

way — there were no other alternatives for accomplishing God’s plan. He began telling His apostles these details regarding His fate so they would be prepared for it when it happened. So when one of them responded with a rebuke, Jesus saw it for what it was: an attempt by Satan to discourage Him from finishing His mission. He came down hard on Peter, not out of personal animosity, but as a means of self-defense. If He allowed Himself to listen to too much of this kind of flattery, it would be much more difficult to finish His course. He had to put an end to this kind of talk. He pushed aside the personal friendship and dealt firmly with the temptation.

There is another lesson, and a more interesting one, when we examine the exchange from Pe-

ter’s perspective. There is no doubt that Peter rebuked Jesus solely from a sense of loyalty to his Master. The idea of Jesus’ work coming to such a humiliating and bizarre end was unthinkable. Peter’s rebuke was not intended to be hurtful, nor a message from Satan. Peter was ignorant, but well-intended.

So when Jesus turned on him with such a sharp response, Peter was dumfounded. “Satan”? “An offense”? “Not mindful of the things of God”? How those words must have stung Peter’s ears! If he knew his own heart, Peter would never say or do anything to offend His Master. Yet here was Jesus turning Peter’s admonition back on his head with uncharacteristic ferocity.

Peter did not argue back, so per-

haps he took Jesus’ words to heart. His later behavior at Jesus’ arrest and trial, however, suggest that he still didn’t understand what Jesus was talking about. He may not have understood, but at least he no longer tried to rebuke Jesus.

Whether Peter got the message or not, there is a lesson here for us when we feel compelled to set a brother straight. Whatever my intentions, my words of kindly rebuke can end up doing Satan’s work, if I am not careful to understand the circumstances my friend is dealing with. Peter misspoke because he did not see the bigger picture. We, too, can cause a brother to stumble by not taking the time to understand the larger context. Before we rebuke, we should take the time to listen. ~

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Assembly Schedule  
Sunday

Bible Class for all ages \_\_\_ 9:00 AM  
Morning Worship Service \_\_\_ 10:00 AM  
Evening Worship Service \_\_\_ 6:00 PM

Wednesday  
Bible Class for all ages \_\_\_ 7:00 PM

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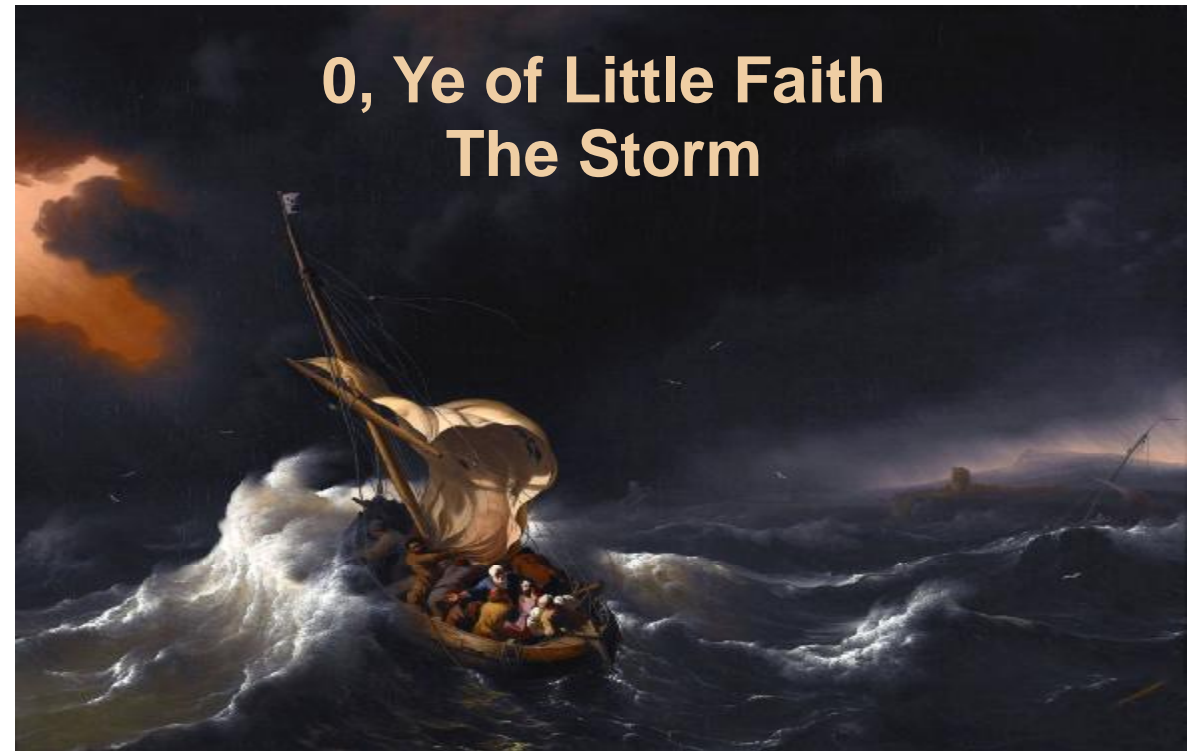
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# NAVARRE MESSENGER

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by Lucas Ward

The apostles were reprimanded several times by Jesus for a lack of faith. Yet these were men who left their livelihoods to follow Jesus. They faced ridicule for following Jesus. Toward the end they faced great personal danger in order to follow Jesus. As Peter says, "We have left all and followed you" (Mark 10:28).

