

Title: **A Message For**

**Bro. And Sis. Fearheart**

Text: Zechariah 8:13

Subject: *Comfort from Our God*

Date: Sunday Evening — October 8, 2006

Reading: *Larry Criss and Larry Brown*

Tape # Zechariah #42

Introduction:

I want to pick up tonight right where I left off this morning, in Zechariah 8:14.

(Zechariah 8:13) “And it shall come to pass, *that* as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, *but* let your hands be strong.”

This morning I tried to show you the greatness of God’s promise in this verse. — “*And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing.*” Tonight, I want us to look at the last line of the text. This last line is based upon God’s great promise to save his elect and to make us a blessing by his grace. Our blessed God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, now says to every believing sinner, “*Fear not, but let your hands be strong.*” That is God’s word to his people. And, in Isaiah 35:4, he commands me to declare it to you just as he commanded Zechariah to declare it in his day. Here is God’s word to every Gospel preacher.

(Isaiah 35:3-5) “Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. (4) Say to them *that are* of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompense; he will come and save you. (5) Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.”

When I was just 19 years old, my dear friend, **Pastor Harry Graham**, from whom I learned so much, said to me, “I’ve never had a doubt about my salvation since the day God saved me, never a doubt.” I can remember it like it was yesterday. If I had heard those words from most any other man, I probably would not have believed him. But I believed Bro. Graham was telling me the truth. Yet, when he made that statement, my astonishment must have been evident, because he repeated himself, again, “never a doubt, not once!” Here was a man who had been walking with God for many, many years, who never had a doubt — But I had so many! How could that be?

Not all of God's saints are so full of confidence and assurance as my friend, Bro. Harry Graham. Most of us are like John Newton. One day our hearts soar to heaven singing —

“Amazing grace, how sweet the sound.

That saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found,

“Twas blind, but now I see!”

The next day, we sigh, with deep bass notes of sorrow, concern and grief—

“Tis a point I long to know,

Oft it causes anxious thought,

Do I love the Lord, or no?

Am I His, or am I not?”

My message tonight is especially intended for **Bro. and Sis. Fearheart**. The Lord God says to his prophets and preachers, “*Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, Fear Not!*” All God's saints in this world need continual comfort and encouragement (Isa. 40:1-2).

(Isaiah 40:1-2) “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. (2) Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.”

**And our ever-gracious, compassionate God and Savior takes great care to supply us with comfort** – (Isa. 41:10-14; 43:1-5).

(Isaiah 41:10-14) “Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. (11) Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. (12) Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, *even* them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. (13) For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. (14) Fear not, thou worm Jacob, *and* ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.”

(Isaiah 43:1-5) “But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. (2) When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. (3) For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I

gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. (4) Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. (5) Fear not: for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west.”

**All those “*fear not*” admonitions are given in connection with God’s promise to save his people.** The word “*fearful*” in Isaiah 35:4 is translated “hasty” in the margin, because fearful people are always hasty. They jump to conclusions. Fear is never wise, patient, or reasonable. The fearful heart says with Jacob, “*All these things are against me.*”

Bro. Fearheart forgets the promises, the providence, and the power of God. Sis. Fearheart forgets the truth, wisdom and faithfulness of God. Acting on impulse, they get into trouble. They judge the Lord by feeble sense and fail to see his grace. They see the cloud of providence, but not God’s smiling face. They taste the bitter, bitter bud, but not the sweetness of the flower. Fear and unbelief, increasing hour by hour, flood their hearts. To you especially, Bro. And Sis. Fearheart, this is my message tonight — “*Fear not, but let your hands be strong!*”

**Proposition:** I do not say that fear and faith cannot live together in the same heart. I know they do (Ps. 56:3). But I do say that fear is terribly inconsistent with faith and robs the believer of much joy.

Tonight, I want to share with you some of the experiences I have had with fear. Some of them I had as a young believer. Some of them I still struggle to overcome. As I talk about my experiences with these things. I am sure I will be talking about some of yours too.

## **Election and Fear**

I know the Bible teaches the doctrine of God’s sovereign election; and I love it (Matt. 22:14; John 15:16; Eph. 1:3-6; 2 Thess. 2:13). I know that all of God’s elect shall be saved (John 6:31-40; Rom. 8:28-30). And I know that only God’s elect shall be saved (Rom. 9:11-13). Now, here is a question that caused me much fear as a young believer – **What if I am not one of God’s elect?** One of the ladies who attended our conference a few weeks ago asked me that very same question. But that is the wrong question. The question is — “Do I believe on the Son of God?” (John 9:35)

(John 9:35) “Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?”

Faith is the fruit of election and the evidence of it. And you cannot have the fruit if you do not have the root. The evidence of election is faith in Christ (1 Thess. 1:4).

