

Responding to the Storm

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Preacher: Paul Murray

[0 : 00] Well, can I send a very warm welcome to you all to the service of worship here this morning. It's good to be with you and it's good to join together to worship God.

We're going to begin by reading a psalm, Psalm 65, reading from the Scottish Psalter. And then the psalm will be played after I read it. So from the beginning of Psalm 65.

The praise waits for thee in Sion, Lord. To thee vows paid shall be. O thou that hearer art of prayer, all flesh shall come to thee. Iniquities, I must confess, prevail against me, do.

But as for our transgressions, then purge away shalt thou. Blessed is the man whom thou dost choose and make'st approach to thee. But he within thy courts, O Lord, may still a dweller be.

We surely shall be satisfied with thy abundant grace. And with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy place. O God of our salvation, thou and thy righteousness.

[1 : 02] By fearful works unto our prayers, thine answer dost express. Therefore the ends of all the earth and those afar that be. Upon the sea their confidence.

O Lord, who place in thee. We're going to hear that psalm played. Psalm 65 plays. Waits for thee in Sion, Lord. To thee vows paid shall be.

Mays for thee in Sion, Lord. To thee vows paid shall be.

O thou that hearer art of prayer, all flesh shall come to thee.

O Lord, who place in Sion, Lord. O God of our transgressions, then purge away shall thou.

[2 : 03] O Lord, who place in Sion, Lord. O Lord, who place in Sion, Lord. O Lord, who place in Sion, Lord. O Lord, who place in Sion, Lord.

O Lord, who place in Sion, Lord.

O Lord, who place in Sion, Lord.

O Lord. O Lord, who place in Sion, Lord. O Lord, who place in Sion, Lord.

O Lord, in Sion, Lord. CHOIR SINGS Let us now call upon the name of God in prayer.

[4 : 21] Gracious and ever-blessed God, we seek to draw near to Thee this Lord's Day on You as our Creator, the Maker of heaven and earth, who made all things from nothing, the one who was and who is and who will be, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

We praise Thee, Lord, for Thou art a God who is self-sufficient, who from all eternity dwelt in incomparable holiness, blessedness, joy, and fellowship and love within the triune, O God.

And we praise Thee, Lord, that although these things are too strange for us to hide, to understand, yet we can seek to peer unto them and to get an understanding of the God who we serve and the infinite perfections and glory and blessedness which belongs to Thee.

And we draw near this Lord's Day in mindful that we are sinners, that we are creatures of the Great Creator, but that we are creatures who have rebelled.

Lord, we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. We have all, like sheep, gone astray. We have turned, each one of us, to our own way.

[5 : 47] And so, Lord, we confess our sin before Thee together today. And we pray that we might know a godly remorse and repentance in our own hearts and in our lives.

And yet we are mindful that no remorse and no repentance is able to atone for these sins. They are a black mark against us which cannot be wiped away with the efforts of men or by the works of our righteousness.

But we thank Thee, Lord, that from eternity past, a plan of redemption was made to save sinners from their sins, to redeem them from the curse of the law that they brought upon themselves.

And we thank Thee, Lord, that the second person of the Godhead, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is so fit to take upon himself, to be made manifest in the flesh.

We thank Thee, Lord, that we beheld his glory in the Gospel, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

[6 : 57] We thank Thee for all that we read of him, in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, of what he was to be and of what he indeed was and is today.

We thank Thee that he came to fulfil all righteousness, and that he did fulfil all righteousness. That from his very youth he was about his Father's business until the very end of his life.

It was into the hands of his Father that he could commit his spirit. And so, Lord, we give thanks for his life of perfect righteousness and holiness, that he did no sin, neither was there guile or deceit in his mouth.

And we give thanks for his atoning death, that as our great High Priest, he offered himself without blemish and without spot. He shed his blood as of a lamb, the lamb which is coming to the world to take away the sin of that world.

And we praise Thee, Lord, for his willingness, as our great High Priest, to die for sinners and to pass into the heavens and to make continual intercession for us.

