

Learn About the Loaves

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Then he climbed up into the boat with them, and the wind stopped. They were completely amazed, because they had not understood about the loaves. Instead, their hearts were hardened (Mark 6:51-52).

The twelve disciples were alone in a boat on the Sea of Galilee, fighting a violent storm. They had been rowing against the wind for three or four miles¹ in the darkness of night. Jesus came to the boat, walking on water. The parallel account in Matthew 14:32-33 reveals that when Jesus “got into the boat, the wind stopped. Those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, ‘Truly you are the Son of God!’”

The disciples praised Jesus and confessed Him as God, so why are the disciples criticized in our text (Mark 6:52)? Why was it wrong for the disciples to be amazed that Jesus calmed the storm? In what way were their hearts hardened? The answer is that the disciples “had not understood about the loaves.”

By this time the disciples had already seen Jesus perform many miracles. For instance, Jesus had previously calmed a storm on the same sea (Mark 4:35–41), driven many demons out of a man and into a herd of pigs (Mark 5:1–20), and raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead (Mark 5:21–43).

Just hours before the storm in our text, Jesus had fed 5,000 men and their families with five loaves of bread and two fish, leaving twelve baskets full of leftovers! The disciples knew that Jesus was God—and that He could calm any storm—that lesson of the loaves they understood.

¹ John 6:18–19.

What lesson of the loaves were the disciples lacking? What the disciples did not yet understand, and what we too so often forget, is that Jesus not only has the power to help us in our need, Jesus *wants to and will* help us in our need. The lesson of the loaves is that we should *expect* Jesus to help us *in every need*. With this in mind, we should never be afraid! Jesus knows our needs and will use His unlimited power and wisdom to meet our every need.

It is so very easy for us to think, “Jesus helped me before, but this time is different. This time Jesus may not help.” In that way our hearts can be hardened too. We can forget the promises of Jesus, promises to help in every time of need. We should always remember that Jesus promises, “Surely I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20). Jesus tells us, “Do not be afraid, little flock, because your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32).

Finally, Jesus asks, “Which of you can add a single moment to his lifespan by worrying? ...So do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For the unbelievers chase after all these things. Certainly your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own” (Matthew 6:27, 31–34).

**This I believe, yea, rather,
Of this I make my boast,
That God is my dear Father,
The friend who loves me most,
And that, what e'er betide me,
My Savior is at hand
Through stormy seas to guide me
And bring me safe to land.**

[Christian Worship: Hymnal #819]