

☞ IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STORM

Paul B

Matthew 8:23-27

Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. **24** Without warning, a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. **25** The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!" **26** He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. **27** The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

v. 23 His disciples followed him To really be a Christian means to be a disciple. What is a disciple? A follower of Christ; not just a believer, but a follower!

1 John 2:6

Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

☞ To be a true disciple means getting in the boat. **What is the boat? Whatever Jesus asks you to do; Wherever Jesus asks you to go; Whomever Jesus asks you to reach out to...** Remember, Jesus is already in the boat, so you're not going alone!

Peter often gets a bad rap for being a bonehead who let zeal overcome good sense, but one thing he got right was he went wherever Jesus went. When Jesus was in the boat, so was Peter; when Jesus walked on water, so did Peter; at the Mount of Transfiguration; at the trial before his crucifixion; Peter was always wherever Jesus was. Sure, he fumbled and bumbled and messed up, but he went wherever Jesus went! Where is Jesus leading you?

v. 24 without warning This is the way life happens! Life blindsides us sometimes. Just because we're in the boat following Christ doesn't mean that everything will be easy. There will be storms.

☞ **Storms represent the difficulties of life.** Life often doesn't go as we planned.

--Murphy's Laws... *Inside every large problem is a series of small problems struggling to get out.*

☞ The truth is **there really is no such thing as normal.** Life throws us curveballs. Things don't turn out as we anticipated. Things can change suddenly and unexpectedly.

--C. S. Lewis... *The great thing, if one can, is to stop regarding all the unpleasant things as interruptions of one's life. The truth is of course that what one calls the interruptions are precisely one's real life... What one calls one's real life is a phantom of one's own imagination.*

--Paul Harvey... *In times like these, it helps to recall that there have always been times like these.*

v. 24 ...furious storm...

Sometimes the storms come from the enemy...

In Matthew 13 Jesus tells the parable of the sower and describes how the evil one comes and snatches away the seed. He also talked about trouble or persecution coming as well as the worries of this life. These are not from God, but the enemy who wants to disrupt our walk with the Lord. However...

Sometimes storms come from the Lord...

Jonah 1:3-4

After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord. **4** Then the Lord sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up.

God sends the storm to test us or to get us back on the right track as in the case of Jonah. Bottom line is **storms will bring us to a point of decision; will we turn to God or not?** When we suffer, if we keep the faith, we get our focus on God more. Affliction drives the wise to the Lord.

Psalms 119:71

It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees.

v. 24 waves swept over the boat This is how our troubles feel at times; overwhelming...

☞ **v. 24 but Jesus was sleeping** **The Lord is not surprised or disturbed by the troubles** that come our way... We might get uptight, but he never does.

v. 25 Lord save us! We're going to drown!

1/2 right; 1/2 wrong... They turned to God, but their presuppositions were wrong. This is where you can get into trouble. When problems arise, you turn to God, but sometimes you turn to accuse and to blame, rather than believe; to complain, rather than comply.

☞ God wants us to turn to him! But he wants us to **turn to him with faith!**

v. 26 You of little faith, why are you so afraid?

Vance Havner, a Baptist evangelist, related the story of an elderly lady who was greatly disturbed by her many troubles both real and imaginary. Finally she was told in a kindly way by her family, "Grandma, we've done all we can do for you. You'll just have to trust God for the rest." A look of utter despair spread over her face as she replied, "Oh, dear, has it come to that?" Havner commented, "It always comes to that, so we might as well begin with that!"

☞ **Proverbs 3:5-6**

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and **lean not on your own understanding**; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. NKJV

☞ **God has a solution planned before we even know we have a problem.**

--A. W. Tozer... *What we need very badly these days is a company of Christians who are prepared to trust God as completely now as they know they must do at the last day.*

☞ We often think that the opposite of faith is doubt. But here Jesus indicates that **the opposite of faith is fear!**

--James S. Hewett... *When you fear that the worst will happen, your own thoughts may help to bring it about. A salesman, driving on a lonely country road one dark and rainy night, had a flat. He opened the trunk--no lug wrench. The light from a farmhouse could be seen dimly up the road. He set out on foot through the driving rain. Surely the farmer would have a lug wrench he could borrow, he thought. Of course, it was late at night--the farmer would be asleep in his warm, dry bed. Maybe he wouldn't answer the door. And even if he did, he'd be angry at being awakened in the middle of the night. The salesman, picking his way blindly in the dark, stumbled on. By now his shoes and clothing were soaked. Even if the farmer did answer his knock, he would probably shout something like, "What's the big idea waking me up at this hour?" This thought made the salesman angry. What right did that farmer have to refuse him the loan of a lug wrench? After all, here he was stranded in the middle of nowhere, soaked to the skin. The farmer was a selfish clod--no doubt about that! The salesman finally reached the house and banged loudly on the door. A light went on inside, and a window opened above. A voice called out, "Who is it?" His face white with anger, the salesman called out, "You know darn well who it is. It's me! And you can keep your blasted lug wrench. I wouldn't borrow it now if you had the last one on earth!"*

☞ **Following fear leads to more troubles:**

Genesis 3:10

(Adam) I was afraid... so I hid.

Genesis 18:15

Sarah was afraid, so she lied

Exodus 2:14-15

Then Moses was afraid... Moses fled

1 Samuel 15:24

Saul said... I was afraid of the people and so I gave in to them.

1 Samuel 18:29

Saul became still more afraid of him (David), and he remained his enemy the rest of his days.

But, Romans 8:15 says, "For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship."

☞ Fear normally results in Fight or Flight. **For born again believers Fear should succumb to Faith**

Fear and faith cannot keep house together; when one enters, the other departs.

v. 26 Jesus rebuked the wind and the waves... it was completely calm...
v. 27 even the winds and the waves obey him...

☞ Everything is under his control!

Matthew 28:18

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Ephesians 1:20-22

Christ... far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. **22** And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,

Hebrews 2:8

In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him.

What is your storm? It is under the authority of Christ. He is in control.

Conclusion

Psalms 46: 10-1 (*from last week*); 1-3

¹⁰ "Be still, and know that I am God... ¹¹ The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress....

¹ God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. ² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, ³ though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging...

Psalms 16:8

I have set the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

☞ Introduce your Storm to the Storm Calmer

Our security is in our faith, not in our safety. There are those in our culture who live in great safety and prosperity, yet their lives are consumed with worry and fear. On the other hand, there are those in the world who live in very difficult and dangerous places who have security, because they are full of faith and hope. We want to be safe, but it is more important for us to be secure in our faith and find our courage in God. The Bible says, "Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever" (Psalm 125:1). Security is not the absence of trouble, but confidence and courage in the midst of trouble that comes from faith.

God is faithful and we can put our faith in him. So, deal with fear by having faith in God! He is in control. He sees the big picture. He always has your best interests in mind. Trust him! He is near!

☞ In the middle of the storm he is in the boat with you! ([Video will play right away](#))