

# Columbus Street church of Christ

## Sunday Bulletin

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# Overcoming A Lack Of Courage

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

2 Timothy 1:7

The word of God is clear, *“perfect love casts out fear”* (1 John 4:18). There are many who “claim” this is true, but the outward evidence tells a different story as they walk in fear daily. Their language also gives them away with words like, “I can’t”, “I am afraid”, “It’s not worth the risk”, and one of my favorites, “I’m not afraid of dying but”. The exact opposite is true of those who live without fear by the *“power”, “love”, and “sound mind”*. The outward evidence tells the story for they live life daily void of fear. Their language also tells the story. “I do not fear man”, “What is the worse thing that can happen”, and my favorite “To live is Christ to die is gain”. There is a song I love to sing called, **“Because He Lives”**. The chorus is, **“Because He lives, I can face tomorrow, because He lives, all fear is gone, because I know He holds the future, and life is worth the living, just because He lives”**. I can see the three things in these words that cast out fear.

**“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power...” Because He Lives I Can:** The *“Power”* of the resurrection, knowing that my Savior is alive is all I need to walk fearlessly, it is all I need to know “I can”. Because He lives, I will not be afraid of anyone or anything. Christian men and women, great bulwarks of faith, who have encouraged me with their personal stories of how God is always in control, and why I should not fear. Now, it grieves my heart to see them hiding in fear. This ought not be so. Why? “Because He lives, I can”. I think of young David when King Saul told him, *“You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.”* Remember what David said, *“The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine”* (1 Sam. 17:33, 37). David remembered the past, remembered what the Lord did and that gave him courage to stand out from all the rest of Israel and say to the giant, *“This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand...”* David acting without fear, defeated Goliath with a slingshot. Because David knew his God lives, he walked and lived accordingly, and the people saw it and all Israel fought at his side, and with God, they won a great battle that day. The

# Knowing & Doing God's Will

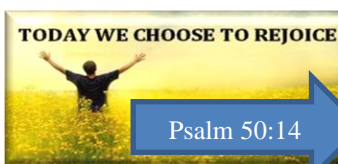
Proverbs 11:14

question we must ask ourselves is this: Do my words and my walk match up? Where does my daily walk lead others? In fear or in victory?

***“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of...love...”*** John wrote, *“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.”* (1 John 4:18). God is love, (1 John 4:8), Jesus is God (John 1:1), and He is risen (Matt. 28:6), therefore, *“If God is for us, who can be against us?”* (1 John 4:8). To know the magnitude of the power of God's love for me demands I look at what He was willing to pay in order to gain my eternal soul. When I consider His matchless love, all fear is gone!

One great example of this is seen in the account of Esther, willing to risk everything—including death—to persuade her husband, king Ahasuerus (Xerxes), to intercede on behalf of the Jews putting a stop to Haman's plan to annihilate them. She was motivated by her love for God and for her people. How great is the power of love? Mordecai sent a message to Queen Esther that was not exactly encouraging. *“For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”* (4:14). Her response: *“Go, gather all the Jews who are present in [a]Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!”* (Esther 4:16). Her willingness, even to die, paved the way for others to stand up against attack and fight the “good fight”.

I can't tell you of the many gospel meetings I have attended and heard powerful words from preachers who proclaim how Christians must walk without fear, much like Mordecai told Esther.



*“Offer to God thanksgiving, And pay your vows to the Most High”*

And again, what grieves me now is a few of those same preachers are leading God's people in fear. Beloved, love conquers fear, and Esther walked right up to the one who had the power to take her life and she put her love for God and her love for Mordecai and the rest of her people out front of her fears knowing God will save or not save, whether she is a part of the process. Do I love God enough to face my fears, even death, like Esther did? God's will, His judgement shall be done no matter what happens to me in this life. Because He loves me I can, like Esther, face whatever may come my way without fear.

We need to remember that Esther spiritually joined the people, her maids and herself together in prayer and fasting. We too, can pray to our Father in heaven for the strength to do those things that we fear most knowing He loves us and will listen to our prayers, just as He did to Queen Esther's.

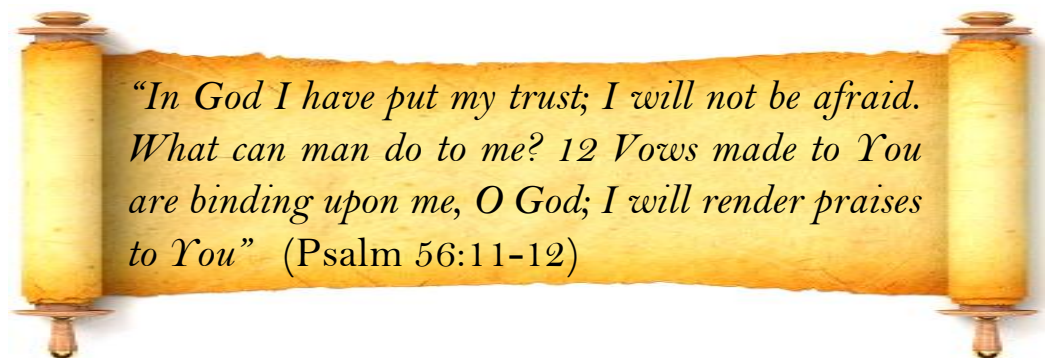
***“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of a sound mind...”*** The term “*sound mind*” is translated “*self-control*” (ESV), “*sound judgment*” (CSB), and “*discipline*” (ASV). HELPS Word-studies: “/sōphronízō (literally “living in divine moderation”) is moving in the “bigger picture” transforming someone to be “radically-balanced” according to the Lord's will. This radical-moderation requires a complete perspective that is eclectic, combining the legitimate extremities of truth from both sides of a matter...” That being said, the idea is don’t react without first knowing all the facts—get the big picture, and then act accordingly. This emphasizes passing on what the Lord reveals is true above anything else that men may say which brings spiritual balance, a settled state of mind that embraces what the Lord defines as truth. In the case of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego they could have said, nobody in their right mind chooses death in a fiery furnace. God will understand that we love Him, reverence Him, and obey Him, and so we will save our lives, do what the king says, and when the smoke clears come back to God.

We know full well that is not what happened. They heard the king’s decree, “*Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?*” (Dan. 3:15) Then they looked at the Bigger picture, eternal life and said, “*17 If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. 18 But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up*” (Dan. 3:17-18). They know Who holds their future.

So, renew your strength! “*But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint*” (Isaiah 40:31).

In Christian Love

David Scarpino



*“In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid.  
What can man do to me? 12 Vows made to You  
are binding upon me, O God; I will render praises  
to You” (Psalm 56:11-12)*

### **Welcome One and All!**

**Our faithful Creator** is worthy to be praised in this assembly. All praise to Him who reigns above in majesty supreme! He gave His Son to die, for all mankind, that He might redeem all. Our blessed Redeemer suffered and died for our sins and is now risen and sitting at the right hand of God as only Head of the church. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, knowing that He is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9). ***“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”*** (Isaiah 6:3)

***“...Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”*** (Rev. 2:10)