[8 : 11] We thank Thee then for his life and that holiness and righteousness which is imparted to us through sanctification. And we give thanks for his death and that righteousness through his cleansing blood which is imputed to us through faith.

We pray then, Lord, that we might have a living experience this day and know that our Saviour, it's not a Saviour who's dead, but one who lives, one who rose on the third day and defeated death, one who could say, O death, where is thy sting?

And O grave, where is thy victory? And we give thanks that through him that we have the hope that one day this corruption shall put on incorruption and that this mortal shall put on immortality, that it shall be swallowed up in life.

O remind us then, Lord, that here we have no continuing city, but that we wait for a city which is to come, a city whose builder and whose maker is God.

Lord, we pray then that these things might be precious to us, that we might be feeding upon Christ, upon his body and upon his blood, that we might be nurtured through the sincere look of the world and that we might be feeding on the manna that comes down to us from heaven through that word.

[9 : 39] Give us then, Lord, today, we pray, ears to hear truth. Give us hearts to receive it. O how cold we can be at times, O Lord, and how hard we can be, how critical, how cynical, in our day of small things.

But help us not to despise it, but rather to be faithful in it. Lord, we bring to thee the situation of our churches and of our nation, and we confess, Lord, that we are a people in dire straits, that we are a people brought low, that we are a people who, even if we have not humbled ourselves, have been humbled, and we have seen the weakness of man and the inability of man to do what needs to be done to get us through this great trial.

And so, Lord, we come to thee today. We come and worship, and we come to adore. We seek to put on the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

And indeed, Lord, we give thanks that we are able to do that not only in our own closets, not only in our own homes, but together. And we give thanks for the corporate worship of God.

And we are reminded that we are called not to forsake the assembling of one another, of the brethren together, and all the more as we see the day approaching.

[11 : 09] And so, enable us to say today with the psalmist that we surely shall be satisfied with thy abundant grace and with the goodness of thy house and of thy holy place.

And we know, Lord, that this building is not the Old Testament temple, that it is a building made with hands. And yet, we thank thee that the New Testament temple is the Lord's people gathered together.

And so, although we don't come to the holy place of old, made of stone and of timber, and yet we know that we come to the holy place of the New Testament where thy holy people, where the saints, are gathered together to worship and to be in fellowship one with another and with the Triune God, we ask thy blessing to be on this congregation.

Remember them in their time of waiting as they wait to hear if they are going to get a new minister. Bless Mr. Thompson also in his prayers, in his deliberations, give him wisdom, give him counsel and his family and all who belong to him also.

And we pray that in these things that thy will would be done. Remember this congregation today, especially as they have lost Paranath, one of their office bearers, for many years.

[12 : 38] And we ask thy blessing to be upon them and we pray that where praying voices have been silent, that other praying voices would be raised up. And where lights have not gone out but have gone up to be stars and glory, that other lights would be lit here.

O Lord, help us not to lose faith and to lose hope that this is thy church, that Christ is building it, so that the gates of hell should not prevail against it.

Be with Thurman's family and those who will mourn his death most keenly. We are thankful for the many promises that we have in Scripture to comfort those who do mourn, that if they do mourn in the Lord that they shall be comforted.

And what comfort we have at the death of a sin. That though the earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, that we have a building of God and house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. O we bless thee then, Lord, that this is not at home, that if we are in Christ, that we are just passing through and that we are looking to go to the better country, even to the heavenly country.

[13 : 53] Go before us now, Lord, bless our worship, meet with us in this place, that as the temple of old was filled with the cloud of glory, that thy spirit would descend upon us, rending the heavens, and fill this place with thy blessing and comfort and renewal.

Go with us now, then, we ask, and forgive us graciously for sin. For Christ's sake. Amen. Well, we're going to read God's word together as we find it in the gospel according to Mark and chapter 4. Mark chapter 4, we can read from verse 21 down to the end of the chapter. And he, that is Jesus, said to them, is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket or under a bed and not on a stand. For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest, not as anything secret except to come to light. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear. And he said to them, pay attention to what you hear. With the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

[15 : 29] And he said, the kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows.

