



March 2021

1 John 4:18 *"There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love."*

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Today, I want to share with you what John wrote to the members of his community during the first century. The church was going through turmoil everywhere. The members of the church were persecuted, tortured, killed, and wrongly abused by Roman and Jewish authorities. They had to hide from the persecution, run away, and move from one place to the next. Previous to the verse we are using for this reflection, he is talking about having confidence in the Day of Judgment, because in this world we are like him.

How could they have confidence in the Day of Judgment, if they were facing so much turmoil around them? The only way they could have confidence was when they were living in God. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God and God in him. Now we are discovering why we need to have confidence inside us! It is because God lives within us. Love is not outside us; love is living inside us! That is the reason why love is made complete among us--so that we will have confidence on the Day of Judgment.

The Christian community of the first century had many reasons to be afraid. The level of adrenaline rose in them when they were under the stress of persecution. It is almost impossible not to feel fear, especially when you do not know what the outcome of any dangerous situation will be. How can we paraphrase "there is no fear in God?" Our perfect God drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in God.

If God is love, you can substitute the word love for God. When someone has been filling up with God, who is love, love drives out his or her fear. Fear leads to punishment, but Christians are perfected in God's love.

Why have I chosen this verse from the letter of 1 John? God wants his children not to be living in fear. If you believe in God, God dwells in you. Fear is eradicated. Everyone needs to be careful in observing his or her doctor's recommendations, but we cannot live in fear.

I encourage you to come to church on Easter Sunday and stop living in fear because God wants to perfect you in love. If you cannot come to church Easter Sunday because of your health conditions, I understand and hope you have a Happy Easter.

In Christ,

Rev. Rey Diaz, Pastor