

MONDAY MANNA

8 March 2021

FACING FEAR WITH A FOCUS ON FAITH

By Jim Langley

Have you noticed how easy it is to focus on the trials and tribulations that surround us these days? Many have lost touch with reality as they sadly deal with limited opportunities to socialise and carry on a fairly normal lifestyle. What I suggest we all might wisely do instead is, *face fear and focus on faith!*

That may seem like a drastic step to many, but I know it works for me. These troubling times require drastic measures if we expect to survive this new reality. So much appears to be out of control, and we can easily get caught in the waves of uncertainty.

As the owner of what was deemed an essential business, it has been good to not only spend time in the office six days a week, but also continue to meet with clients via telephone, e-mail and online Zoom sessions. My clients need me, and I need them; I have been able to encourage many as we all deal with this ongoing crisis.

This has reminded me of a well-known Bible account, found in Matthew 14:22-36, when Jesus sent His disciples to the other side of the lake while He went up on a mountainside by Himself to pray. This was the evening after He had fed 5,000 people with only five loaves of bread and two fish. Early the next morning, Jesus went to His disciples in a very unusual way: walking on the water. When they first saw Him, His followers became afraid and cried out in fear, thinking they were seeing a ghost.

"But Jesus immediately said to them: 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.' 'Lord, if it is you,' Peter replied, 'tell me to come to you on the water.' 'Come.' He said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out 'Lord, save me!' Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt?' And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down" (Matthew 14:27-32).

Like the apostle Peter, if we focus on the turbulence all around us, we too may sink into depression and despair. But look at Peter's response when he started to sink. He quickly cried out, *"Lord, save me!"* And that is exactly what Jesus did. He held out His hand and rescued Peter from the waves. Peter knew he was in dire need of help or he would drown. As with Peter, Jesus is there awaiting our calls for help as well.

Psalm 46:1-3 begins, *"God is our refuge and strength. An ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging."*

The Psalms are filled with assurances that the Lord will be there in our times of trouble. Listen to these words of the apostle, found in 1 Peter 5:6-7: *"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."*

Peter knew firsthand that his Lord would lift him up in times of need. Jesus is available to all who place their trust in Him. If you are unconvinced in the power of the Holy Spirit and lack the faith we have been discussing, please consider taking a bold step of faith into His arms during these troubling times. You simply must admit your sinful nature, be willing to turn from your sinful ways, and ask Him to accept you into His family of believers. Once you have done this simple act, you can start to *face fear and focus on faith!*

Postal Address:

PO Box 8168,
Woolloongabba, QLD, 4102

ABN: 42 005 622 515

Office Address:

Suite CBMC,
Sung Do Lawyers,
14 Annerley Road,
Woolloongabba, QLD 4102

Email:

admin@cbmcaustralia.com.au

Phone:

07 3172 9365

© 2021, all rights reserved. Jim Langley has been writing for more than 30 years while working as a life and health insurance agent. In recent years, his passion has turned to writing about his relationship with God. His goal is to encourage others to draw near to Him as well. A long-time member of CBMC, he started writing "Fourth Quarter Strategies" in 2014.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

During this long period of challenges, caused not only by the pandemic but also by social unrest and many other unexpected developments, what has been your greatest fear?

People often talk about "faith," but their actions betray an absence of true, trusting faith? How would you define the kind of faith being discussed in this Monday Manna?

Had you heard the account of Jesus' disciples going ahead of Him on the lake, and then saw Him walking toward them on the water? What do you think of Peter's reaction? How do you think you would have responded if you had been in his place?

The psalm quoted tells about God being "our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." Do you find this comforting? Why or why not? In what ways could this passage become more meaningful for you?

NOTE: For more about what the Bible says about this topic, consider the following passages:

Psalm 46:1-11

Isaiah 40:27-31

Jeremiah 29:11-13, 33:2-3

Hebrews 12:1-3

1 John 4:16-18