

FEAR NOT

Fear not. That's what God tells us. But how do we keep the howling fear at bay when it overwhelms us? Things in the dark, things beyond our control or comprehension, such as being lost or not knowing when or where you will get your next meal. Not knowing how a bill will be paid, only knowing it must be or there will be dire consequences.

I can't imagine what it must be like to face these daily fears without God by your side. I know that while I often feel fear of what is to come, usually after the initial panic, there is a calm that descends upon me, and I am reminded that these sorts of things have happened in the past and I am still standing today, not living on the streets, not desolate with loss and grief.

God protects us, not from the harsh realities of the world, not from the death of loved ones or from hardships, but from the need to carry our burdens alone. When I feel overwhelmed and am despairing, I must, out of necessity, turn to God to ask for his help in carrying the weight that clings to my spine and hunches me over like an old woman before my time. God's shoulders are so much stronger than mine, and he can see well beyond what my limited scope can visualize.

I know that God has a plan for me, and that every hardship and pain leads me closer to where I am going, even if I cannot fathom how they will take me there. I do not know if God sends us hard things to face to challenge us and make us grow, or if the world is just so blighted and misshapen in sin that things must come of their own volition. What I do know, is that God can take any experience, any one, and use it to forge us into better steel, finer, purer, and with more purpose. I would not give up my bad days and my sorrows, though they have been many, just so that I could walk an easier path and reach my destination with more haste.

Instead, though this is the really hard part, I try to embrace my encumbrances and try to use these experiences to grow and become a better person through Jesus. Be not afraid. These three words are nearly impossible for us as frail and mortal beings to live up to. However, I think God understands our fear and that what he is really saying is Trust Me. You will be okay. I have you in my hands and no matter what happens, I will still be there holding you. You will not be alone, and though you may feel fear, remember that I am here, and I always will be.

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