

What Sort Of Man? (2)

Ponder: Perfect Faith

Scripture: “Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” (Matthew 8:26, NKJV)

When Jesus miraculously stilled the storm on Galilee, the disciples were so awe-struck that they asked, “What sort of man is this that even winds and sea obey Him?” (Matthew 8:27 ESV). Indeed, what sort of man was Jesus? In a prior devotional, we considered Him as a man who, like all of us, became tired and needed sleep. The fact that He didn’t awaken even when waves were filling the boat with water demonstrates not only the level of His exhaustion and thus the depth of His sleep, but also the magnitude of His faith.

Anyone who has been out on a lake in a small boat during a storm can empathize with the terrified disciples. But Jesus challenged them to replace their fear with faith! (Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” (Matthew 8:26). “Why are you so fearful? How is it that you do not have faith?” (Mark 4:40). In these passages, the word for “fearful” indicates a paralyzing dread that is always spoken of negatively in the New Testament. After Jesus stilled the storm, the disciples “feared” or were” afraid,” but the inspired writers used a different word. It connotes a feeling of deep reverence and awe, which is commendable.

Jesus’ faith in God contrasts sharply with the paralyzing fear of the disciples. Faith and fear are like oil and water – they just don’t mix! Invariably, one will overcome the other. Our Savior confidently trusted that the Father would care for them, so He had no concern about sinking or drowning. But fear prevented the faith of the disciples from growing to the extent that they could be confident even when earthly circumstances were bleak.

Our faith, like that of the disciples, can grow when it is tested (see James 1:2-3). We may never have the perfect faith Jesus had, but we need not spend our lives in fear! Let us willingly embrace whatever trials God allows to come our way, realizing that He truly cares for us. More on that in another devotional!

Song: “Living By Faith”

Prayer: Gracious Father, You have always been faithful, even when we are not. Help us to trust You, and to be confident in You even when the storms in our lives are blowing fiercely. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Joe Slater (Justin, TX)

jaslater1954@gmail.com