

***Theme for 2018***

**WE ARE THE ARMY OF GOD &**

**WE ARE ARMED AND DANGEROUS!**

*“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)*



***This Week’s Thought – September 30, 2018***

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*“Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.” Psalm 54:4 (ESV)*

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I am increasingly more and more convinced that the worldview, cultural attitude and behavior is seeking our own self-preservation. Simply stated, we put a lot of attention and energy into the pursuit of security, safety, and health. On the one hand, people go on countless diets and exercise routines, trying to prolong beauty and delay the inevitable biological clock. On the other hand, there are those who obsess over the health of their investment portfolio, hoping to guarantee financial independence and freedom. The end result is that as a society of people, we insulate ourselves from anyone, anything, or anyplace that makes us vulnerable or exposed. Yet time and time again, Scripture reminds us that we are always safe in the Kingdom of God.

The realization that we are ultimately powerless and unable to control every outcome and variable in life, leaves many paralyzed in fear and crippling anxiety. I would say that if God were not who He says that He is, this would actually be a fair and expected response! Yet if we truly believe and trust in the goodness, love, and strength of the Lord, we can rest easy knowing that we are upheld and preserved by Him! For Believers, we know that in any trial or temptation, whether it be physical sickness, financial strain, or relational turmoil, we are held close by our Creator and Sustainer.

*“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” (Deuteronomy 31:8)*

September 30, 2018

When we are set free from fear, we are liberated to join God in His redemptive mission. We learn to be less self-absorbed, no longer caring only about our own wants, needs, and desires. Instead, when we are confident that the Lord sustains and upholds us, we can be bold and brave! He gives us the courage to join Him in vulnerable and broken places. Places that, if only concerned with our own self-care, we would never risk going. Yet when we sit out on the mission of God in the name of “safety”, we miss so many opportunities to see God’s grace at work.

We desperately need the Holy Spirit of God to renew and sustain the world, the church, and each and every one of us. Yet if we forever rest in our own strength and safety, we will live as though we never actually need Him to show up! Could it be that our obsession with safety means that we miss God in the process? Are we so secure that God simply becomes a worst-case scenario back up plan, rather than our very source of life and peace? **I implore you to never let it be so!**

**Application:** Where does your trust most consistently lie? This week, ask the Lord to teach you to truly trust Him and to put your faith in Him above anything else that makes empty promises of safety and security.

**Words from the Master during your time of reflection this week:** “Come to Me with all your weaknesses: physical, emotional, psychological, relational, financial and spiritual. Rest in the comfort of My Presence, remembering that *nothing is impossible for Me*. Pry your mind away from your problems and circumstances so you can focus your attention on Me. Recall that I am *able to do immeasurably more than all you ask or imagine*. The bottom line is that I am taking care of you: therefore, you needn’t be afraid of anything. Rather than trying to maintain control over your life, abandon yourself to My will.”

(Luke 1:37; Ephesians 3:20-21; Psalm 23:1-4)

*“And then God answered: "Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what's coming. It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait! And it doesn't lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It's on its way. It will come right on time.”* Habakkuk 2:2-3 (MSG)

Yours in Christ, Pastor King