He knows not how. The earth produces by itself first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. When the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.

And he said, with what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth.

Yet when it is sown, it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants, and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.

With many such parables, he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately, to his own disciples, he explained everything.

[16 : 34] On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, Let us go across to the other side. And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was, and other boats were with him.

And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. He was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they awoke him and said to him, Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?

And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said to them, Why are you so afraid?

Have you still no faith? And they were filled with great fear, and said to one another, Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?

Amen. The Lord will bless his word to us, and to his name be all the praise and all the glory. And I want us today really to consider these last verses that we've read, verses 35 to 41, in Mark chapter 4.

[17 : 46] But we can take our text from the beginning of verse 40. Jesus said to them, he said to his disciples, Why are you so afraid?

The Christian life, as you know, isn't plain sailing. some people believe that when they are converted, that many of their troubles will go away, that life will become a lot easier.

You maybe thought that yourselves for a time, and then the reality came home to you, that the Christian life is in many ways like any other life, in the sense that there will be troubles to deal with, trials to go through.

And in fact, for the Christian especially, Jesus tells us, he says, in this world we shall have tribulation. He says that especially to the Christian. And we read throughout the scriptures, we read in the book of Psalms, that the troubles that afflict the just number many be.

So, troubles, trials, difficulties are a reality. They're a reality for you, and they're a reality for me. They're a reality for the Christian, and they're a reality for the person who isn't a Christian.

[19 : 04] But what makes a Christian to differ in these troubles? What makes you as a believer, if you are a believer, what makes you different in the way that you deal with these things?

What makes you different from those who don't have the hope that you have, who don't have the faith that you have, who don't have the Christ that you have? What makes you different? different? Well, in many ways, what makes you different is your response to these things.

The way that you react to the troubles and the trials and the difficulties. The way that you deal with them. And that's really what I want us to consider today, our response to storms, to difficulties.

And the Bible teaches us how we're to respond, not just by precept, not just with sermons, but with stories as well. And it's one of these stories that I want us to consider today.

And I think it's quite instructive for us as we learn to deal with difficulty in our own lives. And the first thing in the context, of course, is this storm that came upon Jesus and the disciples in the Sea of Galilee.

[20 : 12] And the first thing that I want us to consider is Jesus' the disciples' response to the storm. And we read it in verse 35, 36. Well, that's the context.

That day, when evening had come, Jesus had been teaching them. He'd been teaching parables. He said, let us go across to the other side. Leaving the crowd, they took him and took him with them in the boat just as he was and other boats were with him.

So, they're on the way to the land of the Gadarenes or the Garetuses and he's going to meet the demon-possessed man. He's going to meet Legion over there. And that is very much going into sort of Gentile or Gentile-ish territory on the east side of the Sea of Galilee.

So he's traveling from the west, probably around Capernaum or the villages surrounding. And he's on a journey of about seven miles. It's about seven, I think, off the top of my head, the Sea of Galilee is around 13 miles long and around seven miles across.

So, it's around seven miles, maybe as little as four miles depending on where he was. And he's making his way east and Jesus falls asleep. Jesus falls asleep.

[21 : 24] The disciples don't but Jesus does. Jesus is tired. In his humanity, he is weary after a long day of teaching and of questioning and of healing.

And it's an amazing thing that he could fall asleep. That he could fall asleep so easily when the disciples were perhaps watching at the storm approaching. But you know, Jesus, more than any other man, could sleep well.

Jesus, more than any other man, could say, I will both lay me down in peace and quiet sleep will take because thou only me to dwell in safety Lord of make.

He could sleep well because he trusted in the Lord in whose hands he knew he was in his Father. But the disciples didn't sleep. And we read then in verse 37 that a great windstorm arose and the waves were breaking into the boat so that the boat was already filling.

It was a stream of water. Now, a great windstorm, literally a mega windstorm arose. It's a bit like a mini hurricane.

