

Pk's Perspectives ... Live in Peaceful Confidence

It happened seventy-six years ago. The irony of it, however, is still sobering. A mural artist named J.H. Zorthian read about a tiny boy who had been killed in traffic. His stomach churned as he thought of that ever happening to one of his three children. His worry became an inescapable anxiety. The more he imagined such a tragedy, the more fearful the artist became; his effectiveness as an artist was put on hold once he began running scared.

Eventually he surrendered to his obsession. Canceling his negotiations to purchase a large house in busy Pasadena, California, he began to seek a place where his children would be safe. His pursuit became so intense that he set aside all his work while scheming and planning every possible means to protect his children from harm. He tried to imagine the presence of danger in everything. The location of the residence was critical. It must be sizable and remote, so he bought twelve acres perched on a mountain at the end of a long winding, narrow road. At the turns along the road he posted signs, "Children At Play." Before starting construction on the house itself, Zorthian personally built and fenced a playground for his three children. He built it in such a way that it was impossible for a car to get within fifty feet of it.

Next, the house. With meticulous care he blended beauty and safety into the place. He put into it various shades of the designs he had concentrated in the murals he had hanging in forty-two public buildings in eastern cities. Only this time his objective was more than colorful art — most of all, it had to be safe and secure. He made sure of that. Finally, the garage was to be built. There would be only one automobile to ever enter and park in that garage — Zorthian's.

He stood back and surveyed every possibility of danger to his children. He could only think of one remaining hazard: he had to back out of the garage. He might, in some hurried moment, back over one of the children. He immediately made plans for a protected turnaround. The contractor returned and set the forms for that additional area, but before the cement could be poured, a downpour stopped the project. It was the first rainfall in many weeks of a long West Coast drought.

If it had not rained that week, the concrete turnaround would have been completed and been in use by Sunday. That was February 9, 1947 — the day Zorthian's eighteen-month-old son, Tiran, squirmed away from his sister's grasp and ran behind the car as Zorthian backed out from the garage. His child was killed instantly. (*from The Quest for Character by Charles Swindoll*)

Harry Emerson Fosdick writes: "Fear imprisons, faith liberates; fear paralyzes, faith empowers; fear disheartens, faith encourages; fear sickens, faith heals; fear makes useless, faith makes serviceable." One of the most revealing verses in Job's story is 3:35: "For the thing that I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me." The Bible teaches us that "God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control." (2 Timothy 1:7) Submit your fears to the reality of God's sovereign authority and faithful love. Live in the peaceful confidence of your Father's shadow - even when surrounded by difficult, challenging, and fear inducing circumstances. Grace & peace, love you. PK