

# THE WAR

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As a hospice chaplain, I learned that there is always a spiritual aspect to the physical and emotional pain people suffer, and physical violence in the world has a spiritual basis also.

This is a biblical concept. King David asked the Lord if he should attack the Philistines in the Valley of Rephaim, and the Lord answered, “*When you hear a sound like marching feet in the tops of the poplar trees, be on alert! That will be the signal that the Lord is moving ahead of you to strike down the Philistine army,*” 2 Samuel 5:24. “David did as the Lord commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines...” verse 25. A partnership.

We are in the end times (see my essay *What is the rapture?*).

In the spiritual realm, the balance of power on Earth is shifting rapidly and actively into Satan’s control. An ongoing war in the spiritual world is spilling over into our world and intensifying as we near the end of this age. In Revelation 12:7-12, speaking of the end times, Michael and the angels fight against the dragon, which represents the devil.

Those few people who are not mentally stable become key players in this battle—for the enemy. Those who take drugs, make themselves mentally unstable, pawns for his potential and actual control. The Miami Police Department warned its patrol officers that the bath salt designer drug—Cloud 9—was causing people to act like they were demon possessed, with zombie-like, flesh-eating attacks on people. Act like it? Who is to say that by taking this drug, they had willingly, or unwillingly, invited demon possession with all of its horrifying ramifications?

As these global existential pains increase, we see a continuous and pervasive lack of honor, shame, guilt, contrition, mercy and grace. While the world’s moral compass spins around out of control, we are being overwhelmed by wickedness and evil. So, would you be surprised to learn that exorcisms are up all around the world?

Let me elaborate.

The Bible tells us that the spiritual universe existed long before what we call our physical universe. It may be that the spiritual universe is just another type of physical universe, or a parallel universe in another dimension. However, for simplicity and clarity, I will refer to the place where God and Angels dwell as the spiritual, and the place where we live on Earth as the physical, although vigorous scientific and theological debates might allow for other or overlapping ideas.

The Bible implies that our universe followed the other because God purposely, at a given moment, created this physical universe—bound by space and time—as described in Genesis

chapter 1 and the Gospel of John chapter 1 (see my essay *The Bubble Verse*). He started somewhere else, added this universe, created from scratch, outside of the place where he was, and is. This further suggests that the problem on Earth—the war-like state we are all experiencing now—started *before* the creation of our physical universe.

Why was our universe created?

I would even go so far as to suggest that the creation of this new physical universe, and in particular Earth and humans—in anticipation of our Fall and redemption story, was integral to a Great Plan to correct the problem caused by the rebellion of Satan with his angels, if that is the only problem.

What does the following verse mean?

*“All inhabitants of the earth will worship the Beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world”* (Rev 13:8).

Actually, in the Greek, this verse says, “Slain from the founding of the cosmos.”

This means that at the dawn of our universe’s creation, the requirement for the incarnation of God as a human called Jesus Christ, and the death and resurrection of Jesus to redeem fallen humans and defeat Satan, was already in their plans. It was the PLAN.

Peter said it this way: *“He (Jesus) was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake”* (1 Peter 1:20).

## THE WRECK

At some time in the far distant past (before our universe was created), there was a wreck. The rebellion of Satan seriously upset or damaged something—perhaps the balance of power and authority, probably because he became the anti-God, anti-Love, the absolute polar opposite—opposed to all God stands for and represents. Satan wanted to rule all Creation; not because he was gifted or talented that way, but because he believed it was his right, his destiny, his purpose. And if he could not get it all, he would at least muck up the Realm, and later what we might call the human story. Full of pride and arrogance, lacking any semblance of empathy, he thinks he has the ability to bring it all down and corrupt everything. He does not think God’s plans are absolute, but that he can work for a different outcome—his victory.

But God anticipated this—from before the beginning.

Because Jesus was successful in his mission, we read, *“And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be the head over everything for the church...”* (Eph 1:22). This implies that *everything* was NOT exactly under his feet or under his control before his sinless life and successful death and resurrection. Remember, I said that the problem began *before* God created our universe.

