

WHOSE GRIP WILL YOU TRUST? YOURS ON JESUS? OR HIS ON YOU?



When the fear of God gets in a person, eternal consequences loom VERY large. The fearful heart trembles and asks, “Will Jesus keep me until the end? Or might I, through weakness of character, be so overcome by sin, that I could ultimately be lost?”

The fear of God is a good thing. It keeps us from foolishness and it moves us to appropriate awe. However, if faith in grace and the mercy of God towards us does not counter - balance the fear of God, great torment can ensue.

Some Christian groups, to keep their members on their toes spiritually, create unnecessary anxiety by dangling the big “IF” before them: “IF you stand firm to the end – then you will be saved.” Jesus spoke those words and they are true. But Jesus NEVER meant for his sheep to worry whether their Good Shepherd might fail to keep them. Sheep TYPICALLY go astray.

Here is the question. Everyone agrees we must stand firm to the end. Nevertheless, who will see to it that happens? Will it be you? Or Jesus? Will it be the strength of YOUR faith clinging to Jesus – or the strength of JESUS holding you? Where, ultimately, will your trust be placed? In YOUR ABILITY to continue in faith – or JESUS CHRIST’S ABILITY to keep you?

The following is a true story. In May 1932, the zeppelin USS Akron, preparing to dock in San Diego, unexpectedly rose back up in the air. Sailors on the ground were holding onto the ropes that moor the ship. As the airship kept rising, four sailors continued to grip the ropes. At 15 feet off the ground, one sailor let go and fell, breaking his arm. The other three continued to hold on the ropes. At 200 feet, their strength gave out, and two of the three plummeted to their deaths.

The fourth sailor, 18-year-old sailor Bud Cowart, continued to hold on even up to 2000 feet above the ocean without letting go. Eventually he was rescued. How did he manage to keep holding

on? Why did his strength not give out? Because as the USS Akron kept rising, Bud Cowart had tied himself up with the rope itself.

Yes, Sailor Cowart had to continue to hold on. However, the real strength supporting him was NOT that of his arms, but of the rope! So too with our faith in Jesus. Yes, we must continue to hold to Jesus. But it is Jesus, the "author and the finisher of our faith," who continues to hold us safe all the way to the end. We are all weak. We all give out at times. But we trust JESUS to save us. Today. Tomorrow. Forever.

Take to heart these words of our Lord Jesus. "I give my sheep eternal life and they shall NEVER PERISH. No one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all. No one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one"(John 10:28-30).

At times, my own grip on Jesus can get rather weak. Therefore, my ultimate faith is not in the strength of my grip on Jesus -- but his grip on me. How about you?