

Learning how to stand on a promise God makes to me

Matthew 14:22 And immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat, and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.

As disciples these men were already devoted followers of Jesus Christ. They had already experienced enough of the reality of God and of His love and goodness towards them, to surrender the course of their lives to Him. Their inclination was to do whatever He told them to do. To these yielded men now comes a lesson in how faith in a promise from God works.

Matthew 14:23 And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up into a mountain by Himself to pray: and when evening had come, He was there alone.

Matthew 14:24 But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves: for the wind was against them.

The disciples' circumstances had begun to get difficult. To the serious born-again believer difficult circumstances sometimes arise. The storms of life may come upon them, through tormenting thoughts, through temptations, through physical symptoms, through financial challenges, and through adverse turns in relationships.

Matthew 14:25 Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.

But Jesus, the Son and Word of God, who says I will never leave you nor forsake you, is never far away. Especially in the darkest hour of our trouble, when we look for Him with the eyes of our hearts.

Matthew 14:26 And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

Matthew 14:27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; do not be afraid.

Matthew 14:28 And Peter answered Him and said, Lord, if it is You, tell me to come to You on the water.

The disciples, including Peter, had both seen Jesus and heard Him, and yet they were still unsure, questioning and doubting thoughts were competing for their attention along with the truth of what they had seen and heard. Often we believers are in the same state, God has revealed His will to us in some matter, through the

inward witness of His Spirit or through a scripture, but then we entertain questioning and reasoning thoughts that cast doubt on what we have spiritually seen and heard. Thoughts such as, was that really God or was that just me? If we stop at that point we will never act on God's direction, we'll just stay in the seeming safety of the boat and forfeit God's blessing. But if like Peter we are not satisfied with uncertainty over whether it was or it wasn't God, we will boldly ask God for a confirming word.

Matthew 14:29 So He said, Come. And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

Jesus said, "come". This time Peter was listening with his heart and he heard the word God spoke to him. Faith, that unstoppable confidence in God, always comes when we hear God speak to us, through His word, with our hearts, that is in our spirits. This is the God kind of faith, Jesus, the Word of God is the author and developer of this kind of faith in me as I hear Him speak a scripture to my heart.

With this faith of Jesus Christ in him, Peter now acts, he now has from God the ability to obey God. He gets out of the boat and starts to walk on the water. Faith without action is dead. As he acted though do you not think the reasoning carnal mind or brain of this fisherman wasn't shouting at him, water cannot support your weight, you're going to sink and drown. Whatever reasoning, common sense thoughts Peter had, clearly he brought them all down into captivity to the obedience of Christ, God's word abiding in his heart. He walked on the water, symbolizing walking spiritually on God's word or standing on a promise from God, in victory over a circumstance.

Whenever we who have surrendered our lives to God, hear with our hearts a word, a promise from God and we begin to act and speak like that word or promise is infallibly true, we will encounter opposition. While our hearts may be fixed and established trusting in the Lord, questioning, challenging, reasoning fear-filled thoughts will arise in our intellects. These lying thoughts are the fiery darts from our spiritual enemies, Satan the father of lies and his demons, seeking to overthrow our simple child like faith in God. Such thoughts will beg us to observe the wind and consider the clouds so that we will neither sow nor reap (Ecc. 11:4) nor stand on a promise from God. When we shift the gaze of our hearts from the truth of the word God spoke to us, and on which we began to act, we're in deep trouble.

Matthew 14:30 But when he saw that the wind was very strong, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, Lord, save me.

Matthew 14:31 And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand, and caught him, and said to him, O you of little faith, why did you doubt?

Often our immediate circumstances will be unfavorable to or even the exact opposite of what God has said to us, and the natural part of us, particularly our common sense, will try to demand that we be governed by the reality of circumstance. But our hearts, with the faith of Christ in them, will over-rule and insist that God's unbreakable word, a higher reality, prevail, believing that faithful is He that has promised us who also will bring it to pass. This is the fight of faith.

