### **Faith Matters**



# Tuesday Daily Devotional - In the School of Faith

DECEMBER 22ND 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

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#### Matthew 16:6-12

Jesus spent time developing His disciples' faith because He knew it was essential for the tasks ahead of them. For over three years, they attended a school of faith, with Jesus as their instructor and the Scripture as the textbook. Sometimes Christ used verbal instructions, but many of the lessons were taught through demonstrations. He healed the sick, cast out demons, fed thousands, and calmed the sea. Their training even included tests revealing if they truly believed Jesus was the Messiah.

At times, the disciples' understanding was slow or faltering, but Christ never gave up on them. He reproved them when they exhibited a lack of trust (Mark 4:40) but also commended signs of progress (Matt. 16:15-17). His objective was to firmly establish their faith so He could accomplish His work in and through them. Right before His ascension, He commanded His men to spread the gospel of salvation to the remotest parts of the earth. Without faith, they would have failed.

The Lord has the same goal for us—increase our faith so we can do the work He's planned for us. If our faith is great, He'll entrust us with challenges and achieve amazing things through us. But small faith limits God's activity in a believer's life. He uses us only to the degree that we trust Him.

Faith building is essential in a believer's life, and God has two primary means of doing this. Scripture tells us what to believe about Him, and tests place us in difficult situations that stretch us to believe and rely on God instead of our own understanding.

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