

Reflections

*Even
The Wind
and Sea
Obey Him.*

River Road
Baptist Church

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Reflections

RELIGIOUS?

23 Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. 24 And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. 25 Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" 26 But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. 27 So the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" (Matthew 8:23-27 NKJ)

Virtually anyone who has ever attended Sunday School as a child is quite familiar with this story of Jesus calming the storm. Certainly it demonstrates that Jesus was and is God and that He has power over His creation, but to make that our only conclusion from the text would leave us without an important part of the story. Let's notice Jesus' response when He was awakened in the throes of the winds and waves. He asks them a very profound question when He asks; ***"Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?"*** Jesus is making a very powerful point here that we need to explore.

He both asks and answers the question in a single statement. They were with God incarnate and yet did not understand who He was. Their lack of understanding is highlighted in their reaction as He stood and rebuked the storm and they saw the winds and the sea become calm. Their awestruck response was; *Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?* He, at the same time, tells them why they are both afraid and unable to comprehend who they are with when He calls them men of little faith. They were in the presence of God but were not able to comprehend it because of their fear of the storm. Their fear had usurped their faith. They had seen Jesus heal a leper, Peter's mother-in-law, and the centurion's servant, but their faith was not able to see that Jesus had power to calm the wind and sea.

It seems that today we experience that same deficiency of faith when we read His Word and discover His promises but are unable to "see" Jesus as our God, our Savior, our Lord, and, as a result, we find those promises impossible to accept by faith. As a natural consequence of our limited view of who Jesus is, we limit His influence in our lives and our faith suffers. We become quite comfortable with our "religion" when it doesn't require that we believe in His Lordship in our lives. *After all, folks say, let's not*

become fanatics about this religious stuff! What if, however, we were to grow in our faith and actually live our spiritual lives as Christ intended? Do you suppose that we might find richness in His grace that will allow us to believe His promises, live in them, and then share them with our children so they too, can walk in faith? I believe we would.

It used to be said: *Jesus said it, I believe it and that settles it.* Not so today. There is always argument about Jesus, His deity, and the resurrection that completed His sacrifice for sins. We have been told that our very existence here is an accident of nature and that God doesn't even exist. This we hear from our childhood in our schools, on our television sets, in the books we read and sadly from too many pulpits in our churches. Is it any wonder that our young folks become so confused that God's Word is treated, by them, as fantasy and myth? It is especially problematic when our own adult lives seem to better validate the fictional, supposedly scientific, theories as the guiding principles of our life rather than God and His Word. God has said that He will tolerate no other gods before Him and yet our society is full of "gods" that people put before God including things and even what passes for science.

When we read God's Word carefully, we encounter His many promises. We also find that He declares that He will be our God and we His people if we will accept that Jesus came in the flesh to become the atoning sacrifice for sin that would satisfy God's righteous requirement of death for sin. If we believe in Him for our own salvation, He has promised that we can have abundant life here and eternal life beyond it with Him in heaven. When we consider that He left heaven's glory to become flesh as one of His created ones, lived a sinless life, and then not only allowed Himself to be crucified for our sins, but rose from the dead that we might have life in Him, the fictions of this world are easy to reject.

That brings us to the most important questions that can be asked of us. First: Have you accepted Him as your Savior? Have you allowed His Holy Spirit to indwell you and lead you in paths of righteousness? Do you believe that He is God? If you can answer yes to these important questions, it should be no surprise that He does have authority His over His creation. That's why the winds and waves obey Him and why His Word is true and relevant to our lives. The last questions needing answers are: Have you received Him and do you obey Him with your life? What is your answer?

Pastor Doug