We may well overcome the thoughts of Satan, and prevail over a circumstance not yet in line with God's word, then the next source of opposition to our walking on the water of God's word can come through people. Unsaved people or saved people, often a family member or someone else close to us, who themselves are walking by sight, in the flesh, and not by faith can be the unwitting pawns of the enemy to sow words of doubt, unbelief or ridicule on our obedience to God. If we dwell on someone's unbelieving words, however well intended they might have been, we may find our faith faltering. This doesn't necessarily mean we need to get back in the boat and give up the faith fight, we simply must now go to God in our hearts and boldly seek and hear another word from Him to strengthen our hearts and restore our faith.

If our situation is really desperate, through thoughts or circumstances or the opinions and words of others, and we sense we are about to go under through doubt, we should immediately cry out to God, in our hearts, to help us, to save us from defeat. He will always deliver us, albeit sometimes with a loving admonition for yielding to unbelief.

Matthew 14:32 And when they had got into the boat, the wind ceased.

Matthew 14:33 Then those that were in the boat came and worshipped Him, saying, Truly You are the Son of God.

To walk on the water of God's word, to fight and win the good fight of faith, without which it is impossible to please our heavenly Father for He needs our faith in order to fulfill His promises to us, can sometimes be, people-wise, a lonely place. A person truly walking by faith can look like an idiot even to a carnal Christian, because things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to the carnal Christian and he can't understand them because he seeks understanding with his intellect and not his heart. Also while there is a genuine faith walk there are also counterfeits in which mental assent to a scripture and presumption try to imitate heart faith. But since the scripture didn't come to me from God there is neither the faith nor power of Christ in me to prevail. If I stay totally honest with God though I will readily distinguish mental assent from heart faith and avoid the snare of presumption. His sheep really do hear His voice.

Only Peter sought and heard in His heart the confirming and faith giving word from Jesus. Only Peter, now with the faith of Christ, got out of the boat and walked on the water. It shouldn't be surprising therefore that Peter was the first to hear from God

the revelation that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God. And, that on the day of Pentecost, now filled with the Holy Spirit, it was Peter that God could preach through to the saving of 3000 souls.

Do I have a word from God that He has spoken personally to me concerning my case

Num 23:19 ...**Has He said it**, and will He not do it? Or **has He spoken it**, and will He not make it good?

2 Tim 3:16 **All Scripture is given by inspiration from God, and is profitable for ...re-proof** (literally to re-convince me of what His will is, of what He will do)...

Prov 22:21 **So that I can make you know the certainty of the words of truth, so that you can answer words of truth to those who ask you.**

Hebrews 11:1 **Now faith is the certainty of things hoped for, the proof of things not seen.**

Rom 10:17 **So then faith comes by hearing** (with my heart), **and hearing of the word of God** (that He , by His Spirit, speaks personally to me).

Will I endure, no matter what, and do God's will, until His promise to me is fulfilled?

Heb 10:36 **For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:**

Heb 6:15 **So, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.** (How?)

Heb 12:3 **Consider Jesus who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself** (doesn't He, the great enduring One, live in me? Can't I in and by Him therefore endure?) **lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.**

1 Thess 5:24 **He who calls you** (and lives in you) **is faithful, who also will do it.**

Will I remain living in Christ, submitted, loving, bearing fruit, certain of His promise?

2 Cor 1:20 **For all the promises of God in Jesus are Yes, and in Him Amen** (so be it), **to the glory of God through us.**

Mark 9:23 **Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to the one who believes."**

Jam 2:17 **So also faith, if it does not have works, deeds and actions of AMP obedience to back it up, by itself is destitute of power, inoperative, dead.**

Isa 41:10 **Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand** (more of My faith building words that I will speak personally to you).

Ps 55:22 Cast your burden on the LORD, And He will sustain you; He will never permit the righteous to be moved (from their loving trust in Him).