

Series: Questions  
Title: Why Are Ye Fearful?  
Text: Matthew 8: 23-27  
Date: August 10, 2017  
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**Matthew 8: 26: And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?**

Here is another question our Lord asks sinners.

If we would be a true disciple [student] of Christ, in fellowship with him, then we must follow Christ by believing on him—**Matthew 8: 23: And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.**

Many think of following Christ but something always gets in their way. For instance, some cannot bear to suffer for his sake—**Matthew 8: 19: And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.** Self-willed religionists always begin with “*I will...*”; the contrite say, “Lord, if thy will...” The self-made professor brags about what he will do. “*Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.*”

Isn't it amazing how differently Christ preached to men than how preachers preach in our day—**Matthew 8: 20: And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.**

Most tell you that following Christ will mean you will be prosperous. Christ said that if you follow me you will not have where to lay your head. You will be a sojourner in this life just passing through. For this reason, few truly follow Christ.

Other's would follow Christ but there seems to always be something more important to them—**Matthew 8: 21: And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. 22: But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.** This does not mean that a believer should not bury his father. But Christ uses something so important to show us the all-important thing is to follow Christ—nothing justifies us for not following Christ. Yet, very few are willing to leave father and mother's opinions and cleave to Christ alone! If you can, then thank God because it is only by his grace.

In Mark's gospel, before entering the ship, Christ preached the parable of the 4 kinds of ground. Of those 4 kinds of ground, only 1 received the seed and brought forth fruit. Christ makes us good ground; Christ makes us receive the seed of the gospel. He said, “*Unto you it is given...but unto them it is not given.*”

So, by God's grace, true disciples follow Christ no matter what—**Matthew 8: 23: And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.**

When they followed Christ, they were physically in *fellow-ship* with Christ; when we follow Christ by faith, we are spiritually in fellow-ship with Christ. But those who stayed behind were not; nor are those who refuse to believe on Christ in spiritual fellowship with Christ. The only way you and I can have fellowship with Christ is by believing on Christ.

If we would be students/disciples of Christ then we must follow him by believing on him. If we would be united to Christ—in fellow-ship with Christ—in communion with him—we must believe on Christ. There is nothing as important as following Christ by believing on Christ by God's grace.

Also, know this, faith in Christ will be tried by great trials. It is a must—**Matthew 8: 24: And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves:...**

It would seem that having followed Christ, they would have experienced a sunny voyage on a glassy-calm-sea. Many false preachers teach that if you believe on Christ you will be healthy and wealthy all your days. This is not true.

Christ promised his disciples that we shall suffer in this world. As soon as Christ publicly was baptized, immediately Satan began to tempt him and Christ began to suffer rejection from men. He says to us,

John 15: 19: If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. 20 : Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. 21: But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

John 16: 33: These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

You who are baptized should expect to be tried soon. But I want you to see in this passage that believers suffer trials to teach us that we are not saved by ourselves but by Christ alone. This is what is meant by the words we just sang:

When thru fiery trials thy pathway shall lie  
My grace all sufficient shall be thy supply  
The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design  
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine

## **TRIALS TEACH US BY WHOSE FAITH WE ARE SAVED**

**Matthew 8: 24: And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. 25: And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.**

When the tempest was raging, *Christ was asleep*. In this we see his faithfulness as a Man representing his people as he trusted God his Father. Surely, he knew there was a tempest. The front and back are the worst places to be in a ship during a storm—*he was in the hinder part of the ship*. He could feel the ship rolling, creaking and the winds howling! Yet, Christ was asleep.

Christ, who is God, as a Man, representing his people, trusted God his Father perfectly in the midst of every tempest, even his worst tempest on the cross. It was by *the faith of Christ* that he took flesh like unto his brethren. It was by *the faith of Christ* by which he remained faithful in the face of every temptation. It was *the faith of Christ* by which he went to Gethsemane at the appointed hour to present himself as the spotless Lamb of God to be made sin by God for his people, knowing full well the shame of that and what he would suffer. It was *the faith of Christ* by which he endured being made a curse for his people, cut off from God who he loved, in that great tempest of strict justice in place of his people! From his perfect holy heart came perfect faith, knowing and trusting that his God would not allow him to perish. He said,

Isaiah 50: 7: For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

Now, compare Christ's perfect faith with our faith seen in his disciples. Having Christ the Life so near, they thought they were about to die. In Mark's gospel, they even accused Christ of letting them perish, "*Master, carest thou not that we perish?*" (Mark 4: 38) Let this scene teach us that we are not saved by our faith; it is the object of our faith that saves us—Christ the Faithful One!

Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but **by the faith of Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified **by the faith of Christ**, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Galatians 3:22: But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise **by faith of Jesus Christ** might be given to them that believe.