[22 : 32] is what we have here. Matthew, actually, when he describes his story to us, he uses the word seismos. Now, seismos is the word from which we take our word seismometer or seismograph.

And as you know, a seismograph, it measures hurricanes. It's not hurricanes, earthquakes. It measures earthquakes. earthquakes. So, what you have here is perhaps not a literal earthquake, but it's as if the earth under the sea is shaking.

So, the very sea itself is shaking. And of course, these kind of storms, many of you will know again that these kind of storms weren't uncommon, or storms weren't uncommon in the Sea of Galilee.

The Sea of Galilee is in a basin around 700 feet below sea level. And all around it, it's surrounded by high hills or small mountains.

And what would happen and what still happens is that the cold air, the cold air comes down from the mountains and it mixes with the warm air that is down there in the basin and that the difference in atmospheric pressure, it often creates storms.

[23 : 44] storms. Fear storms. And Luke actually tells us that this particular storm that it came down, it came down upon the Sea of Galilee.

And that appears to be what he's describing. So, they were used to storms, but this wasn't a normal storm. This storm was excessive. It was it was seismic.

Matthew doesn't use that word without meaning. It was different. Different from what they'd known before. Different from what they'd ever experienced. So that even the boat that they were in, it began to fill with water.

The waves began to come into it and they couldn't keep the water level down. And they found themselves in dire straits. They were terrified. They thought that they were going to die. And so they come to Jesus and Jesus is there with his head on a pillow and he's asleep and they wake him and they say to him, Teacher, do you not care?

Do you not care that we're perishing? Do you not care that we're here in the process of dying? Do you not care that this ship is most likely going to sink and that we're all going to be lost? Do you not care, he says.

[24 : 54] These were experienced seamen. In their midst would have been probably Peter and Andrew, James and John. Men who had spent their young lives on this very sea, the Sea of Galilee.

Men who were used to the sea, men who were used to storms, men who were used to handling boats and all sorts of weathers and yet they couldn't explain this, they couldn't handle this, they couldn't get this situation under control.

And so they have these great questions and they have these great doubts and they come to Jesus and they say, do you not care? What a thing to say. What a thing to say to the one who loved us and who gave himself for us.

What a thing to say to the one who cared so much that he offered himself up on a tree for sinners who was willing to be mocked, to be slapped about, who was willing to have a crown of thorns in his head and nails put through his hands and his feet.

What a thing to say. What a thing to say to the one who took upon himself the form of a servant for them. He was obedient unto death and they said, do you not care? Sure, so far gone, they'd gone.

[26 : 13] But you know, they had real questions in their own mind. There were things that they couldn't explain. There were problems that they just couldn't get their heads around. And the problem wasn't in the first place one of science as to how this had happened.

The problem was a problem with providence. It wasn't how this had happened, but why? Why has this happened? You see, the God who they forsook all for, they knew that he controlled the storm. The Lord that they served, he ruled the raging of the sea. So why was he doing this? Why was God doing this? Why was he doing it now? Why was he doing it to them? Them of all people, the disciples, the faithful, the remnant, and here they are at their wit's end, their very lives on the line, and then you've got these others who rejected the Savior, who wouldn't listen to his teachings, who questioned him and who criticized him, and they're there on dry land, safe.

They're there probably at home in their beds with their bellies full. And yet here's us, here's us, the faithful disciples, and look at us. Why, Lord? Why?

And you know, disciples will often ask such questions, not just in Jesus' day, but in our own day. It's not always the howling that bothers us, but the why.

[27 : 37] Because you don't have to be at sea to encounter the storms of this life, to encounter the tribulations and the trials. There can be times in your own experience, and I'm sure you've been there, where there can appear to be trouble on every side, as Paul said.

And there are fightings within, there are fears without, and your boat appears to be filling with water. Life becomes almost unbearable, and the walls seem to close in, and you're learning to deal with uncertainty, you're learning to deal with fear, you're learning to deal with loneliness, with illness, with anxiety, having to deal with bereavement, so that many of the constants in your life, the things that have always been there, the things that you thought wouldn't change, and yet they're taken from you, and you feel deserted, you feel maybe left let down, let down by others, let down by yourself, let down by God, and you ask why.