*“For he has put everything under his feet. Now when it says that ‘everything’ has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ”* (1 Cor 15:27, also Philippians 2:5-11).

The letter to the Hebrews expands upon what Paul just described in I Corinthians. The subjection of all Creation—the physical and spiritual universes—under Jesus’ feet is not complete—yet. *“You have put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see **not yet all things put under him**”* (Heb 2:8). This passage is talking about the promise and the fulfillment that follows. There is a sense that it is an ongoing process and a timing issue.

For us the spiritual war has been raging from Genesis chapter one, is happening now, and will not be over until the end of the Book of Revelation. That is one of the Bible’s predominant themes throughout.

Back to the story.

The war in heaven spilled over into our present timeline when humans in the Garden disobeyed God’s commandment, and that disobedience damaged their relationship with God. Many changes took place at that time, but let me talk about two.

First, while humans lived in the Garden, life was as perfect as it could get. But when they disobeyed God, our many problems began: death, diseases, hurts, fears, pains, horrors, pride, and arrogance to name a few.

So, when someone says they cannot believe in God because he lets bad things happen to good people, back up a second. We chose. We told God we could manage our lives better without his aide or interference. The Bible is really all about the failure in the Garden, the resulting Fall, and necessary redemption of humans. Eve had two boys, and what happened right out of the chute? Cain kills Abel! Hasn’t it been like that ever since? And we are the only ones to blame.

Second, Satan seems to have received some level of power and authority from the Fall of humans, because we read that after Jesus died and rose from the dead, he—Jesus—got something back that he didn’t previously have: the Keys to Death. *“I have the keys of Death and Hades,”* Revelation 1:18.

Did you ever wonder why Jesus descended into hell after he died on the cross? He took the fight into Satan’s realm for the first time. He was on a quest, a mission, to get something back that had been lost. And he could get there no other way.

The Apostle Paul wrote: *“And he (God) made known to us his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment - to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ”* (Eph 1:9-10).

God’s plan is to restore everything in the spiritual realm, to put back into order the system broken by the rebellion of Satan. This is not really a contest to see who wins. Rather, it has been and is a

methodical and simple plan: One that will result in a new creation and the restoration of God's kingdom in both dimensions—spiritual and physical.

### Galactic Consequences and Results

*“His (God’s) intent was that now, through the Church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms” (Eph 3:10). Doesn’t that statement sound somewhat galactic? “The rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms...”*

Sometimes I get the feeling that a lot more has been at stake than we can imagine. And how could we imagine? We are in the middle of this wretched crisis, suffering and dying, loving and hoping, all while being fully centered on ourselves. Feeling blessed by God one minute, then shaking our fist at him in rage, anger and frustration the next, because something went wrong in our lives, or someone we loved got sick or died.

We shake our fist and shout, “IF YOU ARE SO BIG AND SO SMART AND SO LOVING, WHY DID MY PRECIOUS CHILD DIE!”

How can we fully comprehend these events, or everything that is threatened or in jeopardy in the universe, when all we really and truly care about is ourselves and our loved ones? Nearly impossible. Mostly impossible. We cannot comprehend our own temporary life picture, much less God’s cosmic magnum opus. That is one reason I wrote this book: so we could study the clues and delve into this a little deeper to discover what is going on, and what our role(s) might be.

Rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms.

Realms—plural. Are there galactic empires watching, waiting? Are there participants or observers on the sidelines, waiting for the outcome of *this particular conflict* to decide what they will do—or not do? How far does Satan’s rebellion actually stretch? Heavenly realms? How vast and extensive does this term “realms” encompass? Do you remember my comment about Star Princes? Are they watching this conflict to decide how to go forward—capitulate or fight?

