

Protection from sudden fear

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I was invited to travel to a foreign country as part of a small cast of performers. The political situation there was unstable, and many people thought the trip dangerous and unwise. After considerable prayer, however, I decided not to let fear prevent me from doing something worthwhile and I accepted the invitation.

During a concert given to a large, all-male audience of a different race, an innocent comment unexpectedly triggered a violent outburst by a section of the crowd belonging to a radical political group. I took refuge with the other performers in a nearby store-room whose walls were partitions that went only three quarters of the way to the ceiling. Those outside the walls subjected us to physical intimidation, verbal abuse, and threats against our lives. It was a terrifying experience for four young Australian women who were completely unused to political tensions of that type and totally unprepared to deal with them.

I myself was shocked and frightened by the suddenness and ferocity of the attack, and so I was surprised when a cast member asked me to take action. Not knowing what she envisaged, I replied that the only thing I could do was pray. "Well, do it!" she stated firmly. Her startling pronouncement awakened me from the fear, and I started to pray.

I knew that turning to God in prayer brings practical results. Prayer is not simply the only thing to do in *some* situations; it's the best thing to do in *every* situation. When confronted with illness or danger, I have proved that radically relying on God's power and goodness brings healing. Right then I took a stand against being transfixed by the intimidation and ugliness of evil.

No one is actually helpless or powerless in the face of hatred of any kind. When menaced we can acknowledge the supremacy of God's law. We can all turn to God and listen for His messages of comfort and peace. God is in charge, guarding and protecting everyone who places his or her trust in Him and obeys His direction. The tender words of the [91st Psalm](#) remind us that we aren't alone. Right where anger and hatred seem to be in charge, we can be shielded by Love's all-power. As God's expression, we have strength and dominion. We can remain calm and affirm that because God is All, menacing actions cannot touch God's man. Because divine Love is omnipotent, evil intentions are powerless.

Since there is only one Mind, a so-called evil mind does not exist either as a power or a reality. Evil is no part of God and thus no part of God's government. Man, as the image of God, reflecting Mind's intelligence and peace, can never be subject to hostility. We are secure in God's keeping. As I prayed along these lines, the others sat quietly on boxes. After things outside the door quieted down, they asked me to tell them what I was praying about. I told them of the Bible's inspiring examples of safekeeping. Daniel's life was preserved in the lions' den, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego walked unharmed from a fiery furnace (see [Dan. 6:1-23](#); [3:1-28](#)). I also described how Moses was saved at the Red Sea (see [Ex. 14:5-31](#)).

As I recalled these wonderful stories, so full of courage and spiritual conviction, I felt buoyed and hopeful of a peaceful resolution. Knowing that we had to walk to our transport through the crowd of men now waiting outside in the dark for us to leave, I told the cast members of Christ Jesus' experience.

When he was faced with an angry mob intent on harming him, Jesus' steadfast trust in God enabled him to pass safely through the midst of them and go on his way unharmed (see Luke 4:28-30). This example of our Master gave me confidence that we could do the same. I suggested to them that we walk out fearlessly, looking straight ahead. As we left the room I felt God's tenderhearted regard for *everyone*. We were able to board our open-sided, uncovered vehicle without incident. Although some objects were thrown toward us, no one was struck, and we drove away unscathed.



Since this experience, whenever I hear reports of violence, I gratefully think of what Mary Baker Eddy writes in her book *The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*:

“Good thoughts are an impervious armor; clad therewith you are completely shielded from attacks of error of every sort. And not only yourselves are safe, but all whom your thoughts rest upon are thereby benefited” (p.210).

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