You know, in the last eight months or so, many have felt this particularly keenly. Maybe you've felt it yourself, in some respects, to be a trial, to be a storm.

Again, it's not the how, but it's a why. And the temptation in all of these things, and in all of the changes in your own life, and that of your family, and that of the elderly in the community here, there's the temptation to ask God, well, why?

Why are you doing this? Because ultimately, whatever you believe concerning what has happened to the world in the last eight months, whatever you believe to be God's purpose in that, as Christians, we know that God has allowed it.

[29 : 25] God has allowed it. He has sent it. He foreordains whatsoever comes to pass. You were taught, many of you, when you were younger in the Catechism. The storm, this storm is of his timing, and this weather system is of his making.

And you ask why. When Martin Lloyd-Jones preached on this section, it's interesting. He took this line, do you not care that we are perishing?

And he said that that didn't just include the disciples themselves, it included Jesus. Jesus was included in the way. So it's as if he's saying, do you not care that we and you are perishing, and the cause with us, and the kingdom with us, and so what they're basically saying is, do you not care about the church?

Do you not care? And you know, we can get to that place as well, in a day of small things especially, and we can begin to ask our Lord, why are you allowing this to happen to the church? It's the last thing we needed. Last thing our congregation needed. Last thing the church in Scotland needed to be pushed to the fringes even more. Why are you allowing it?

[30 : 42] Why are you allowing so few to be saved? Why are you allowing the godly man to cease, and the gold to become so dim? Lord, why did you appear to have left us?

I don't know if you've ever been there before. The question of the Lord as to why, to why the church is so weak, why the cause is so low. we have to understand in the first place that these kind of questions are true to Christian experience.

They are true. And it's remarkable the honesty of Scripture, isn't it? The honesty of it. These are disciples. These are the people who are going to be the great role models in the apostolic church. And you're going to have people 30 years down the line, 50 years down the line, 2,000 years down the line, treating of these people, these great men of God, and here they are, and they have these questions, and they have these doubts.

So these things are true to Christian experience. And you might have them, and you probably will have them. But that doesn't mean that they're right. There's a difference. It doesn't mean that they're right.

[31 : 50] It doesn't mean that they're good. And so we have to stop whatever we're thinking ourselves today, we have to stop and question ourselves, and question our response. and ask, well, how do I react to this story?

How do you? What kind of questions are you asking God today? What kind of prayers are you praying? Because if we're in any sort of healthy place at all, we'll go to the Lord with these things. We'll go to him, but what do we say? J.C. Ryle said something interesting in this regard. He said this. He said, how many people have grace enough to go to Jesus saying, Lord, save us in every trouble, and yet not grace enough to lie still and to believe in the darkest hour that all is well. Easy to go and say, Lord, save us. Not as easy. It's easy to lie, to be still. Again, Martin L. Jones said this, and it's starting when you hear it, but he says that it's a time when you've got to stop praying and believe.

It's a time when you've got to stop praying and rest because you can tire yourself out with these prayers when they're not mixed with faith.

[33 : 04] These prayers of why, these prayers of how, these prayers of save, these prayers of help. I'm not telling you not to pray, but you know, if the prayer isn't mixed with faith and belief in the God who controls the storm, then what are they?

We so often go to God with our complaints but not with our trust. We go to him with accusation. We're not believing what he says. So I want us, secondly, I want us, secondly, to consider Jesus' response to the storm.

You see the disciples' response. How now does Jesus respond? And this is where the great instruction is for us. Now, Jesus was asleep, his head on a pillow. But you know, he wasn't ignorant

of what has happened.

He wasn't. He had a purpose in all of this. In fact, again, J.C. Ryle says something which is instructive. He says that his head was asleep but his heart was awake.

