

Fresh Start

By Jerry Bader

What's in Your Blanket?

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In last week's Fresh Start we shared the backstory of the creation of *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. Specifically, we recounted how Peanuts creator Charles Schulz insisted on the inclusion of Bible verses in the production. As part of that discussion, we included an observation from Jason Sorowski that at the moment Linus reads "fear not" from Luke 2:10, he drops his security blanket. By 1965, when the program first aired, Peanuts fans were well acquainted with the relationship between Linus and his security blanket. In every frame of the comic strip where Linus appeared, he was holding his blanket. He was asked about it, mocked about it and survived attempts to take it from him. But he *never* surrendered it, until that moment in an animated television Christmas special. [Sorowski sees it as important symbolism](#):

"Looking at it now, it is pretty clear what Charles Schulz was saying, and it's so simple it's brilliant. The birth of Jesus separates us from our fears. The birth of Jesus frees us from the habits we are unable (or unwilling) to break ourselves. The birth of Jesus allows us to simply drop the false security we have been grasping so tightly and learn to trust and cling to Him instead."

So, to borrow from a popular advertising slogan, it seems a good time to ask – "what's in your blanket?" What fears or habits are you clinging to that you can let go of as we celebrate the arrival of Christ this year? Some possibilities:

- Resisting God's call to action because of fear of failing
- Fear of losing financial security
- Creating false expectations that God has for you and fearing you won't live up to them
- Fear created by obsessing over political and other world events that we cannot control
- Fear of loneliness
- Fear of not being accepted
- Fear of being misunderstood
- Fear of never being able to give up the habits of talking too much, eating too much (fill in the blank) too much.

There are a lot more, but you get the idea. In John 14, Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will teach all things and remind us of everything Jesus has said. He then says – *Peace is what I leave with you; it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world does. Do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid.* John 14:27

From the Life Application Study Bible notes on this verse:

"The end result of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives is deep and lasting peace. Unlike worldly peace, which is usually defined as the absence of conflict, this peace is confident assurance in any circumstance; with Christ's peace, we have no need to fear the present or the future. Sin, fear, uncertainty, doubt and numerous other forces are at war within us. The peace of God moves into our hearts and lives to restraint these hostile forces and offer comfort in place of conflict. Jesus says He will give us that peace if we are willing to accept it."

This Christmas season, search your heart for fears you didn't release when you accepted Jesus into your life. Offer them to Him and then, as Sorowski advises, "just drop the blanket." After all, you don't need it anymore. Jesus has you covered. The celebration of His arrival on earth seems like the perfect time to remember that.