Ephesians 4:7-10, *“But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: ‘When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.’ What does ‘he ascended’ mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.”*

Here is another cosmic statement from the Apostle Paul. *“...all the heavens—in order to fill the whole universe.”*

Makes me think of the starship (see Chapter One) and the possible uses God might have for it—and us. The whole universe will be filled, and I am thinking it will be a process we are intimately involved in over an eternity. Do you realize how big *the whole universe* is? Beyond our

imagination. The whole *Star Wars* saga takes place in one galaxy, and there are trillions and trillions of galaxies in our universe.

We understand from this next verse that Satan fell to Earth with a third of the angels. His angels, apparently. But what else is going on here? *“And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth”* (Revelation 12:3-4).

The people writing these stories and letters that ended up in the Bible knew a lot about what was really going on. They had visions and dreams, writing down what they saw, while trying to explain things in a language we could understand, at least partially. It might also be that they were not given all of the answers themselves or all of the information at one time, and we have received everything they had—incomplete or baffling as it is; baffling even for some of them.

For example, the angel specifically told John not to reveal what he learned from the Seven Thunders (Rev 10:4). Both Daniel (Dan 7:16) and John (Rev 7:13-14; 17:6-18) had to have things they saw explained to them by angels, but even the answers can leave us scratching our heads.

### Summary

Jesus went to hell (also called Sheol in the Hebrew, Hades in the Greek), and spoke to the spirits of certain angels and people who had died. After three days, he freed people trapped in Paradise, leading them to heaven. I am not sure if Jesus freed those in chains. By his life, death, and resurrection, he corrected previous wrongs and set the stage for a universal restoration.

I am guessing that when Satan won in the Garden and God expelled Adam and Eve, this was one of the things he gained, somehow:

1. The ability to capture and hold souls in his spiritual domain from the time of Adam until the death of Jesus.
2. Satan controlled the keys to Death and Hades.

Because Jesus brings us comfort by announcing, *“Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One. I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys to Death and Hades”* (Rev 1:17-18).

Rejoice! Now Jesus has the keys!

Jesus was victorious, but do you sense in these words a militaristic aspect to all of this? Even if he did not free the Jews from their Roman oppressors as the military leader they expected, he was a humble and obedient *soldier*; nevertheless. Phil 2:8, *“He was obedient unto death.”* Jesus was in a deadly contest with the devil, because Satan was always looking for an opportunity to trip him up, causing him to fail in his mission (Luke 4:13).

*“Since that time (his death and resurrection) he (Jesus) waits for his enemies to be made his footstool...”* (Heb 10:13). As I said before, whatever was gained is not complete at this time.

Jesus is waiting.

We are waiting.

The war is ongoing.

The broken relationship with God, starting with the Fall of humans had to be repaired—somehow, or Satan would be the winner. Because of rules set in place before the foundation of the universe, the only possible solution was for God, himself, to fix the problem. But isn't that what I have been saying? He knew there would be a wreck and appointed himself as the solution, within the established constraints, because we could not fix it ourselves. And we certainly could not fix what was previously broken.

Because of Rules

Rules are important. God cannot casually appear at the mall and perform miracles to convince people of who he is and his purposes. For one thing, his absolute lack of pride forbids it. Instead, he talks to us through Nature, the Bible, prayer, dreams and visions, and other people, so we can discover the answers for ourselves. He gave us the ability to be successful in this task by filling us with an internal yearning for meaning and purpose in our lives, felt by all people around the world. He tells us that if we believe in him, he will place his Spirit inside us, so we can call him *Daddy* (Abba) and be effective as his children (Romans 8:14-17), living in this fallen world.

Ezekiel predicted this. *"I will give you a new heart and a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And (and this is important, explaining why) I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful about keeping my laws."* Arming soldiers. In other words, God would help us to be successful in this ongoing conflict (Ezek 36:26-27).

Ezekiel was a prophet and said this would happen in the future. Did it come true? Jesus told his disciples that after he returned to the Father, he would then send the Spirit. So, this becomes another benefit for us of the resurrection. *"Unless I go away, the Counselor (the Holy Spirit) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you"* (John 16:7, 14:23-27).

