

# “FAITH CANCELS FEAR”

**TEXT: Mark 4:40**

**THESIS:** To show that faith cancels fear in the believer and to reveal the foundation of faith.

**INTRO: A.** God is never surprised by our “storms” or circumstances. God is in control of our “storms” or circumstances.

**ILLUS:** This time Jesus was on board the boat in the midst of the storm. After taking charge of the situation and calming the storm, He rebukes them: “Why are ye so fearful? How is it ye have NO FAITH?” On another occasion Jesus sent the disciples into a storm without Him, then came to them in the midst of the storm walking on the water. When Peter came to him and began to sink, he said: “O thou of LITTLE FAITH, wherefore didst thou doubt?”

**B.** You can’t be filled with fear and filled with faith at the same time. A person who is faithful is fearless and a person who is fearful is faithless! Fear is the anticipation of failure or embarrassment. It keeps us immobilized. The disciples were fearful because they had “no faith.”

**ILLUS:** My father lived in fear of losing his job at Sun Oil Co. He retired from there after 30 years! His fears never were realized. He lived like Job who said: “That which I greatly feared is come upon me.” 3:25

He was saying, “I knew this was going to happen. I’ve been worrying about this for years. I knew everything was going to good. I have been suffering from it before it happened, not I am suffering all over again. (Don’t suffer ahead of time. If the worst case scenario does happen, at least you will only have to suffer it once...not twice! “Be not faithless, but believing...” Jn.20:27)

**C.** Fear is the absence of faith. FEAR CANCELS FAITH. Fear paralyzes, faith mobilizes. Fear keeps people from believing and doing God’s will. Fear is based on the natural, faith is based on the supernatural. To experience fear is not wrong, but to be ruled by fear is sinful. (“Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.” Rom.14:23b) Fear rules God out. Faith puts God in. Fear is Satan’s tool to neutralize believers. Faith is God’s tool to activate believers.

**D.** Faith is when God’s Word is enough. Faith recognizes God’s power. Faith claims God’s promises. Faith is the anticipation of God’s intervention. Faith is trusting God and depending upon Him.

## **I. FAITH IS BUILT ON THE FOUNDATION OF GOD’S POWER:**

### **A. Faith Believes In The Sovereignty Of God:**

1. The disciples forgot who was on board with them. (“Master, carest Thou not that we perish?” They called Him “Master” but refused to trust Him!)

**ILLUS:** We need to remind ourselves of what Jesus told Pilate: “Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above.” In our next storm or problem, we need to recognize His power is still available to us.

2. The disciples were immobilized by fear.

**ILLUS:** Fear keeps people from getting saved. "I'd get saved, but I know I can't live it now; I'll wait till I can live it. I'd be a hypocrite if I did it now." He is headed for hell. He anticipates failure at living the Christian life. He doesn't rely on the power of a sovereign God to assist him.

Fear keeps people from getting baptized. "I know I ought to get baptized, but I'm afraid of water." (You ought to see these people at the beach or at the pool!) But the devil attacks their obedience. I have never heard of one person who drowned in a baptism.

Fear keeps people from tithing. "I know I ought to tithe, but I can't afford it." They fear financial reversal. They say, "If I gave the way the Bible teaches or the preacher preaches, I'd be in trouble." They would be if there was no God! Don't you know you don't have the ability to take care of yourself anyway? If God doesn't do it, you are in big trouble. Fear rules God out. Faith puts Him in.

Fear keeps people from soul-winning. "I couldn't do that. I couldn't talk to people about the Lord. It wouldn't work for me." But you never go soul-winning alone. The Lord always goes with you! You need to say. God told me to do this and I believe He is alive and will help me, so I will be obedient. I am trusting in His power.

The first time I preached I prepared for 10 hours and preached for 10 minutes. (Now I prepare 10 minutes and preach for 10 hours! ☺) I found out God was with me when I preach and I am no longer fearful! I preach believing God will use me. He will use you too!

