

Conquering Life's Storms

By Terry Bostic

Do you tell God about your problems or do you tell your problems about your God? Do you speak to the mountain or does the mountain speak to you? Do your circumstances rule over you or do you rule over your circumstances? Do you spend more time speaking about your medical condition, your latest medical procedure or your list of medications instead of glorifying God? Are you dominated by the words of your doctors, the information from your medical reports, x-rays, blood test etc? Are you dominated by the fear of what could happen to you (like worst case scenarios playing out in your mind), constant fears, the what-ifs or the “well, you just never know?” Do you feel anxious, uncertain, sleepless, having worried thoughts and negative imaginations of what could or might happen to your family, health or your mind?

All of these things have something in common. Christians who meet this criteria and fall into one or more of these categories all share the same root problem they are controlled by their eyes, ears and vain imaginations. As believers in Christ, we can be influenced by our own fleshly senses (*what we hear, see or feel*); we can be influenced by evil through the prince of the power of the air (*the devil*) or we can be influenced by God and what he has already promised us in his word. It is important what and who we choose to believe. If we choose to believe what our natural eyes, ears and feelings tell us, we can ultimately succumb to the spirit of fear, which will bring doubt and unbelief. This will cause believers to lose faith in God and his Word. When faith is lost, fear takes its place!

Unfortunately, doubt and unbelief have become a normal part of some Christians lives. These by-products of fear (*or should I say fear's offspring*) steal the victory from us. Fear is the opposite of faith, it is not from God, it magnifies the problem, and it steals your peace and causes doubts to fill your mind with negative scenarios. Understand that fear will exalt itself against the finished work of the Cross and cause us to shift our focus on the problem instead of where it really belongs- on our Healer and Deliverer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is exactly what happened to Peter. When he first got out of the boat, he stepped out by faith in Christ's word. (*Matthew 14:22-32*) He was able to walk on the water because he kept his eyes fixed firmly on Jesus. Momentarily however, his eyes glanced at the foreboding waves and his eyes were no longer focused on Jesus but instead they shifted to the severe storm he was in. We could imagine that his ears were hearing the fierce wind, the loud thunder and waves crashing loudly into each other. We could imagine what Peter might be thinking: “Boy, this is really a bad storm and these waves are really huge! What if I won't be able to reach Jesus? What if a giant wave knocks me over and

the current drags me under, could Jesus even find me or save me? What if I drown?" Doubt and unbelief began to creep in and Peter began to sink.

Here's the point, when Peter got focused on the surrounding circumstances, he could no longer walk on water like Jesus or walk towards Jesus. He believed what his eyes and ears told him over the Word (*Jesus*). The Bible says that our faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. (*Romans 10:17*) Although faith comes by hearing, fear can also come by hearing. Our eyes and ears can allow fear to come in by letting the physical dominate the spiritual by exalting the circumstances to be greater than God's promises.

Today, we too have our storms in life. Our eyes and ears can be assaulted by the sound of ambulance sirens, the sights and sounds of a hospital emergency room, bells, buzzers, alarms, monitors and x-rays. Our faith can be attacked through doctors and specialists (who have had years of training) with their reports of doom and gloom and their prescribing a never ending merry go round of prescription medicine. All of these things are like Peter's storm. These things have become our waves, thunder, lightning, and wind. The story of Peter walking on the water was recorded for our benefit and serves as a lesson for us today to not go by what we feel, hear or see in the natural.

We must cast out all negative reports by canceling them verbally. We should refuse negative thoughts and not accept them. These thoughts are from Satan, they are seeds sown by the enemy and he is looking for your agreement. We must not agree with him for the moment that we do, he will water these seeds with fear, doubt and unbelief. If you see or hear a negative report you and I have the responsibility to defend our faith by casting out all fear, doubt and unbelief no matter what form or shape it takes or how it arrives.

You can and must prevail. Your God is bigger than your problem. You must speak to the mountain. Notice I said "speak" to the mountain, not "about" the mountain. Speak to your problem! Take control of your circumstances (*storm*) by ruling and reigning over it.

Jesus cannot die for you again, he cannot take the stripes for your healing again, he has done all he can do for you. He has declared that it is finished and he has sat down at the right hand of the Father. Many are waiting for God to move but God is waiting for the many to move. Don't have unforgiveness in your heart. Verbally cancel prayers and words of fear, doubt and unbelief. Pull down strongholds by verbally canceling negative reports. Lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. Speak total healing in the name of Jesus. Declare and decree God's promises of healing. Use the authority that has been given to you by Christ. Tell the mountain to get out of your way. (*Matthew 21:18-22*)

Even though there are giants in the land, we are well able to possess it. Be like Joshua; be like Caleb, people of faith. They were the only two adults of their generation who crossed over into the Promised Land that God gave to them and they did it by faith. Don't let your storm talk you out of what may be your finest hour, the moment when victory is at hand and God's power is released by your faith and obedience. Keep the spiritual atmosphere clear of the negatives. Starve out the unbelief, don't even give it an inch of space, you can also do this by the power of agreement. (*Matthew 18:19-20*) Don't let words spoken or written or sights or sounds move you off your course. Cancel out loud all negativity, stand firm in your believers authority, talk to that mountain. Starve your fear, exercise your faith and watch the power of the Cross work for you.

I spoke of the story earlier about Peter walking on the water (*temporarily*) and why and how he failed. Now I want to share what I believe that Peter learned from his storm walk. Here is

Peter sometime later as he approaches the Gate called Beautiful. (*Acts 3:1-10*) He sees a man, crippled from birth, begging for money. He sees that this man needs healed. Imagine what must have been going through Peter's mind. He sees the deformed legs of a life long cripple. He also sees that many people were wandering around. There were lots of eyes that would be watching. Peter may have been thinking, "What if he doesn't get healed, what would people think?" He remembers how his eyes and ears caused him to doubt his walk on the water. This caused him to fail, robbed him of his faith and miracle last time, but not this time. Now he will not be moved by what his eyes see or the negative thoughts that tried to creep into his mind. The mountain wasn't speaking to him; he is going to speak to the mountain. He rebukes all fear, doubt and unbelief within himself.

Seeing this crippled man's circumstances was not going to steal the victory from Peter. As Peter approached this man, his faith rose up. No wind or waves will shake his faith this time. He would not allow his eyes, ears or evil imagination steal the victory... quickly he said, "Silver or gold have I none but such as I have, I give unto you. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" (*Acts 3:6*) The rest is history. The restraints were removed to allow this miracle to manifest. If you notice, Peter did not ask the Father "if it by your will" or would you, could you or will you heal this man? He did not beg or plead. He understood the power of the Cross. He also knew that the Lord commanded them to lay hands on the sick so that they could be made well. (*Mark 16:15-20*) He knew that the Lord had given him authority over all manner of sicknesses and diseases and Peter and exercised that authority and dominion in the name of Jesus. (*Luke 9:1*)

Do you know that you are not only a conqueror but that you are more than a conqueror? God said so and because he said it, it is absolute truth. His word declares over you and me:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (*Romans 8:35-39*)

No matter what you may be going through right now, God wants you to conquer the storms of life and you can through Christ. We always have the victory in him and he has ensured that victory through the Cross and by giving us the power of his Spirit. (*1 Corinthians 15:57*) We must believe God and go on to become all that he has called us to be. We can only do that by using all that God has given us. We must walk in faith not fear, doubt and unbelief. We must walk in our authority in Christ. We must declare his word with power. In Christ, no storm can defeat us. The question is, "What will you do when your storm comes?" The victory is there; will you lay hold of it and hold fast?