What difference does this make, receiving the Spirit?

I want to say it is all about power, but that sounds like something the world would value and exploit. The Holy Spirit does give real spiritual power, but I find that the Spirit also gives knowledge, which itself is a form of power. The Spirit has different names, based on our needs. In my NIV Bible, John 14:16 describes the Spirit of God as a Counselor, but the Greek of that word, *parakleton*, is better translated as Comforter, Helper, Advocate, Personal Trainer, Tutor. I mean, if we decide to stand for God against the World, wouldn't it be nice to have a little help, a little comfort, guidance, training—a little power?

Because of the ancient rules, God uses us to be his face and voice to a world at war, bringing help, hope and redemption—face to face, with people in need. Not the smartest idea in my mind:

Using us—flawed, broken, miserable, wretched human beings? It is like trying to win a fight with your left arm tied behind your back, standing on one leg, while blindfolded. Satan must have jumped at the chance to enter that ring.

For example, the most powerful person to ever enter our world was God incarnate, Jesus... who was with God before and at the creation of our universe. He humbled himself, renouncing the personal use of all power for his own benefit—and *he wins*.

Some might think it a great tragedy that Jesus died in his early thirties, but it was a great victory all around, because he obeyed God explicitly, strictly, only doing *exactly* what his Father told him to do, saying only what his Father told him to say, and absolutely nothing else. Period. Crazy. “*And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross!*” (Phil 2:8). He did not live his own life; he lived the life God outlined for him in order to be victorious. You might say the end justified the means. We would be quick to criticize anyone acting like that now, while others might call them saints.

That is also why the Gnostic literature about Jesus is false and heretical. In those writings, like the Gospel of Thomas, the child Jesus uses his power for his own pleasure and purposes. Jesus would not give up his calling as Messiah to have an affair with Mary Magdalene, much less marry her and have children. Either of these would negate his calling, because he would be serving himself at the expense of humankind. I wonder what creature would benefit from promoting these kinds of stories—sowing doubt and confusion?

That is the essence of the incarnation—God became human. God became a human so he could enter our world and universe, perfectly fixing the problem himself, forever. The New Testament is hidden in the Old, and the Old Testament is revealed in the New. For example, the Old Testament has many allusions to the incarnation, but my favorite is the Akedah—the Binding of Isaac, which I mentioned earlier. This event took place about nineteen hundred years before Christ. To make a long story short, God told Abraham to sacrifice his only son. A shocking idea; something practiced by the heathen nations around him. In strict obedience to God’s command, Abraham and Isaac walked up Mount Moriah to perform the sad and wretched deed. Isaac carried the wood. As they prepared, Isaac—37 years old, asked his father, Abraham—137 years old, where was the sacrificial animal?

Abraham told his son, “*God, himself, will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son*” (Gen 22:8). Isn’t it interesting that this statement in the Hebrew could also be understood as, “*God will provide, himself, the lamb...*”?

Also, in strict and absolute obedience to his father, this young man, who could have easily overwhelmed the old man, lay obediently on the altar built of rocks and sticks.

After Abraham’s dire pronouncement, in my mind, I see them both weeping softly, neither speaking. Abraham goes about his grim task in hopes that God will bring his promised son back to life after he is dead (Heb 11:19): To Abraham, Isaac has already been dead during the three-day hike to the mountain. Isaac lies back on the pile of sticks, a desperate pleading in his eyes for understanding, yet trusting, as his father ties him down. He weeps in bewilderment, confusion,

and as his father takes the wicked knife in hand, growing horror. He closes his eyes tightly, panting, and waits. Before Abraham could slay his son, an angel calls out to stop him, and they discover a goat conveniently wedged in a nearby bush.

Why did I tell you the Akedah story?

This disturbing story is only interesting if you learn later that Mount Moriah becomes known as Mount Calvary or Golgotha, where God incarnate—God *himself*—offered his only son almost two thousand years later as the sacrificial Lamb. He shed his human blood for the sins of the whole world, then went to hell for three days, before rising from the dead—figuratively, like Isaac.