(1 Thessalonians 1:3-10) “Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; (4) Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. (5) For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. (6) And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having

received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: (7) So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. (8) For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing. (9) For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; (10) And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”

### **Here the Apostle Paul gives us five marks of election:**

- Hearing Ears (v. 5).
- Following Feet (v. 6).
- Serving Hands (vv. 3, 7, 8).
- A Converted Heart (v. 9).
- A Waiting Hope (v. 10).

### **Illustration: *The Retired Soldier***

### **Redemption and Fear**

I know that the Lord Jesus Christ effectually redeemed his people by his great blood atonement, and that not one of those for whom Christ died shall ever perish (Isa. 53:8-10; John 10:11, 15; Rom. 8:32-34; Gal. 3:13; Tit. 2:14; Heb. 9:12). I have absolutely no question about that fact.

(Isaiah 53:8-12) “He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth. (10) Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. (11) He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. (12) Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

(Hebrews 9:12) “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.”

(Romans 8:32-34) “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? (33) Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s

elect? *It is* God that justifieth. (34) *Who is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

- The Bible teaches particular redemption (Isa. 53:8). — Rejoice in it!
- The Bible teaches effectual redemption (Heb. 9:12). — Rejoice in it!
- Universal redemption is universal nonsense!

“From whence this fear and unbelief?

Hast Thou, O Father, put to grief

Thy spotless Son for me?

And will the righteous Judge of men

Condemn me for that debt of sin

Which, Lord, was charged on Thee?

“Complete atonement Thou hast made

And to the utmost farthing paid

Whate’er thy people owed;

How then can wrath on me take place

If sheltered in thy righteousness,

And sprinkled with thy blood?

“If Thou hast my discharge procured,

And freely in my room endured

The whole of wrath divine,

Payment God cannot twice demand,

First at my bleeding Surety’s hand,

And then again at mine.

“Turn, then, my soul, unto thy rest;

The merits of thy great High Priest  
Speak peace and liberty;  
Trust in His efficacious blood,  
Nor fear thy banishment from God,  
Since Jesus died for thee.”

Perhaps you ask, as that dear lady asked me the last night of our conference, “But what if I am not one of those for whom Christ died?” Again, that is the wrong question to be asking. The question is — “Do I trust this Redeemer?”

If the blood has been applied to me, I am redeemed. If God has purged me with the hyssop of Immanuel’s sacrifice. I am redeemed. The blood cannot be applied in the wrong way! The fruit of redemption is pardon. If I am pardoned, I am redeemed. I know that I am redeemed because Christ has set me free.

**Illustration:** *A.J. Gordon and the Two Black Birds*

### **Effectual Calling and Fear**

I know that no man can come to Christ unless he has been called by his Spirit (John 6:44-45, 63).

(John 6:44-45) “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (45) It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”

(John 6:63) “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.”

How Satan roared against my soul with the thought, “The Holy Spirit has not called you! You are just in an emotional state of fear. This is not God’s call.” Yet, I know that all who come to Christ have been called and cause to come by his almighty, irresistible, effectual call. He says, “*Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*” (John 6:37). If I come, it is no presumption on my part to assume that I have been called!

Because the Lord Jesus Christ, Jehovah’s Righteous Servant, has fully obeyed his Father’s will in putting away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, because he was made sin for us, because he bore our sins in his own body on the tree, because he paid all the debt for our sins and put them away completely and forever, he now assures sinners everywhere of this glorious truth by the gospel. — “*Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*” (John 6:37-40).

(John 6:37-40) “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. (38) For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. (39) And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. (40) And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Come to Christ, no matter who you are, no matter how vile your transgressions are, and he promises that he will receive you, just as you are, and that he will never cast you out, that he will give you eternal life, that you shall never perish. Come, then, to Christ...

- Without preparations.
- Without change to qualify you.
- Without delay.

**Illustration:** The woman with the issue of blood came to the Savior, though she perceived no call from him at the time. She came because she had to have him. — Do you have to have the Lord Jesus?

**I assure you**, while you live in this world, you will never know exactly how you were convinced of sin. You will never know precisely how you were quickened by the Holy Spirit, or when. But there is no need for us to know those things. In fact, anytime anyone thinks he knows them, he immediately takes his eyes off Christ and begins looking to those things for assurance before God. If you come to Christ, that is enough. You would not and could come to him unless he had drawn you by his Spirit’s omnipotent grace. — Sinners, come and welcome!

(Matthew 11:28-30) “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.”

**Is there a sinner here?** I am talking about a sinner. Is there a sinner in this house?

“To understand these terms aright,

This grand distinction should be known —

Tho’ all are sinners in God’s sight,

There are but few so in their own.

To such as these our Lord was sent:

They’re only sinners who repent.

