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## Perfect Love Drives Out Fear

Posted by revrandy - 2007/12/10 15:43

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Driving in today I surfed my usual list of radio stations, some of which are "talk" radio. The "talk" was about many things but there was a central theme. It seemed everyone was talking about fear of something. One person was afraid of Iran. Another was afraid of terrorists. One was afraid their football coach would leave and another was afraid that the same coach would stay. Fear of mall shootings, a stock market crash and the real estate market all filled the minds and words of callers and hosts.

As usual, I thought of God's Word in response to the fearful rhetoric and was drawn to the story of God coming to earth that first Christmas. God uses four words that are repeated throughout the Christmas story. They are "do not be afraid." In Matthew 1:20 Joseph hears "Joseph ... do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife." The message to us is don't fear what the world thinks when you have the truth in your heart and your life. In Luke 1:30 Mary hears the angel's words ... "Do not be afraid, Mary. You have found favor with God." People ... be unafraid when God has chosen us for a task ... God has called us and will equip us for the task at hand. Finally, the words to shepherds ... (Luke 2:10) "Do not be afraid ... I bring you good news of great joy, that will be for all people." As we walk to kneel and worship at the manger of Bethlehem, we can be glad that we need not fear scary circumstances ... God has it under control and has called us to bring Good News of great joy to all people. That Good News is the Savior ... Christ the Lord.

One Christmas season I took a van-load of presents to a group home at the United Methodist Children's Home in Selma, Alabama. One of my youth, a troubled 7th-grader, wanted to go on the trip. We arrived in Selma and unloaded the presents. We felt good about being the "good guys" who brought Christmas cheer to girls in a group home. As we were leaving we heard a mournful, wailing cry from one of the rooms in the house. Without hesitation my teenage friend bolted to the source of the crying. A little girl had crawled into a closet and was crying in the dark. She had only been in the home for a few days. She had no family, no friends and ... it was almost Christmas. My traveling companion went into the closet and held the little girl's hand. They just sat there for about 5-minutes, and presently they both came out of the closet. The little girl had a new friend and I had the pleasure of going home from Selma with a troubled teenager who looked a lot like Jesus. For Jesus heard our cries of anguish ... came into our dark place ... held our hand ... and led us out. Do not be afraid. For unto us is born a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And the people who walk in darkness have seen a great light. AMEN!

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## Re:Perfect Love Drives Out Fear

Posted by communications - 2007/12/10 21:09

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Reminds me of this Igniting Ministry image.

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## Re:Perfect Love Drives Out Fear

Posted by communications - 2007/12/10 21:33

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Trying again--this reminds me of the Igniting Ministry image "Fear is not the only force at work in the world today" and has a pair of praying hands with this message. This was put up in Times Square by the UMC after the 9/11 attacks, and it really spoke to those who viewed it. <http://www.goodnewsumc.com/cms/images/fbfiles/images/nycbillboardbig.jpg>

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