

# SIMPLE TRUTH: What do we have to fear?

*By Shawn Parker*

*Executive Director-Treasurer, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board*



Parker

According to the YouVersion Bible App, the most searched Bible verse during 2020 was Isaiah 41:10. In this verse, Isaiah declared as God's spokesman: "fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (ESV). One doesn't need much imagination to understand why this would be a favorite verse last year.

I'm inclined to say that fear is our greatest problem these days. People are afraid of all sorts of things, from contracting COVID, to losing a loved one, to losing a job, to losing political control. These fears are leading to anger, which is driving a wedge between families, friends, and even church fellowships.

Anger might be what we see most overtly, but fear is the root problem. Isaiah 41:10 provides us with the cure for fear. Simply stated, fear melts away when we ***focus-in on God's friendship***. God reminds His people that He is with them as a constant friend! I think we'd all agree that the confidence of God's presence as our friend shrinks any bully in this world to its proper size.

Secondly, we can meet and cure our fears by **plugging-in to God's power**. Again, God challenged the people not to be afraid because, in His own words, "I am your God." The word "God" is the translation of the Hebrew word *Elohim*, which means strength. Strength and power are fundamental to the very nature of God's character. May we not forget the Apostle Paul's rhetorical question that if God is for us, who can be against us?

Finally, fear is cured when we **lock-in on God's love**. He asserted in the final phrases of verse 10 that He will help and uphold with His right hand. God promised to take care of His children as an outgrowth of His love and personal care. If we could maintain some sense of the height, depth, breadth, and length of God's love, our hearts would be set free from the fangs of fear that strike in our lives.

Fear is a primal emotion that all of us have. Some fear is good! For instance, fear of a lightning strike might save your life. However, many of our fears are unfounded and even crippling. Fear led Abraham to lie to Pharaoh about his relationship with Sarah, fear drove Aaron to build the golden calf, fear motivated the spies to discourage movement into the Promised Land, and fear led to Simon Peter's denial of Christ. Generally speaking, fear doesn't produce our finest moments in the faith.

The world seems terribly infected by fear, but those of us who know Christ have no reason to fear. When we **focus-in** on His friendship, **plug-in** to His power, and **lock-in** to His love, we can be set free. Mississippi Baptists, I pray we'll lock arms with the Lord and move forward in faith showing the world what true courage is!

*Editor's Note: Opinions expressed on this website are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, The Baptist Record, nor the publication's Advisory Committee. The author may be*

*contacted at [sparker@mbcb.org](mailto:sparker@mbcb.org).*