

76 times the NIV translation of the Bible tells us: “Do not be afraid.” But, often we are.

I love Disney’s Space Mountain. You strap in, the car takes off, and you’re plunged into darkness. You have no control. Why would you do that? Adrenaline is fueled by our fight-or-flight reflex caused by fear. When we pay \$104 for a Disney ticket we’re buying laughter and fear. Of course, millions have survived so we assume we’ll make it home, too.

Fear and Power are interconnected. On a roller-coaster you give up control (power) to experience fear. Before you non-roller-coaster-junkies tune out, think about it. You drive on 2-lane roads at 55mph. On-coming cars pass 4-feet away at 55mph. That’s a 110mph crash waiting to happen, but fear (also known as responsibility) keeps you both in your lane.

One of the scrolls found at Qumran has the entire 43rd chapter of Isaiah. These ancient-future words speak to us today. Listen to Isaiah 43:1, The LORD who created you says: “Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine.”

In Christ, God has ransomed us. He knows our name – it’s written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. 1 Timothy 2:6-7, “Jesus gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. This is the message that God gave to the world at the proper time. And I, Paul, have been chosen as a preacher and apostle to teach the Gentiles about faith and truth.”

“Do not be afraid” is the message God is giving the world today. Fear focuses us on the immediate; faith on the big picture. 1 John 4:17-18, “As we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid... Such love has no fear because perfect love casts out all fear.”

No one likes to give up power – the ability to determine or direct my own or others’ actions and destiny. Think of your heart and mind as a glass that only holds so much. Satan loves to fill us with fear (I MUST be in control!). Christ wants to fill us with love as we act in kind and compassionate ways to a frightened world focused on uncertainty and a loss of control.

Let’s claim 1 John 4:17 “As we live in God our love grows more perfect.” Let’s stay connected to what’s happening in the world, our families and circle of friends. But, let’s loosen Satan’s grip on our thoughts, emotions, and actions by giving up the illusion of power. God is control. You survived Space Mountain, or at least driving, so trust God with the highway to heaven.