

The Spirit Of Fear

(Testimony Cont.)

Rev 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

2Ti 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a **sound mind**.

1JO 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear hath torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love.

I preface this with the above scriptures, because since first coming to know the Lord some 30+ years ago, I have always felt and indeed believed that the opposite of Love, was never hate, but fear. Love is the spirit of truth, whilst fear is the spirit of error, for God is Love and God is Truth. We are told by John that the whole world lies (in every sense of the word), in the wicked one.

1John 5:19 [And] we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear. I remember a line of a song from the rock opera Jesus Christ Super Star, which says, "To conquer death, you only have to die".

What has led me to write this article, is a direct result of resent events, which have had fear roaring at me like a devouring lion. I have put the scripture from Jesus Christ's Revelation underneath the title above, purely in the hope that if only one person was freed from the roaring lion, with this testimony, then it will have been worthwhile me writing it. Of course all my friends and relatives know the surgical treatment I have just been through, which entailed the removal of a tumorous growth on my face, and a skin graft replaced there, that was taken from my thigh. Also I had to have my throat cut, in order for the surgeons to be able to get to the lymph glands to check out whether there were any cancer cells left lurking there. (Fortunately there were no cells lurking there, by the way). Yes, it sure was painful for several weeks, whilst I awaited surgery.

I have no desire to boast, as it is fruitless, but like Paul, if I am to boast at all, I shall boast of my infirmities. Why, because as always God truly does work all things together for good, and the wisdom, love and understanding that He gives after such ordeals, are truly wonderful.

2Cor 11:30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern my infirmities.

2Cor 12:9-10 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, **that the power of Christ may rest upon me**. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear hath torment.

So where was the torment for me? Strangely enough the torment was not in the ordeal of the operation, or that it might fail and I may die, nor was it in the wonderful after care that the hospital afforded me, with the medication, the dressings, and helping me to eat with a temporary malformed mouth etc. No. None of these. The torment came from the same source that it has always come from, and anybody who knows me will testify to the constant inner

struggle I have had, ever since first meeting Christ. My Smoking. I have feared it from the beginning of my walk. At first the fear was based on what a sinful person I was being, by continuing to smoke, and there were only too many well meaning souls in my church at the time who backed that up. I felt like a worm, a hopeless nobody. I was a baby in my 'spirit' walk then, and thought, "here's a man who has died a violent death on a cross for me, and wretched man that I am, I can't even quit smoking for Him". This eventually led me to the understanding of what Paul was getting at in Romans 7. But as I grew older the fear moved to one of self survival, and with the well meaning love of those near and dear to me, asking me to quit for my own good, and now with this latest development with the hospital, I now have a whole team of well meaning medical practitioners, telling me how imperative it is, that I quit, the torment is enhanced 100 fold. I can assure you over the years I have tried, and I have tried, and I have tried some. I have smoked from the tender age of 12. I'm now coming up to 64 years of age. That is a lot of cigarettes, thousands. I probably deserve to be 6 foot under, but God does not deal with me, by what I deserve, but He deals with me with His overwhelming unconditional love for me. The smoking has been a constant torment for years and a curse, but it has also been my greatest blessing. God has used it over and over again to show me my total inability to keep myself, and the absolute faith and trust required for Him to do the keeping. In fact even more than this, He has shown me there really is no 'self' to keep. For the self that I have always believed myself to be, is in fact not that self at all but He. He that is joined to the Lord is One Spirit/person. I know that Christ is indeed my 'real' and 'true' life. He commands us to cast all our cares on Him, but how stupidly we hold them to ourselves, with the belief, or vain hope that we have power of our own, and we are able to deal with our lives and problems without Him. Foolish Galatians we have all been and sometimes still are.

1Jo 4:3 And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that [spirit] of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

1Jo 4:6 We are of God: he that knows God hears us; he that is not of God hears not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

2Jo 1:7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

We need not fear Hollywood's Antichrist, Mr 666 showing up. We are it. Or rather, when we are believing we are of our self and have our own power and have no need of a Saviour God, and are not confessing that Christ is come in the flesh (yes, our flesh), then guess what? Hello 666, how are you doing? The carnal man. The carnal mind. That which is enmity to God and His Spirit; this is 666. This is the spirit of error and the spirit of fear. In the scripture above from Rev 12:11, it says, "and they overcame him". Who is this him? If it not be independent self. The I that I think I am, but am not. As opposed to the I that I truly am.

