm 33:8-12**

8 Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. 9 For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. 10 The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect.

11 The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations. 12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, The people He has chosen as His own inheritance.

**Genesis 12:10-20**

10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land. 11 And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, "Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance.

12 Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, 'This is his wife'; and they will kill me, but they will let you live. 13 Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you."

14 So it was, when Abram came into Egypt, that the Egyptians saw the woman, that she was very beautiful. 15 The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken to Pharaoh's house. 16 He treated Abram well for her sake. He had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels.

17 But the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. 18 And Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife?

19 Why did you say, 'She is my sister'? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take her and go your way." 20 So Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they sent him away, with his wife and all that he had.

Saints, Abraham (originally called Abram) is an example of someone whose faith gave way to fear. When the Lord first spoke to him, He gave him clear instructions and unconditional promises, saying,

**Genesis 12:1-3**

1 “Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you; 2 and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; 3 and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed”

Saints, in faith and obedience, Abraham left his home and traveled to Canaan. After arriving, he built altars to worship the Lord and pitched his tent there (vv. 7-8).

**Genesis 12:7-8**

7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. 8 And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD.

Saints, but before long a situation arose that caused him to doubt the Lord.

**Genesis 12:10**

“Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land”

**Faith gives way to fear because our focus moves from God to our circumstances**

Saints, Abraham had kept his eyes on the Lord throughout his journey and had obediently settled in the land and worshipped Him, thanking Him for His protection and provision.

But now his survival looked doubtful. What Abraham saw as unexpected and frightening, God viewed as an opportunity for Abraham to trust Him.

Instead of looking around him, Abraham should have remembered God’s promises and relied on Him to keep His word. Changing circumstances are no reason to stop trusting the Lord.

**Psalm 91:1-8**

1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust." 3 Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler And from the perilous pestilence.

4 He shall cover you with His feathers, And under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. 5 You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, Nor of the arrow that flies by day, 6 Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.

7 A thousand may fall at your side, And ten thousand at your right hand; But it shall not come near you. 8 Only with your eyes shall you look, And see the reward of the wicked.

**Faith gives way to fear when we make decisions based on human reason**

**Proverbs 14:12**

There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

Saints, Abraham reasoned that the way to survive was to go to Egypt where there was food. He probably considered this trip to Egypt as only temporary, thinking he’d come back to Canaan when conditions improved.

However, as reasonable as his plan seemed, even a temporary journey away from God’s will, can have disastrous results.

**When we forget that God is both our provider and protector, we take matters into our own hands**

Saints, Abraham should have dealt with his fear by staying in Canaan and seeking God’s protection and provision. The Lord would have been faithful to care for him and fulfill all His promises to him. We often make the same mistake Abraham made. He should of:

**Proverbs 3:5-6**

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

Saints, we look around at the situation, forget that God is our provider and protector, and we substitute what He’s said in His Word with our own plan, reasoning that His way won’t work.

**Isaiah 55:8-9**

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Furthermore Saints, we think God will understand why we had to change direction. But the only plan that will fail is ours because the Lord never supports disobedience but works solely to accomplish His will in our lives.

**1 Samuel 15:21-23**

 22 Then Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king."

Saints, true obedience is doing what God says, when He says, and how He says to do it. Any alteration is disobedience.

**John 14:15**

"If you love Me, keep My commandments”

Saints, when we are tempted to take matters into our own hands, we must remember that God has put us in these circumstances so we’ll learn to totally depend on Him and trust in His promises. If we disregard His commands, one wrong step will lead to another until we finally repent and turn back to the Lord.

**When we give in to fear, we become willing to sacrifice our most precious possessions in order to gain the favor of others**

Saints, Abraham’s first wrong step soon led to another one. “It came about when he came near to Egypt, that he said to Sarai, his wife,

**Genesis 12:11-13**

11 And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, "Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance. 12 Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, 'This is his wife'; and they will kill me, but they will let you live. 13 Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you."

Saints, fearing what could happen in Egypt, Abraham was willing to give up his wife to preserve his own life, even though God had promised to protect him

**When we forget the unconditional promises of God, we begin to fear man**

Saints, the Lord had given Abraham grand and far-reaching promises without any exceptions or qualifications. But in the midst of his circumstances, Abraham became afraid, and contrary to God’s will, went to Egypt.

**2 Timothy 1:7**

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind”

Saints, but now he had another reason to be fearful. He knew the Pharaoh could kill him to get Sarah, her beauty making her desirable and vulnerable.

In the same way, when we forget God’s unconditional promises in His Word, we’ll begin to react in fear instead of faith.

Saints, then we end up where we shouldn’t be, doing something we shouldn’t do, feeling what we should not feel, and paying a price we don’t want to pay.

**2 Corinthians 1:20-23**

20 For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. 21 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, 22 who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

**When we stop trusting God and start fearing circumstances, we’re willing to cause others pain and great harm in order to protect ourselves**

Saints, Abraham’s plan kept the Egyptians from killing him, but it cost him his wife.

**Genesis 12:16**

He treated Abram well for her sake. He had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels.

Saints, although none of this was God’s will, He was faithful to Abraham despite his disobedience and “struck Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram’s wife”

**Genesis 12:17**

But the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife.

Saints, not only did Abraham’s disobedience cause harm to Sarah, but also to Pharaoh and his household as well. She was returned, and Pharaoh had Abraham and all that belonged to him escorted out of Egypt

**Genesis 12:19-20**

19 Why did you say, 'She is my sister'? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take her and go your way." 20 So Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they sent him away, with his wife and all that he had.

Saints, the Lord had intervened to preserve Sarah, and eventually she had a son from whom Jesus Christ descended. It is through Him that

**Genesis 12:3**

and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed”

**In Closing:**

Saints of God, Abraham’s story teaches us that God always keeps His promises and warns us not to let fear cause us to lose our trust in Him and step out of His good and perfect will.

**1. Have you ever stopped obeying a clear command of God because of fear?**

**2. What was the situation?**

**3. What happened as a result?**

**4. Now think about a time when you obeyed the Lord, even though it was difficult.**

**5. How did He prove Himself faithful to you?**

**Let's Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace." '**