Speaking of Jesus, Isaiah wrote, “He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth” (Isaiah 53:7). Isaac obediently lay down, and Abraham tied him to the pile of sticks; Jesus lay down and Roman soldiers nailed him to the cross then stood it up for all to gaze upon. Isaac was the type and shadow of a promise and Jesus the fulfillment.

Only God could right the wrongs by becoming a human. In addition, he does not just fix the relationship problem between humans and himself, there is the restoration of his authority in certain spiritual areas, in the heavens and in the realms, with the whole universe affected. As I said, it is complicated. And magnificent.

Imagine that: A cosmic plan of restoration and reconciliation conceived and set in motion 13-plus billion years ago to correct a problem that developed in another universe, in another time. I use the figure 13 billion, because, *at this time*, that is the distance to the farthest object we can observe with a space telescope, as measured by the red shift distance light has traveled. Meaning the most distant galaxy we can observe, God created more than 13 billion years ago. Talk about a long-range strategic plan.

Sounds like a *Star Wars* epic space opera, a saga and historical drama of cosmic proportions. God, gods, villains, heroes, victims, oppressed people, mythical creatures, battles seen, unseen, and suspected: all of the elements that make up a great story, ending in a climactic battle, redemption of a fallen people, punishment of an ancient foe, with the hero, at the end, riding in on a white horse to save the day.

*“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And he who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war”* Revelation 19:11.

Now you know where Westerns got the idea.

This is an intricate and old story, and it is important to uncover the many facts and facets, so we can understand what is happening, what is at stake, and what our roles and responsibilities might be *should we choose them*.

God as Lover



I want to present this idea of God coming to us from another perspective—as Lover. Here is a brief parable by philosopher Søren Kierkegaard presented by James Gettel. I find the reasonableness of the story to be compelling and understandable at a very basic level.

“Once upon a time there lived a king who loved a poor maiden. The king was all-powerful in his land, and no one would dare prevent his marriage to whomever he pleased, despite differences in class. But the maiden did not know the king or suspect his love for her.

The king’s love became a peculiar sort of tragedy. Because he desired the maiden and her true love and understanding, he could not approach his beloved as the king. For if he were to appear to the maiden as a king, she would be awed by the differences between them. She could worship and admire him for his power and status, but she could not forget that he was the king and that she was but a humble maiden. As a true lover, the king desired not to be glorified by the maiden, but to glorify her. He desired her true understanding and equality in love, and he knew true love could come only through his beloved’s freedom, courage, and self-confidence. These all-important attributes of love would not blossom in the unequal relationship of king and subject. The differences between the king and the maiden would prevent either from being confident, understanding, or happy in their love.

The king considered the possibility of elevating the maiden to his equal through secret gifts, transfiguring her to the joys of being a princess. But he quickly realized the folly of this approach. If the maiden accepted her good fortune, their love would be only a delusion created by the king. And, if the maiden were not completely deluded, in her heart she would suspect the deception and thereby recognize the differences between herself and the king. In either case, the elevation would be catastrophic if it changed the character of the maiden. For the king loved her for herself! ‘It was harder for him to be her benefactor than to love her,’ for he knew that ‘love does not alter the beloved, it alters itself.’

The king grieved. How could he help his beloved to understand him as he wished to be understood, as a lover rather than as a king? ‘For this is the unfathomable nature of love, that it desires equality with the beloved, not in jest merely, but in earnest and truth.’ If their union could not be effected through the maiden’s elevation to the king, it must be attempted through the king’s ‘descent’ to the maiden. The king realized he had to ‘appear in the likeness of the humblest.’ He therefore had to appear as a servant, as one humbled enough to serve others. So he clothed himself in a beggar’s cloak and went out to meet the maiden.”<sup>1</sup>

Paul wrote about Jesus: “*He made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness*” (Phil 2:7). The person of Jesus is the king come to Earth, calling to each of us, personally, now, by the Holy Spirit, moving our heart to choose him. Every person who chooses Jesus is a poor maiden who finds her king with the promise of this relationship into all eternity.

