

Faith Overcomes Fear

Mark 4:26-5:20 When we look at Jesus and the life He lived on earth, we see His mind was filled with faith. Worry and doubt were not part of His life. He was able to sleep through the storm because He trusted in the Father, whom He knew controls the storms of this life. Fear overcame the disciples in the boat because their focus was on the storm instead of their heavenly Father, who sits on and even rides upon the clouds. Faith comes when we learn to glance at the storms (the trials and testing in our lives) and gaze upon Jesus. The moment we encounter a difficulty on this earth we need to look at it briefly and then focus our eyes heavenward. Paul exhorts us to set our affections upon things above.

I learned through a great trial I experienced what to do when my faith was being overwhelmed by fear and doubt. A little boy I hit with my car was lying in a hospital bed battling for his life. He was experiencing a breathing problem, and the doctors were not sure he would survive. When I learned of his condition one morning when I visited the hospital, my heart sank, and I was paralyzed with fear. By the power of God's spirit I was able to compose myself long enough to make a few calls to prayer warriors. I knew who would faithfully intercede for Richey. As Richey continued his battle for life, I continued my battle for faith. I kept hearing, "If Richey died, I could not live."

One of those faithful friends I called came immediately to the hospital to pray for Richey. We first knelt in the intensive care waiting room and prayed with Richey's mother. Then we excused ourselves to go to the chapel. After a season of prayer, my friend had to leave, and I was alone again to face these doubts and fears that attacked my faith. I entered the elevator to return to the waiting room, and no one but the Lord was in the elevator with me. I cried out to the Lord, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief." As I pressed the button

to go down, I heard the Lord say, "All you need is one finger of faith. Lift that finger heavenward, and the ocean of My love will support you and keep you from sinking."

My mind raced back to when my dad taught me how to float in the swimming pool. His strong hands held me up on the surface of the water, but slowly he withdrew one finger at a time until only one of his fingers was supporting me. Then he withdrew that finger. When I realized his finger was no longer supporting me, I began to sink. Immediately my father placed his strong hands under my back to get me above the surface of the water again. He said, "Relax, I will not let you sink. Look up at the clouds and the blue sky and concentrate on their beauty." As I focused heavenward, once again Dad's hands were withdrawn, but I did not sink this time. I felt all tension leaving my body, and a peace overwhelmed me. I was floating, and I knew if I began to sink again, Dad would quickly catch me. Faith began to fill me and doubt left. When the doors of the elevator opened, I was greeted with the news that Richey's breathing crisis had passed.

**READ: Leviticus 9:7-10:20; Mark 4:26-5:20; Psalm 37:29-40;
Proverbs 10:6-7**