



April 14, 2020

Lives Shaped by Fear

The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"...He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" - Mark 4:38,40

Here we find the disciples having some problems with the Sea of Galilee. With their boat filling with water and about to sink, Jesus sleeps in the back. What are we to make of this scene? One can only imagine as the waves break over the boat they were also breaking over Jesus.

We quickly learn the mind of the disciples. They have some grave concerns about the situation they were facing and wake Jesus saying, "don't you care that we're perishing!" Forget about the boat...we're going under.

You see, the disciples had faith in Jesus but they didn't have Jesus' faith, his faith in God. They get a hold of him and say, you do something, you're the one who's supposed to fix our circumstances. But Jesus' response is, why are you so afraid, why do you have so little faith?

To step into the faith of abundance requires us to move from fear to trust. Fear grows out of desire to control one's circumstances and the future. It has many faces, some of which include: dread - expecting bad things to happen; cynicism - thinking nothing is going to work; constantly complaining - verbalizing and obsessing over obstacles; anger - frustration at not getting our way; ill tempered - making ourselves and others miserable; depression - becoming immobilized.

We fear no evil not because we're cool or tough, but because God is with us in the circumstances we encounter. The writer of Hebrews reminds us that, we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe" (Hebrews 12:28). If we are those who cling to Jesus, we are those in whom Christ dwells and delights and are invited to live in the strong and unshakable kingdom of God. This is where Jesus lived and we too are invited to live there with him, here and now.

Practice: Rembrandt's "Storm on the Sea of Galilee" beautifully captures the idea of living in the strong and unshakable kingdom of God in the midst of life's storms. As you gaze upon the tranquility of Jesus, consider which of the disciples you identify with in this picture?

(Q) How would living with peace before God impact your reaction to the challenges and difficulties that come your way? Identify one thing that would help you step away from a life shaped by fear and step ever more deeply into the strong and unshakable kingdom of God?

Painting: Storm on the Sea of Galilee
by Rembrandt, 1633



The Storm on the Sea of Galilee by Rembrandt Harmeniz, van Rijn, Public Domain.

