**Fear God, Not Man.**

***24****“A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant[*[*f*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mt+10&version=ESV#fen-ESV-23442f)*] above his master.****25****It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.*

***26****“So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.****27****What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops.****28****And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.[*[*h*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mt+10&version=ESV#fen-ESV-23446h)*]****29****Are not two sparrows sold for a penny] And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.****30****But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.****31****Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.****32****So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven,****33****but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 10:24-33, ESV)*

 Despite all kinds of pressures and persecutions, other than God Himself, a Christian has no serious reason to fear. Greetings to you dear brothers and sisters in Christ, as we focus on another aspect of Resurrection life. As believers, our lives are called to be fearless, because our Lord has defeated death itself, which was the most powerful enemy then ruling over the world. Satan had already been defeated – and the Lord showed that truth multiple times. It was death that still ruled, and Jesus stopped its sting through His works, and brought forth a new life through it, the life that was full of the power of The Resurrection. Again, despite all kinds of pressures and persecution, other than God Himself, a Christian has no serious reason to fear. Let’s see why that is…

 For a Christian, there is no reason to fear. The Lord was describing how the apostles would be subjected to persecution soon. Yes, they were going to encounter all kinds of difficulties. They were going to be betrayed, slandered, and sometimes even families would be split because of their faith. They would even be hated by the public for the same reason, and it would all happen, but none of those things would be valid reasons to fear. First and foremost, they did not need to be afraid, because as messengers of the Lord, they should not have been expecting to be persecuted less than Him. Second, they didn’t need to fear because the time would come, especially at the Final Judgment, when everything would be revealed – all that was kept a secret – and true justice would be rendered at that time. Third, fear was unnecessary because those who could kill the apostles physically could not do anything beyond that, since martyrdom was a victory for the Apostles and a proof of their loyalty to Christ. Fourth, they need not fear because the Lord was going to take care of their needs as human beings, who were the epitome of His creation, as well as those who confessed Him before people. Thus, the Apostles were called to be fearless in life, especially since they were witnesses of the Risen Jesus.

 Yesterday was the 106th Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide. We remembered, we ached at the injustice, and it seems that we are still hurting, given that old and new wounds mix together, and it appears that justice has fled from Armenian and Artsakh. That is not the case, however. As a Christian nation, we have had all manner of dangers, obstacles, and temptations in our history. We have gone through all of them and come out on the other side, no matter what they were. Sometimes the issues were internal divisions among us. Other times they were external political crises. There were times where we had no country, and sometimes are leaders were incompetent, indifferent, or even working against the people. We got through all the above, however, we survived, and we have kept faithful to Jesus’ commands. The true danger to our ethnic group has never overcome us, because the only genuine danger that faces us is a nation of people who are lost, who have not accepted Jesus, nor have submitted to His authority.

 In every period, we have had genuine believers that have prayed for both clergy and secular government (our two main types of national leaders). In every period, we have had those that took the Bible seriously and believed its words. Our grandfathers and grandmothers at times carried our nation with their simple faith, with their loyalty to Jesus, and brought us through deserts, through poverty, through injustices, through all kinds of cruelties. They did not fear – and they are our best examples of that fearlessness today. For them, only betraying God was scary, and they counteracted that danger by living with faith, even when they were marching through the deserts of Syria. Today, the same has happened in Artsakh, where hiding in their ditches, our young men were being hammered by enemy drones, and they were returning fire at the cruel invaders with their inferior numbers… do you think no one was praying for them? Of course, there were. The Lord did not say, however, that his apostles, his followers would not suffer or that they would not be martyred. No, He said that the disciple is not above his teacher. He also said, do not fear those who can only kill the body.

 Therefore, today, if you are afraid, ask yourself – have you accepted Jesus as your Risen Savior and Lord? Have you believed that He has forgiven your sins and cleansed you to have a true relationship with God? If you have, and you are living out that life of faith, then don’t let anything shake you or move you away from that faith of yours. Even death cannot defeat you, because you will rise to be with the Lord on the Last Day – because you submitted yourself to Him, and you are following Him. However, if you are still doubting and are not sure about Jesus Christ, it is time to accept His salvation for you, and to surrender your life to Him as Your Lord and Savior. If you do this, you will no longer have any reason to fear. If you do not, however, you will have chosen eternal loss by your rejection or meaningless procrastination since no one knows their last day on earth. Thus, don’t be afraid, come to the Defeater of Death (Jesus Christ), and submit yourself to Him. Let us all drive away fear from our lives, because as Jesus’ followers, we have no reason to fear, except to fear God, whom we already fear and worship.

 May the Lord drive away every fear from us by His love and may every unbeliever’s heart of ice be melted to faith, so that fear will have no room to dwell both within and among the people of God.

 For the Christian, there is no reason to fear (ever). Despite all kinds of pressures and persecutions, other than God Himself, a Christian has no serious reason to fear. May the Lord Bless you All. Amen.