

A Letter from God

Faith Does Not Deny the Facts

One thing I have discovered as I look throughout Scripture is that faith never requires us to reject the facts.

Think about the disciples in the boat with Jesus.

- The storm was real.
- The wind was real.
- The waves were real.
- The water entering the boat was real.
- And the disciples were afraid.

When they awakened Jesus, He did not stand up and say, "There is no storm. What you are seeing isn't real."

No.

Jesus acknowledged the reality of what was happening by speaking directly to it: **"Peace, be still."**

He did not deny the storm.
He demonstrated His authority over it.

Jesus gave another picture of this when He spoke about the mountain.

"For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith."

— Mark 11:23 (KJV)

There was a literal mountain there, and Jesus told them to speak to it.

He did not tell them to deny that the mountain existed.
He told them what to say concerning it: "Be thou removed."

That speaks deeply to me because mountains will present themselves in our lives too.

The mountain may be a diagnosis. It may be fear. It may be lack. It may be a circumstance standing in front of me that I did not ask for and cannot ignore.

But I do not have to deny the mountain in order to walk by faith.

I can acknowledge that the mountain is there without surrendering authority to it.

I speak to the mountain.

I do not waste my words pretending it is not there.
I use my words to speak faith concerning what needs to happen.

The mountain was the fact.
Faith did not deny the fact.
Faith spoke to what was there.

Faith does not deny the mountain.
Faith speaks to the mountain.

There is a popular acronym that describes FEAR as False Evidence Appearing Real. But I don't believe that statement adequately describes every kind of fear.

Sometimes what you are looking at is real, just as the storm was real when Jesus was in the boat with His disciples. But sometimes fear is connected to something that has not happened at all. In those moments, the acronym may fit—the fear is responding to something imagined or anticipated rather than something that has actually taken place.

So we must recognize the difference. Sometimes we are facing a present fact, and sometimes we are fearing a future possibility.

- The diagnosis may be real.
- The doctor's report may be real.
- The financial situation may be real.
- The loss may be real.
- The storm may be real.

Faith does not require me to pretend that something does not exist.

Faith requires me to know Who has authority over what exists.

That changes everything.

God does not repeatedly tell His people, "Fear not," because there is never anything frightening standing before them. He tells them:

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee..."
— Isaiah 41:10 (KJV)

Notice God's answer to fear:

"I am with thee."

The answer was not the absence of the situation.
The answer was the presence of God in the situation.
That is what I had to understand when faith met the facts in my own life.

Cancer was a fact. The diagnosis was a fact. The medical reports were facts. Treatment was a fact.

I didn't have to deny any of those things in order to have faith.
I simply had to decide that the facts would never occupy the place that belonged to God.

- Facts could inform me.
- Facts could tell me what the doctors saw.
- Facts could help determine the medical decisions that needed to be made.
- But facts could never become my God.

There is a difference between acknowledging something and surrendering authority to it.

Jesus acknowledged the storm. Then He spoke to it.
And the storm had to obey.

Our authority is not independent authority. It is authority given to us through Jesus Christ. Our confidence is never, "Look at what I can do." Our confidence is:

"Look at the One whose authority I stand under."

So perhaps fear is not always false evidence appearing real. Sometimes the evidence is real.

But there is a greater reality:

- God is present.
- God is faithful.
- God is not intimidated by what I see.
- And what I see will never have more authority than the God I serve.

*Faith does not close
its eyes to facts.
Faith looks directly
at the facts and then looks higher.*