Philippians 3:9: [Paul said I want to] be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through **the faith of Christ**, the righteousness which is **of God** by faith:

When Christ said to one, "*Thy faith hath saved thee*" he certainly meant that we must have faith in Christ. But when we begin thinking our faith is strong and we are saved by our faith, God sends the trial. Why? "*I only design, thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.*" The dross that needs to be consumed is us putting faith in our faith, which is putting faith in ourselves. The gold he refines is making us behold Christ is our Strength and our Salvation. It is the object of our faith that saves us—Christ the Faithful One!

## TRIALS FORCE US TO CHRIST

**Matthew 8: 24: And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. 25: And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.**

While the wind and the seas were calm we do not see them running to Christ. It is likely they did not even notice Christ had parted and went to the rear of the ship to sleep. According to the other gospels, they did not run to Christ until the ship was full of water and they saw they were in jeopardy. They probably tried to save themselves by striking the sails, by throwing overboard what was not needed, until at last they saw they could not save themselves—*then* they ran to Christ.

Usually, we do not pray—truly pray in earnest—until we are forced to our knees. We wait until we have exhausted our efforts, until the boat has almost gone down, until we see we have no strength and no way in ourselves—*then* we go to the Lord, asking, "*Master, save us: we perish!*"

Brethren, the trial is to force us to Christ, to teach us to seek Christ first—and that means all the time in all things. "*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*" (Mt 6: 33)

## TRIALS TEACH US WHAT IS MOST DEADLY TO US

**Matthew 8: 25: And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. 26: And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea;**

Why did Christ first rebuke them then rebuke the winds and the sea? It is not the winds and the sea (the trial) that is our great danger. Our greatest danger is our unbelief. So first, "*he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?*"

Is it that we doubt *the Life we have in Christ*? Believer, Christ is our Life! We cannot die with Christ as our Life. He said,

John 11: 25:...I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

Do we doubt *the security in Christ's finished work*? He stood as their Surety so his work had to be finished because Christ entered covenant to justify them. So that ship could not sink and his people perish because his cross work *was not yet* accomplished! Now, we cannot perish because his work *is* accomplished! God is just so he will not execute Christ then execute one for whom Christ died!

Are we fearful because we doubt *his love* for us? Would Christ lay down his life and suffer such a shameful death to redeem us then let us perish? Of course not!

Do we doubt *his faithfulness*? Would he teach us to trust him only to make us ashamed for doing so? Of course not!

Psalm 37:40: And the LORD shall help [his people], and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.

1 Peter 2:6: Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

Believer always remember, as real as Christ was in that ship and touched with the feeling of those waves, so Christ is in fellowship with us and touched with the feeling of our infirmities. If we suffer, he suffers; if we are touched, he is touched. And he will have compassion on us and save us. Believe on him! Our unbelief is our greatest danger, not those things we are afraid of! So we need the trial for him to turn us to believe on him and cease giving glory to trials!

## **TRIALS TEACH US WHO RULES ALL THINGS IN OUR LIVES**

**Matthew 8: 26:...Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. 27: But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!**

In every trial, we are at last taught that Christ alone rules our lives. He works greatly in us by this.

Matthew says, "*They marveled!*" By trials, he keeps us marveling at Christ and his amazing grace to weak sinners like us.

Mark says, "*They feared exceedingly!*" By trials he keeps us awe-struck at his constant abiding presence and protection.

Matthew says they said, "*What manner of man is this?*" By trials he keeps us admiring him who is the Wisdom and Power of God.

So let's answer this briefly, "*What manner of man is this?*" In this one passage, we behold Christ is both God and Man in one person. As Man he was *asleep*. He was tired therefore he slept. As a Man in the midst of the storm he faithfully trusted his Father representing his people. Then as God he is *able to send the storm then rebuke and calm it*.

Believer, this same GodMan is risen and seated at God's right hand and is *our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*. It is he who sends every trial in our lives. Is the power of your trial strong? Then use that to remember that the Power of the GodMan who rules your trial is far greater!

This Man is he who speaks peace into our hearts teaching us he is the Faith of our faith, the Strength of our strength, and all our Salvation! This Man is he who ends the trial when he has taught us once again he is our God and our Savior, our All. The trial is only for our good by our loving Savior!

I read a story. A woman was on board a ship much disturbed in a storm. But her husband, the captain, was calm. She asked, "How can you be so calm?" He took his sword and held it to her breast. She smiled. He said, "Why are you not afraid? This is a sharp sword with which I could slay you in an instant!" "Ah!" she replied, "but I am not afraid of a sword when it is my husband who wields it." He said, "Neither am I afraid of a storm when it is God my Savior who sends it, and manages it for my good." So when the trial comes let us say this:

Be Still My Soul,  
Thy God doth undertake  
To guide the future, as he has the past  
Thy hope, thy confidence, let nothing shake  
All now mysterious shall be bright at last  
Be still my soul  
*the wind and waves still know*  
His voice *who ruled them while he dwelt below.*

**Amen!**