Does this idea make you uncomfortable, being referred to as a maiden in relation to the king or Jesus?

Like all things in the New Testament, it started in the Old Testament. Isaiah speaking to the Land of Israel, said, “*For your Maker is your husband—the LORD Almighty is his name—the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth. The Lord will call you back as if you were a wife deserted and distressed in spirit—a wife who married young, only to be rejected,*” says your God” (Isa 54:5-6).

Later Isaiah speaks about Jerusalem in the same language: “*As a young man marries a young woman, so will your Builder marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you*” (Isa 62:5).

So how does the Israel bride translate in the Church bride?

For one thing, Israel has not gone away, as Paul reminds us: Israel is the branch and we are grafted in (see Romans 11, Isa 5:1-7). But Galatians 3 tells us that we are children of Abraham by faith when we accept Christ. “*So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise*” (Gal 3:26-29).

In Matthew 22, Jesus tells the parable of the Wedding Banquet, implying that believers are the bride. Then in Matthew 25, he talks about the Bridegroom coming unexpectedly, so everyone should watch carefully for his arrival. Paul understood this intimate relationship. Speaking to the Galatian church, he said, “*I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him*” (2 Cor 11:2).

And then we come to Revelation 19. John witnesses a great multitude described the Bride of the Lamb (Jesus) and holy people. “*Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: ‘Hallelujah!*

*For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.’ (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God’s holy people.) Then the angel said to me, ‘Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’” And he added, “*These are the true words of God*” (Rev 19:6-9).*

Think of the Maiden in Søren’s parable as another name for the Bride of Christ—all faithful believers, a metaphor that helps us understand the intimacy and importance of our relationship to the king, Jesus and God, individually and corporately. That his love for us probably runs deeper and wider and stronger than we can ever truly and fully imagine in this life.

## Dealing With Fear

Before I close this section on war, I want to go back to fear. When terrorists and bullies attack (as represented by individuals, organizations, and countries), people are injured—physically, mentally, and spiritually. These attacks generate fear in the community. Society suffers an

ongoing victimization because fear persists after the evil actions, often in anticipation of another or series of attacks, although not necessarily just where the violence took place. Like ripples on the pond from a stone, an attack on Paris is felt around the world, and other societies wonder if they will be targeted and harmed. The looming threat affects all.

Jesus talks about this. When he was here, people sought to kill him. *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid”* (John 14:27).

The disciples hid in fear after Jesus died. Out of fear, Peter denied him—repeatedly, but something changed. A short time later, Peter boldly stood in the crowded square and announced the Good News of Jesus Christ. When arrested, Peter and John assured the authorities that they would continue sharing about Jesus, whatever the threats. What changed?

John wrote, *“God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. God is love. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear”* (1 John 4:12, 16, 18). David said that even if he had to walk a scary path, *“through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you (God) are with me”* (Psalm 23:4).

The question then is how can we be sure God is with us and that we have the Peace of Jesus driving out fear, while causing us to remain calm, confident, and hopeful? John also said in this same passage, *“This is how God showed is love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him”* (1 John 4:9).

We live without fear by *living through Jesus*. Trusting him. During fearful times, pray and ask God to fill you with his Spirit of Love—the Peace of Jesus. In this way, fear is driven away from the inside out. Then, like the disciples, you will boldly go where once you cringed in fear.

*“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand”* (Isaiah 41:10).

During fearful times, pray and ask God to intervene in your heart, transforming you from the inside out. Then your fear will dissipate, and you will be able to comfort others with the comfort you have received

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<sup>1</sup> James J. Gettel, *“God’s Love, Human Freedom, & Christian Faith,”* (St Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press 2003), 11-12 (based on the *Parable of the King and the Maiden* by Søren Kierkegaard in *Philosophical Fragments*, 1844, with some Kierkegaard direct quotes).