



### Matthew 28:5-10 New Revised Standard Version

<sup>5</sup> But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he<sup>[a]</sup> lay. <sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead,<sup>[b]</sup> and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.” <sup>8</sup> So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers and sisters to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

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Some years ago, a company introduced a line of merchandise featuring the slogan, “No Fear.” Its clothing and decals were aimed at athletes and the adventure type reminding them that anything is possible when you push through your fears. A few

years later, a Christian clothing company offered their take on this slogan and design, but, instead of “No Fear,” their merchandise read “Fear Not.”

Fear is common to being human and all of us have been in situations that we might describe as fearful. In the past two years, Chapman University conducted a survey of people’s greatest fears and, while many of the usual subjects were on the list (snakes, heights, etc.) the top three were: political corruption, a loved one dying, and a loved one contracting COVID-19.

Fear isn’t necessarily a bad thing as it can be used for good, but, when it becomes uncontrolled, it can paralyze a person and hinder him or her from accomplishing anything in life. With fear being normal to our lives, perhaps it is appropriate that the most common command throughout Scripture is “fear not.” On several hundred occasions, some form of “fear not” appears in both the Old and New Testaments. It even occurs in some of Jesus’ post-resurrection words which we find in today’s sermon text.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary had been witnesses to the empty tomb. They were startled by the presence of an angelic being who indicated Jesus was no longer there because he had been raised to life. In their haste to go and tell the other disciples, they encountered the risen Jesus along their way. He offered them greetings and also a charge not to be afraid.

Each of us has something of which we are fearful today. For many, it is much more than insects, clowns, etc. and is hindering us from being who God has created us to be. What are your fears? What needs to be surrendered to God in order that you might experience peace and hear the words “Do not be afraid?”

**Prayer Pebble:** Lord, you know my deepest fears. Remind me that I am not alone and that you will be with me always.