So, these were men who by our standards would seem to have great faith, but their lack of faith constantly disappointed the Lord. So let's look at the instances that the Lord said "O ye of little faith" and discover what the apostles lacked, then see how we can use that to increase our own faith. In this first article, we'll consider the apostles in the storm.

The Storm: Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25

Our first question is, "Did the apostles have reason to be afraid—under normal circumstances?" The answer would be yes. In Luke's account, he admits that they were in jeopardy. The boat was filling with water. These men—many of whom were ex-

perienced Galilean fishermen—had lost control and everything they knew said that they were about to die. All through this, Jesus slept. Luke has him falling asleep almost as he entered the boat. Mark adds a little when he says Jesus was asleep on a cushion in the stern. Can't you feel the frustration of the apostles? Here they are, fighting for their lives, trying to avoid being swept overboard, bailing for all they are worth, yet the boat still filling, and there is Jesus—asleep on a cushion!

So they finally ask, "Don't you care that we are about to die?" (Mark 4:38). There is anger in the question, and frustration. Matthew and Luke both record the apostles' plea to be saved, but Mark shows that they were feeling more than just fear.

Upon being awakened, Jesus calms the storm. Think about that for a minute. We've all heard the story so many times that it loses its power. I've experienced Florida thunderstorms with rain so fierce that it almost knocks you flat, thunder so loud it leaves your ears ringing, and lightning so bright and continuous that you can almost read by it. How would you feel if you saw someone look up at one of those storms in annoyance and say, "Oh, shut up!" and saw the storm quit? The rain stops instantly and the clouds part and run away like scared kids. Even the echoing of the thunder halts! That is what Jesus did. No wonder Mark says the apostles were afraid when they saw him do this—his power was incredible.

Then Jesus confronts the apostles, questioning their faith. "Why are you afraid, O ye of little

faith?" (Matt 8:26). "Where is your faith?" (Luke 8:25). "Why are you fearful? Have you not yet faith?" (Mark 4:4 emphasis mine). Jesus is genuinely annoyed and disappointed. It's easiest to see it where he basically asks, "Don't you get it yet?" He is flabbergasted that they have been with him for so long and don't have better faith. Matthew also shows this in his demeaning address of the apostles: O ye of little faith. In Luke he sounds like a tired, disappointed mother questioning her children about where they left something important: "Where is your faith?"

So, what was the fault of the apostles? Where was the lack in their faith? The answer is seen in what the apostles say among themselves. Of the three parallel passages, the only thing that is almost word for word is the amazement of the apostles—What kind of man is this, that even the winds and sea obey him? ... Who then is this, that even the winds and sea obey him? Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the sea, and they obey him? (Matt 8:27; Mark 4:41; Luke 8:25). The lack in the apostles' faith was that they did not know who Jesus was. They had not yet come to the understanding of Jesus as the Son of God. They knew him as a man of God, a great teacher and prophet, but they did not yet believe that he was God. They feared because they did not realize that nothing could harm them when they were with the Master. They should have known. Jesus was upset because they showed so little faith. He had expected better.

I get the feeling that the apostles

were beginning to understand, intellectually, who Jesus was—that if asked in a calm setting, they might get the answer right. But this was not a calm setting. They were terrified. And rightfully so, under normal circumstances—but they were there with Jesus. If they had truly believed in their gut what they knew in their heads, there would have been no fear. Ultimately, the problem comes down to not truly knowing who Jesus is.

So the question to us is do I really know who Jesus is? Sure, intellectually I know him. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. That's easy. But do I know who he is in my gut? When everything I know, all my life's experiences tell me I'm in trouble, does my faith fail because I don't know that Jesus is master of all and he is with me so nothing can truly hurt me? (Matt 18:20; 28:20; Phil 4:5).

So, if I'm struggling with persistent sin, whether it be drunkenness or immorality or fierce anger or whatever, and it really has me down, and all I know says I can't beat it, do I despair, or do I know who he is, that he is with me, and I can't be harmed if I'm with him? When the doctors say that my mother will go blind and there is nothing that can be done, do I know who the Lord is and have faith, or do I ask, "Carest thou not that we perish?"

The first and biggest impediment to our faith is knowing Who the Lord is—that he is over all, has the power to do anything, even to controlling the storms of our lives. If we know who our Lord is, and that he is with us, nothing and no one should cause us to fear. ~

## “Get Behind Me, Satan!”



by David King

“From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, ‘Far be it from You, Lord, this shall not happen to You!’ But He turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men’” (Matt. 16:21-23).

This testy exchange between Jesus and Peter occurred right after Peter's famous confession that Jesus was the Christ (v. 13-19). Whatever pride Peter felt in that earlier incident was quickly smashed in this later episode, revealing the cleverness of our adversary.

First, consider this exchange from the perspective of Jesus. He not only knew how His life would end, He knew that it had to be that