

- **NOTE:** As you probably have guessed, I've been having computer and Internet issues. I'm not sure if they have been resolved or not, but I'm praying that they have come to an end. Anyway, my apology for missing the last few days with the daily devotional. – Pastor Jim
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Greetings to all the beautiful Saints at Manatee Life,

SCRIPTURE:

Revelation 1:17 (NIV) – Larger reading: Revelation 1:9-20

“When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last.”

STORY:

The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith, and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety. George Muller Massena, one of Napoleon's generals, suddenly appeared with 18,000 soldiers before an Austrian town which had no means of defending itself. The town council met, certain that capitulation was the only answer. The old dean of the church reminded the council that it was Easter, and begged them to hold services as usual and to leave the trouble in God's hands. They followed his advice. The dean went to the church and rang the bells to announce the service. The French soldiers heard the church bells ring and concluded that the Austrian army had come to rescue the town. They broke camp, and before the bells had ceased ringing, vanished.

OBSERVATION:

“Do not be afraid” or “Fear not” appear repeatedly through holy writ and yet, our life is in the constant grip of fear of one kind or another. Is it because we do not have enough faith or is it because the things we fear are so many or is it simply another issue totally?

The words from scripture are a constant reassurance that God is in control and that we have nothing to fear. And, so, as the town was surrounded by a deadly army on the verge of destroying the Austrian town the pastor said, “But first we worship” and he rang the bells. What a story. In the face of danger, we peal out the glorious news that Jesus is alive. In the face of certain death, we ring out the tremendous news that death has been defeated. In the face of pending doom, we ring out the unbelievable news that God is still in charge and we have nothing to fear.

And at the sound of this Good News the evil flees. It has always been the case and it will continue to be the case. And, so the reassurance of God's word, “Do not be afraid” for truly he is the first and last and everything in life answers to him! When God is on our side who or what can stand against us? ... NOTHING!

QUOTE:

“Fear is the main source of superstition, and one of the main sources of cruelty. To conquer fear is the beginning of wisdom.” — Bertrand Russell

PRAYER:

May the good and glorious news that you are the first and last ever peal from our heart so that all fear will be gone and we can live a triumphal life of victory. Through Jesus Christ the first and the last, amen.

And the faith journey continues (with or without the computer), Pastor Jim
Jmartin450@tampabay.rr.com

386-795-5323

Sermon this Sunday is titled: “And the Reign Came Down.”
