

Absence of Fear

It was late Summer in 1995. I had just set off on my motorbike to ride to the evening service at Grace UMC in Atlanta. I was in the far right lane of Piedmont Avenue (a four-lane, one way street), heading north, and was slowing down for a red light at Ralph McGill Boulevard next to a car in the lane to my left. Just as I almost stopped, the light changed to green and so I revved up and started to cross Ralph McGill when suddenly a car appeared on Ralph McGill to my left and we collided (the car waiting on Piedmont at the light and to my left had partially blocked my view of Ralph McGill).

I was tossed into the air and was sailing, facing the sky, over Ralph McGill with my arms stretched out like an upside-down bird. I was aware that I might die. And yet while sailing like this for about a second or two (although it seemed much longer), I took notice of the beauty of the blue sky filled with fluffy clouds, and then suddenly a cross appeared in the sky à la Constantine. I banged to the pavement flat on my back still looking at the sky and the cross. It was all very leisurely and I felt totally at ease. I then realized that the cross I had spied in the sky was on top of the Methodist chapel at the intersection of Courtland and Ralph McGill, a short block away.*

* The other driver approached me with apology and inquired about me. I replied that I thought I was ok (and I was indeed uninjured) and inquired about her and never offered even a suggestion of a reproach. Indeed I should have been a more careful driver and more on the lookout when approaching the intersection. So we both were wrong, at least in a court of truth, if not in a court of law. She was in violation of running a red light, but I was guilty in not being more careful at that moment.

What still stands out to me about all this was the absence of fear. I decided to take this as a sign of God that I should never have reason to be afraid. I saw it as an anticipation of the state of [continuing holiness](#) promoted by John Wesley and promised to all Christians at some point before death (and usually just before death), where all fear and all sinful thinking vanish and we are prepared to meet God face to face.

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