

Believing Jesus for Our Needs



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) September 29, 2020

Imagine that you have witnessed healing after healing, miracle after miracle, one incredible wonder after another. You would be on your knees praising God, wouldn't you? You would probably say to yourself, "I'll never again doubt the healing and miracle-working power of Christ. From now on, I'm going to practice unwavering faith in my life, no matter what comes."

The disciples had witnessed Jesus feed five thousand men, plus women and children, by multiplying five loaves and two fish. As they participated in the distribution of the food and witnessed the supply continuing to increase, one would think their faith would increase, as well. But in truth, Jesus had been reading their thoughts and he knew they were not understanding what was happening. The message of the miracles had not yet registered in their hearts and minds, and doubts still plagued them.

Later, after the day's remarkable event, we see Jesus "constraining" his disciples to quietly get into a boat. "And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away" (Matthew 14:22, KJV).

The Greek word for "constrained" here means "to compel by entreaty, force or persuasion." Jesus was urging his disciples in the strongest terms, "Brethren, just get in the boat. Go now." Jesus was going to stay to dismiss the multitudes and meet the disciples later.

As they pushed off from shore, I wonder if Jesus shook his head in amazement, wounded by their wavering faith after all they had seen. At that moment, Jesus must have considered what he would have to do to bring his disciples into unshakable faith. What he did was dramatic. He walked on the sea toward them in the middle of a storm. When they saw him, "they were troubled, saying, 'It is a ghost.' And they cried out for fear" (Matthew 14:26). But Jesus said, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid" (14:27).

The disciples didn't doubt that Jesus could heal multitudes with a touch or a word. But when they got away from the crowds, they grew worried about their own needs and those of their families. But when Jesus stepped into the boat, a semblance of faith began to rise up in their hearts. "They ... worshiped Him, saying, 'Truly You are the Son of God'" (14:33). Finally, they were beginning to get it, and a foundation of faith was being built in them.

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