

“Do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you” (D&C 68:6).

THE **Opposite** OF **Fear**

BY PATRICIA R. JONES

Based on a true story

Tricia stared with wide, watery eyes at her bedroom closet. The door was broken and wouldn't shut all the way. In the dark the clothes looked like huddled monsters waiting to jump from their hangers and rush at her. To make things worse, she could hear loud breathing that seemed to come from the closet.

She knew that there were bad people who sometimes hurt children. One of them could be hiding in the closet! She also remembered the story a boy in her kindergarten class had told about a nightmare. He had been chased by a snake with a very long tail. The snake caught him and tied him up with its tail!

Tricia's sisters, MaryAnn and Rebecca, were sleeping in the bedroom too, but she didn't call out to them. Whatever was hiding in the closet might attack. She heard the TV fall silent. That meant her parents had finished watching the news and were going to bed. But she couldn't run to them—she couldn't even move.

Tricia was so scared that she wanted to cry, but she didn't dare make a sound. All she could do was stare at the dark, creepy closet, hoping that whatever lurked there wouldn't get her.

As Tricia stared, a thought came quietly into her mind: “Why don't you pray?” Immediately she felt a little better. Her mom had told her that she could pray anytime,

anywhere. She didn't even have to close her eyes! Tricia prayed silently. As soon as she said, “In the name of Jesus Christ,” a calm feeling came over her. She knew that Heavenly Father had heard her prayer.

With every breath she became calmer. The scary breathing wasn't as loud anymore either. In fact, as her own breathing grew quieter and quieter, so did the breathing from the closet. Tricia held her breath. The breathing stopped entirely. Finally she understood—she had been afraid of her own breathing!

She felt a little foolish, but mostly she felt grateful. As soon as she had thought about Jesus, her scary thoughts had stopped being scary, and she could see how silly they really were. She remembered her father telling her that the opposite of fear was faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. “No wonder Satan likes people to be scared,” she thought. “They're not thinking about Jesus when they're afraid.”

Tricia snuggled into her covers and prayed again. This time she thanked her Heavenly Father for hearing her prayer and helping her overcome her fears. When she finished praying, she silently sang “Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam.” Now she wasn't afraid to close her eyes and let the music and words warm her. Before long, she was fast asleep. ●



“Our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the source of spiritual power that will give you and me the assurance that we have nothing to fear.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Our Lord and Savior,” *Liahona*, Dec. 1997, 14; “You Have Nothing to Fear from the Journey,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 61.