

**IN AND OUT**  
**#16: In Fear, But Not Of It**  
**August 25-26, 2007**

<sup>3</sup> You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in You. <sup>4</sup> Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal.

*Isaiah 26:3-4 TNIV*

Introduction: Perhaps the most pressing issue facing believers in our culture is how to live “in the world, but not of it.” This is especially true for a church like Columbia in a place like Metro DC. Our world can be a frightening place. Even a brief review of local, national, or global news reports can cause us to cringe. Add to that our own personal issues of family, health, job, school, finances, and the general changes of life, as well as concerns of church and the larger kingdom of God, and frequently we are “in fear.”

But, unlike other “In the World, But not of It” issues, fear is not an area of life in which we have God’s consent or blessing. Indeed, nowhere in scripture does the Lord say it is permissible to be afraid. Repeatedly God tells his people, “Fear not.” “Don’t be afraid.” “Never fear.”

Fear robs us of the internal and relational peace that our Lord intends for us to experience. The Bible teaches that in fearful times we can trust God; we need not live in fear or be of it.

I. The Context of Life.

- A. Fear assaults all of humanity. We may be startled, shocked, stunned, traumatized, troubled, frightened, terrified, horrified.
- B. Like most Biblical promises, instructions, and testimonies of trusting God, this declaration of the prophet Isaiah was born out of uncertainty, crisis, and impending danger—a fearful time.
- C. The prophet saw bad news on the horizon. The nation was in trouble, with social collapse from within and military attack from without.
- D. Still, God would not forget His people. He would be with them in their sufferings and enable them to endure.
- E. A day would come when the Lord would perform amazing things to restore and prosper His people. Isaiah 25:6-9.

II. The Principle of Living.

- A. V.23. Even when the world around is in turmoil, God desires to provide inner peace to His people.
- B. Internal peace is possible only when trusting in the Lord. Indeed, that is the how their minds are steadfast—consciously unwavering in their commitment to God, resolute in their constant devotion, focused with the long look of eternity.
- C. God not only bestows peace, but He guards and protects (“keeps”) them in that peace and with that peace. Phil. 4:6-7.
- D. Such peace is “perfect”—full, permeating, and accomplishing its divine purpose.
- E. The reason and basis for experiencing such divine peace is trust in God—a relationship with the Lord characterized by adoration, intimacy, faith, confidence.

III. The Admonition of Trusting.

- A. V.24. Whether in the day of victory, restoration, and ideal life, or in the times of imminent danger and impending peril, God’s people should trust Him—not just momentarily, but always
- B. The prophet emphasizes the name and nature of God. He is the LORD—YAHWEH, the God who truly exists, “I AM.”
- C. This LORD is present with His people. Isaiah 7:14, “Emmanuel”—“God with us.” Isaiah 41:10, “I am with you.”
- F. This God is their Rock, entirely reliable as the safe and sure foundation for life, now and forever.

Conclusion: The only true antidote for fear is faith in a Creator God, Who has revealed Himself in Christ as Lord and Savior. When we learn to trust Him, not in denial or in self-optimism, but as people who “embrace, endure, emerge, and engage” out of confidence in a good God Who reigns and works for the good of His people, then we experience that divine peace beyond human comprehension that acts as a “deep-brain stimulation” for our spirits. It centers us firmly in the Lord, in the truth of His Word, and in the greater realities of His purposes. It enables us to take the longer look of eternity.

We can learn to trust God in a changing and sometimes scary world. When confronted with the turmoils of life, we can rest assured of God’s presence and provision. If you know you belong to God for all eternity, why not trust Him now in the scary times? It will glorify your Lord, conquer your fear, and bring you that inner peace only He gives. John 16:33.