

# Bible Studies for Life: December 18

*Love in Place of Fear • 1 John 3:13-18; 4:14-18*

*By Becky Brown*



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This “fear” is a reverent, respectful recognition and adoration for the Lord Who brought all things into existence. Such “fear” evokes a response from us which pours forth in worship and praise for Him.

Last Sunday we were saturated in the last few verses of that wonder-filled eighth chapter of Romans. We replaced fear with security in the Lord Who is ALWAYS working ALL things for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose.

We who were created in the image of God now have the privilege of being conformed to the image of His Son Who came, lived, died, and rose again to defeat death forever. We are conquerers. God is FOR us. Jesus came TO us. The Holy Spirit is IN us.

Nothing can separate us from this great love. Such security in Christ should blitz any fear that remains.

This week, we will take our stand in chapters three and four

of the little book of First John and see how love offers us the opportunity to cast out fear. God loves us. He sent Jesus to die for our sins. Through His relationship with the Heavenly Father, Jesus showed us how to love His Father well.

With every scripturally-recorded day of His life, Jesus showed us that since the Father has demonstrated His love for us in sending Jesus, we also should put that love into practice by loving one another. Fear is rendered helpless by the love of God.

That night in the Upper Room in John 13, Jesus washed 24 feet. He told those 12 very apprehensive and fearful disciples that they were to spend their inaugural ministries finding feet to wash! What Jesus did with a basin and a towel, the Twelve were to do with their lives after He was back in Heaven with His Father.

Right then, kneeling there at their feet, Jesus was providing them with a plan to cast out fear with loving concern for other people. He was helping them focus on servanthood through love, not giving over to fear!

First John 3:13-18 picks up just after John reminded his first century readers of the hate-filled action of Cain as he killed his brother, Abel. John says we should love – not hate – our brother.

Those who hate others prove they have not experienced salvation. Spiritually-dead people can't love! We are dead spiritually before we meet Christ. Love is the proof that our salvation experience was genuine.

We see needs all around us daily. This word, "see," in 1 John 3:17 means we observe, become aware, and realize we need to act. When we close down compassion that comes from deep inside our being (heart, will, empathy) and ignore the perceived need, we prove we do not have the love of the Father.

There will come a day when the Lord will ask us to give an accounting of what we did with what He gave us. Time, money, spiritual gifts, daily opportunities for service – all of these matter to God.

He has provided these things for us. We must use all of them to minister to others. When we follow His leading and love and serve like Jesus, we never need to fear His return and dread our time of accountability before Him.

We can stand before Him in boldness and confidence. knowing that we have made it our business to wash feet in love. By loving others, we put fear in its place.

In verse 18 of First John 14, we read that perfect love casts out fear. There is no fear in love. Jesus stands alone as One with perfect and complete love. When we love like Jesus did, fear has to flee.

Punishment calls forth fear. God does not want us to live in fear. He made a way for us to grow through discipline that is administered in love. Pick up the towel. Fill the basin with water. Wash feet. Rinse and repeat.

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