Devotion #315

**No Fear of Judgement**

**1 John 4:18 (NASB)** *“ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.”*

Many of you have read this verse for today or at least heard people mention it. Usually it is brought up when someone is dealing with a particular fear or are anxious about something. That is certainly not wrong because it does help us understand the freedom that true love brings to every soul. However, in context, the Apostle John is writing to help the church understand that when a person trusts Jesus as Lord of their lives, there is no more judgment. At least there is no judgment unto eternal death. There will be a judgment for all believers one day. That’s the time when the things will be burned up that had no merit in the spiritual realm. These are the things that we still do out of our residual sin, the sin that still affects us because we are in this fleshly body. But as for eternal judgment for all unbelievers, that is a different judgment. That is the Great White Throne Judgment when all people who do not know Christ as their Savior will be judged and sent to eternal damnation.

I bring this up because often believers live their lives as if there will be some judgment from God that will be akin to the judgment of unbelievers. I have met many people who say they know Christ but are living in fear of their eternal security. This is not accurate. There is no judgment to eternal condemnation after we are born again. The Apostle Paul made that clear in his letter to the church in Rome when he said, **Romans 8:1 (NASB)** *“Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*.” The word, “therefore” is being used by Paul because he just said in Chapter seven of Romans, **Romans 7:24-25 (NASB)** *“Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”* Paul had just been ranting about the effects of sin in his mortal life that weighed heavily on him even after he put his trust in Christ. But then he thanked God for the work of Jesus who took our judgment upon Himself. Therefore, there was no need to live in fear of condemnation any more.

Years later, the Apostle John writes our verse for today - specifically stating that when we are assured that we belong to God through the work of Jesus’s death and resurrection, we have no need to fear God in the way we once did. Because love, true love, the love God has for all people who surrender to Him, takes away our fear of judgment. Think of it like this. God is a loving Father to all who surrender to Him. And because of that, He does not condemn those people. He will never put in front of any of His children a fear that they could or would lose their salvation. To do so would take away from the very purpose we were saved.

I know this personally from my relationship with my earthly father. He was a man of high ideals and expected his children to live according to the standards he put in place for us, and when we didn’t, there was rebuke for it, but never, never was I told that I would not be his son. I know there are many earthly fathers and mothers who make their children live with that kind of fear, and that’s the point. When love is real love for someone, there is never reason to fear that they will stop loving us. Even if that happens in earthly relationships, God will never do so.

John’s point is that you and I accept into our hearts the truth that once you and I are saved by Christ, we will always be saved and have no reason ever to fear a judgment from God that will remove us from His love. He loves us too much to ever do that.

So take heart beloved. If you belong to God through Jesus, you are safe. There is no reason to fear the judgment of God. The great joy of your life should be to live each day in the presence of your heavenly Father, peacefully and contentedly that you will forever belong to Him.