I must finish this by qualifying that I am not in anyways, blaming anybody for anything, for any torment, for as always it is all God, for He is all and in all, and His ways are not our ways. His ways are foolishness to man, but then man's ways are foolishness to Him. So what. No, I have the greatest respect for the medical profession, what they are able to achieve these days has become an

art form. What they have done for me, and the wonderful surgery and after care they have given, I could never thank them enough. I know that they have taken an oath to protect human life, whatever the cost, but even they as wonderful as they are can only save the body, and are unable to save the soul. But what profit a man if he is gaining the whole world, but in that process losing his soul.

My relatives and my friends, all who have tried to help me, persuade me, coerce me, in to quitting smoking over the years, have all done it from the greatest of motives, and the best of intentions, for they care for me, and do not want to lose me. To them I am also hugely grateful for their love, care and concern.

If I could quit smoking, I would have done it years ago. Might have been hit by a truck instead, who knows. But, the important thing is, as I said earlier, I could not have possibly known God's Son, His love, His wisdom in such a deep way, without these trials. I have mentioned in an earlier testimony - article, that I wrote, saying how I felt God was showing me the relevance of the cigarettes in my life, by this little story that came to me, out of the blue, during a testing time.

There was a horse that had to take a journey. This journey, by necessity took him through a very dark forest, and it was important that he made it safely to the other side. The horse was fearful, and reluctant to undergo the journey, for he knew not what perils may await him, in the darkness, but he also knew he had to go. The rider on the horses back sensing its fear, patted its neck and said, "fear not old friend, I know this forest well, I will get us safely to the other side. However I'm afraid I am going to have to place this 'bit' of metal against your gums, as I have need of complete control, and if I am to get you safely to the other side, then I'm afraid this 'bit', is of great importance". They set off, and there were times when the metal did bite into the soft flesh of the horses mouth, and there were times when it hurt so much, that the horse would begin to doubt whether this rider was in fact, an 'old friend' at all. But true to his word, the rider did indeed bring him safely through.

No sooner had this story unfolded in my mind, than I heard God say - you are that horse and I have to have your cigarettes to get you through. They are the 'bit'.

I am not saying I will never quit, for all things are possible to God. He alone will know when He has finished with the 'bit'.

I am sure there are those that would read this and say, "Well the guys a fool, he's just copping out of his responsibilities". Well, that is fine, and I can see why they may say that. And for those, this article isn't. Unless you have been through, or are at this moment going through this forest, you cannot 'see' what I am getting at. Which is why in your independence, I appear to you a fool.

1Cr 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

Ecc 4:5 The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.

Jhn 6:57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

Jhn 6:60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard [this], said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

Jesus said, “Deny self, pick up your cross, and follow me”.

I received another mental picture many years ago, regarding this saying of Jesus’.

I was looking at the back of a man’s head and shoulders. The man was looking up a steep hill, and it had recently snowed severely. As he looked up the hill he could see a snowball rolling directly toward him down the hill, and he knew that he was going to be the target. He frantically rushed around to find some wood, some sticks, anything that he could to make a barricade out of. He was extremely exhausted, but he managed it, and when the snowball hit the barricade, he heaved a sigh of relief, as it broke up into thousands of pieces. But when he looked up the hill again he could see a second snowball rolling toward him, and this one was already twice the size of the first snowball. Once again with all his strength and might, he set about building a second barricade, to strengthen the original one. Once again he succeeded just in time before the snowball hit the barricade and smashed in to a million pieces. The guy was completely exhausted. He was drained and knew that he had no strength or ability to deal with any more snowballs, but to his horror, when he looked up the hill a third time, he saw yet another snowball ten times bigger than the first two put together, rolling toward him. The man could do nothing now, he felt that his days were numbered, all he could do was face the ordeal with fear and trembling, as the snowball gathered speed and grew ever closer to him. He faced the inevitable and stood facing the onslaught, He spread his legs, stretched out his arms in readiness for the impact. The snowball hit him and broke in to a zillion pieces. The guy was amazed to find that he was stronger than any barricade.

No sooner had this picture unfolded in my mind, than I heard God saying, you see, I do not remove your problems (snowballs), I remove you, and I stand there in your stead. That’s how in denying self; you are able to embrace your cross, and to follow ME.