What comfort can a Savior bring  
To those who never felt their woe?  
A sinner is a sacred thing;  
The Holy Ghost has made him so.  
New life from Him we must receive  
Before for our sin we rightly grieve.”

### **Perseverance and Fear**

I had no greater fear, when I first began to have some interest in God’s salvation than the fear that I could not and would not persevere and continue in the faith. Knowing that only those who preserve unto the end shall be saved, as the Scriptures clearly declare (Matt. 10:22; 1 Pet. 2:20-21), Satan roared against my soul, “How can you hope to preserve?” Then one day, while struggling with that great fear, as I tried to read his Word, the Lord God graciously caused a statement found in 1 Thessalonians 5:24 to leap into my soul. — “*Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it!*” (Phil. 1:6; Heb. 13:5; John 10:28-30; Jer. 32:38-40; Jude 1:1, 24-25).

(Philippians 1:6) “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:”

(Hebrews 13:5) “*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*”

(John 10:28-30) “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. (29) My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father’s hand. (30) I and *my* Father are one.”

(Jeremiah 32:38-40) “And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: (39) And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: (40) And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.”

(Jude 1:1) “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called:”

(Jude 1:24-25) “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, (25) To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.”



**Our security in grace is security by grace.** We shall persevere in faith, so long as our God perseveres in grace. We are kept by...

- The Purpose of God.
- The Purchase of God.
- The Promise of God.
- The Power of God!

### **Experience and Fear**

Still, there is another fear that often vexes my soul. — “How can I be a believer when my comforts are so few and my conflicts are so many?”

Opening my heart’s door, as best I can, entering into its most secret chambers, **I see the most foul, abominable and frightful things imaginable.** In my sinful heart of flesh I see every evil thing that man has ever done, or imagined against God and his fellow man. I make no exceptions (Matt. 15:19). I see evil thoughts, murderous imaginations, vile adulteries, fornications and perversions, deceit, thefts, lying and blasphemies. Let other men talk of progressively getting more sanctified, holy and righteous, and less sinful if they dare speak so proudly. As for me, “*I know*”, by the testimony of Holy Scripture and by painful experience, “*that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing!*” — “*I am carnal, sold under sin!*”

**Before God saved me I thought things would be different,** if ever God was pleased to save me. I knew my sins would not be eradicated. But I did think they would at least be fewer, weaker and less troublesome. But things are not as I dreamed! I was shocked to wake up one day and realize that I am still just as sinful as ever by nature. My flesh is still flesh. And it always will be. Until this body of flesh dies, my sin will never die, or even diminish! The outward deeds are not so bad as they once were. But the inward corruptions are worse, far worse.

**I am trying to be honest with you, because I want you to be honest with yourself and with God.** Before God saved you, did you ever imagine that a saved person could be so vile as you are? I never thought a saved man could...

- love Christ so little as I do and love the world so much,
- trust God so little and fret so much,
- have such a cold heart of indifference to the things of God and such a lively spirit to the things of the world,
- have such a hard time praying and reading God’s Word,
- and be so impatient, murmuring and resentful of God’s providence.

In myself I honestly see nothing good, righteous, or holy. I pray. But my prayers are full of selfish desires. I read God's word. But my mind runs to every evil thing. I love Christ. But my love for him is shameful. I trust my God. But my faith is mixed with unbelief.

**This is my confession:** I am a sinner, nothing else. My only hope is God's free grace in Christ. My only grounds of acceptance with God is the righteousness and shed blood of Christ, the sinner's Substitute.

I am learning, by the grace of God to look for nothing to give me comfort, assurance, peace, or joy in myself. In my heart I find two raging armies at war with one another (Song 6:13).

(Song of Songs 6:13) "Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies."

### **God's Direction**

Do you ask, "Bro. Don, How can we overcome these fears?" The answer is clear. The only way to do so is to look away from ourselves altogether. Look away from your...

- Experiences.
- Knowledge.
- Righteousness.
- Sinfulness.
- Weakness.
- And look to Christ our God alone.

(Hebrews 6:18-20) "That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: (19) Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; (20) Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

(Jude 1:21) "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

"Behold, your God!" — That is what the Lord calls us to do.

(Zechariah 8:13) "And it shall come to pass, *that* as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, *but* let your hands be strong."

(Isaiah 35:3-4) “Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. (4) Say to them *that are* of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompense; he will come and save you.”

(Isaiah 45:22) “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else.”

“I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all,

But Jesus Christ is my All in All.

**This is the cure for all fear.** — “*Be strong, fear not: Behold, your God.*” — His “*perfect love casteth out all fear.*”

- The Lord God is your God!
- Your salvation is accomplished!
- Your Savior rules the universe!
- The glory of God (your desire and concern) is certain!
- Your troubles will soon be over!

(Isaiah 45:17) “Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.”

Amen.