



I prayed

to the LORD,

and he answered me.

He freed me

from all my fears.

Psalms 24:4



Naming and Bringing Our Fears to Jesus

Going Back to the Garden

Why go back to the Garden?

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." Gen 3:6-10 (NIV).

So, where are you?

Our Utter Dependence on the Holy Spirit

Why focus on the person and work on the Holy Spirit?

“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.” John 14:15-20 (NIV).

Acknowledging and Receiving Jesus’ Gift of Peace

Have you taken the time to thank Jesus for His gift?

“I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.” John 14:27 (NLT).

The Necessity of Fixing Our Eyes on Christ

Why is an upward-directed gaze necessary?

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God’s right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory. Col 3:1-4 (NLT).

Confession of Our Need of Him

The banishing of fear begins with the acknowledgement of our need of God.

ALL: We come to our Creator God, aware that we need Him with every fiber of our being.

We want nothing to stand between us. We draw near, and He seeks, finds, and holds us.

As we are held, we slowly dare to look into the face of the One who created us and holds us.

And gradually, and without fear, our own faces and our lives begin to reflect His beauty.

Pause and reflect.

ALL: Eternal Light, shine into our hearts.

Eternal Goodness, deliver us from evil.

Eternal Power, be our support.

Eternal Wisdom, scatter the darkness of our fears.

Eternal Pity, have mercy upon us.

Pause and reflect.

Naming Our Fears

It will be very difficult to defeat our fears if we don't declare war on them.

O God, your people have always had their fears.
So we come to you in humility and with honesty, naming our own.

Lord, some of us fear death;
... the loss of control over our thoughts, actions, or impact;
... loneliness;
... getting sick or having pain;
... being shamed or humiliated;
... being a failure, or sometimes even being a success;
... loss;
... rejection;
... being judged;
... the future.

And for all those fears which we cannot name, we come to You, O God— those we cannot name because they're either unknown or unspeakable, receive them in our silence.

We are fearful so often, O Lord, because in our encounters with sin and evil in this upside-down world, we often find ourselves weak and poor.

Help us not to shy away from quiet times, from the simplicity of prayer, Scripture, and Your presence, and most especially of a deepening relationship with Your Holy Spirit.

Jesus, the gift of the Holy Spirit is Your Ultimate gift to us which cost You everything. Thank You, that the presence of Your Holy Spirit and Your perfect peace drives out fear.

We thank You so much then, Lord Jesus, for Your actions and for your words— for love, and for the promise of the Holy Spirit and Your peace, which are our strength and our riches.

ALL: Amen.

Naming and writing down our fears.

Write them down. And name them out loud.

Bringing Our Fears to Jesus

We've named them. Now we take them to Jesus.

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." Matt 11:28-30 (NLT).

ALL: In You, Lord my God, I put my trust (Psalm 25:1).

Bring your fears to the cross. Tear up that paper and leave it at the foot of the cross.

Lighting a candle of decision and intention.

Psalm passages to meditate on as you contemplate:

The Lord is my light and my salvation— so why should I be afraid? Psalm 27:1 (NLT).

The Lord is for me, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me? Yes, the Lord is for me; he will help me.

Psalm 118:6-7a (NLT).

I prayed to the Lord, and he answered me. He freed me from all my fears. Psalm 24:4 (NLT).

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. Psalm 23:4 (NLT).

Declarations and Thanksgiving

We want to remember this day— to fix it in our memory. Why?

Our ancient adversary, Satan, has been at work ever since the Garden seeking to instill fear. And he does so because of his hatred of us, for we are the beloved of God and made in the image of our Creator.

ALL: We recognize and reject the work of the devil.

In the days that follow what we have done here this morning, it would be like our ancient adversary to call us to re-focus inwardly on the fears that we have given to Jesus and to use the fear present in our fallen nature to bring us harm.

ALL: We will remember this day and the actions we took, fix our eyes on things above, and put our trust in the Lord.

At the cross, the Lord Jesus Christ bore all of our sins, carried our sorrows, and took on and defeated that despicable “gift” of our ancient adversary, fear, by nailing it to the cross.

ALL: Thank You for the cross.

And with His precious gift of peace, our Lord Jesus Christ—our Triumphant Christus Victor— has sent us the person of the Holy Spirit Who resides in us. For perfect love drives out fear.

ALL: Thank You for the gift of the Holy Spirit and the peace that is ours through Him. For as Jesus is in the Father, we are also in Him, and He is also in us (John 14).

Let all that I am wait quietly before God, for my hope is in Him.... My victory and honor come from God alone. He is my refuge, a rock where no enemy can reach me. O my people, trust in him at all times. Pour out your heart to Him, for God is our refuge (Psalm 62:5-8).

**ALL: And now, O Creator God,
grant that we may ever seek Your face and love You
with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.
And in Your infinite mercy,
bring us at last to the fullness of Your presence
where we shall be as You intended from the beginning,
without fear, and where we will behold Your glory
and live Your promised joys.
Amen. Amen. Amen.**

Epiclesis

An Ancient-Future Faith Community...

**Worshiping Sundays at 10:30 AM, at the Carmichael Chapel
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**Find us on the web: www.Epiclesis.org
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