## **II. FAITH IS BUILT ON THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S PROMISES:**

### **A. Faith Believes The Word Of God:**

1. When Jesus rebuked His disciples, He was saying: "Why can't you just trust Me? Why didn't you believe what I told you?"
2. Again and again Jesus told His disciples, "Fear not..."
3. Faith begins and ends with "Thus saith the Lord..." - we either believe it and Him or not!

**ILLUS:** That is why you don't want people messing with this Book! The NASV (updated 3 times!) says "In my Father's house are many dwelling places..." The New Living Translation and RSV and NIV (with ongoing updates!) says "many rooms." The Living Bible says "many homes." How can you have faith if you don't know what God said? (The Greek word is "mone" and is properly translated "mansions!" in the KJB!)

4. The promises of God are found in the Word of God...you had better trust them.

**ILLUS:** Dr. Tom Malone says there are 32,000 promises in the Word of God. That is enough to get all of us through at least one lifetime! That is a lot of stuff to depend on. The Bible is a promise book. We sing "I'm standing on the promises of Christ my Lord" and don't mean a word of it. They don't even think of His promises when the crisis or storm comes. They don't claim the promises, they become fearful.

5. Faith believes the Word of God even when things don't add up.

**ILLUS:** How many believe in the Virgin Birth? Would you have if you had been Joseph? He didn't. The Bible says he was minded to put her away. After the announcement by the angel, the Bible says he thought on these things. He didn't just accept the obvious. He wanted to believe Mary was innocent. He then remembered the promise of Isaiah 7:14 and trusted the promise.

## **III. FAITH IS BUILT ON THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S PAST BLESSINGS:**

## A. Faith Believes Based On Past Evidence:

1. Folks who live in fear have forgotten past successes.

**ILLUS:** These disciples in this storm had just seen Jesus heal sick bodies, open blind eyes, open deaf ears, seen people miraculously fed, and lives changed. After all that, they feared the storm?

Isn't that the way we are? He has come thru for us again and again and then a new storm comes and we forget about what He did and act as though His last blessing was His final burst of power and now His batteries are dead. But His batteries are better than those of the Energizer bunny's batteries, and He "just keeps going and going and going..."! He is the same yesterday, today and forever. What He did before, He can do again. In the storm anticipate His intervention.

I like the attitude of those present at Lazarus' grave after 4 days, who said: "Could not this man who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man (Lazarus) should not have died?" They remembered past evidence of His great power and believed that He could have kept Lazarus from dying. But did they believe that He could raise him from the dead? What about a miracle for today?

2. We can either decide the problems are too great for Him or we can trust Him, remembering what He has done for us in the past.

**ILLUS:** When David went out to face Goliath he encouraged himself in past victories. He remembered his battles with a lion and a bear and how God gave him the strength to be victorious. He went in the power of past blessings to kill the giant. (2 Sam.21:19 says Elhanan killed Goliath (!) in the ASV, THE NASV, THE NIV and THE RSV! The KJB says Elhanan killed "the brother of Goliath..."! Which do you believe?)

After he killed Goliath, David took his armor and put it in his tent. He knew this wouldn't be the last battle, so he needed a reminder of God's past victories in his life. Every time he faced a new storm or a new battle, he looked at that armor and said "If God could give me the victory over that giant, He can help me again! I will keep on obeying Him and trusting Him. I won't be fearful, but faithful!"

3. Peter walked on water when he was full of faith (faithful), then began to sink when he became full of fear (fearful)! (It was good that he utilized his alternative option when he began to sink and cried "Lord, save me!")
4. As long as Peter kept his eyes on the Lord and trusted Him, he was O.K.; it was when he looked at the wind and the waves, that he became fearful.

**CONCL:** Peter's faith cancelled his fear. Then his fear cancelled his faith. That's the way it is for all of us. We have a choice. Which will it be? FEAR OR FAITH?