

BE NOT AFRAID, Part 2

Last month, we began a study of some things we should not fear. We read the Lord's words to Paul in Corinth: "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee." As an example of how we ought not to fear, we noticed the man who had been given one talent and who was afraid to use it. We emphasized: **DON'T BE AFRAID TO USE YOURSELF IN GOD'S SERVICE.**

Continuing this line of thought, let us suggest: **DON'T BE AFRAID TO TAKE A STAND FOR WHAT IS RIGHT.** In the ninth chapter of John, Jesus healed a man who had been blind from birth. When the Jewish leaders, who were the enemies of Christ, questioned the parents of the healed man about this miracle, they refused to commit themselves. The Bible says this was because they **FEARED** the Jews.

Certainly the right way does not always seem to be the easy one. Being a faithful Christian calls for courage. The Bible says, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit ye like men, be strong." I Corinthians 16: 13

When standing for the right, **DON'T BE AFRAID TO GO AGAINST THE CROWD.** It is an ever-present temptation to yield to the way of least resistance and go along with what everyone else is doing. Pontius Pilate was afraid to go against the crowd and had Jesus crucified.

Jesus taught that the majority follows the wrong course in life. "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because few there be that find it." (Matthew 7:13-14) Christians should not seek to be conformed to the things of the world. Romans 12:2 admonishes: " And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Standing for what is right will often cause the loss of companions; it may bring ridicule; and it might cause us to be openly persecuted. After naming some of the things he had suffered as a Christian, Paul said: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (II Timothy 3:12) No, it is not always easy to do the right thing, especially when it means acting contrary to what others are doing and what they want us to do; but God says, "Be not afraid. ..for I am with thee." When faith in God rests firmly in our minds, worldly opposition loses its significance.

Remember these words: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear: The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" "So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.