His head was asleep but his heart was awake. He was mindful of his people and knew he was going to use this. He'd been teaching them, interestingly, in Matthew's account.

[34 : 16] This comes quite soon after the Sermon on the Mount. He'd been instructing them on the Mount but now he was going to instruct them in the depths. He taught them by precept but now he was teaching them by example.

And so we read in verses 39 and 40 that he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, Peace be still. And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. he said to them, Why are you so afraid?

Have you still no faith? Now, Matthew differs from Mark in his order here.

And it's quite interesting. In Mark here, Jesus says, Peace be still to the sea and then he goes on to question the disciples. He rebukes the sea and he rebukes the disciples.

In Matthew, it's the other way about. The other way about. In Matthew, he questions the disciples first with the sea still raging and then he goes and he rebukes the sea and the wind stops and the storm becomes a camp.

[35 : 24] What do we go with? Well, we have to go with both. So it's likely that he made the question before he calmed the storm and after. But if we had to choose one, we would actually choose Matthew's account.

Because in Mark, there's no there's no chronological language. We're not told of any order. We're just told that the two things happened. Whereas in Matthew, we're told that he spoke to the disciples and then, that word then, that brings a chronology into it, then he rebuked sea. And so that's the way that I want us to take it. He may have spoken to them before and after he came to the storm. But he certainly spoke to them before. So I want to take this the other way about.

The storm is still raging. The disciples are still fearing for their lives. The wind is still blowing. The waves are still crashing against the boat. The water level in the vessel is still creeping up.

[36 : 29] And the disciples are crying out. And Jesus comes to them. What does he say? So characteristic. Why are you so afraid?

Why are you so fearful? Now, godly fear, of course, as you know, is a good thing. It's a good thing. It's a healthy thing. But this isn't godly fear.

In fact, the word itself is different. The word is a, essentially means, why are you so cowardly? Why are you so cowardly? Why do you have this fear which is neglected, the truth, which has forgotten the promises?

It's a fear which has lost sight of hope. And a fear which is despairing for the future. And Jesus is saying to them, why do you have this fear? Why do you have this fear when I'm here with you? And then, related to that, he says, he says, in the ESV, he edits, have you still no faith? In the other versions, it's, how is it that you have no faith?

[37 : 34] There are side differences and I'm not going to go into them, but it doesn't really matter. In Matthew, it's, O ye of little faith. And that is instructive for us as well. Because, it's not that these men didn't have any faith.

It's not that they weren't saved men. It's not that they hadn't believed in the Lord Jesus. It wasn't that they never exercised faith in times of trouble. Or when they were out on the mission, when they were sent out two by two.

But, the point is just this. They weren't exercising their faith here. They weren't believing in this particular circumstance. They had every reason to believe.

They had every reason to have faith. Do you remember what Jesus says to them? Verse 35. Let us go across to the other side. Let's go over.

Let us go over to the land of the gatherings. I've got work to do there. Let us go over. Let us go over. They didn't believe it. When the going got tough, when the boat began to fill with water, they didn't believe anymore.

[38 : 38] They didn't have faith enough to see beyond their circumstances, to see beyond their current situation. Do you know how often it can be the same with us?

How often it can be the same? We can find ourselves as Christian people, perhaps Christians for many years, and something goes wrong. We're filled with fear.

We can't see forward. And our faith just can't see beyond our circumstances. You might be in that kind of situation today. You might have come into this church, and very few people know it, but you know it.

And you feel as if in your life you're on an open sea. You're going through this great crowd, and the waves are crashing in on you. Yet if you're in Jesus Christ, he says to you, why are you so fearful? And how gracious these words are when we really consider them. He doesn't say, why do you fear? Why are you afraid? He said, why are you so fearful? You know, Jesus knew what was in man.

[39 : 40] He had an understanding of the mind. He was the greatest psychologist, and he knew that as men we're going to fear. We're never going to be without any fear. It would be unnatural. But he says, why are you so fearful?

Why are you so fearful when I am with you? Why are you on the verge of despair when I'm with you here on the boat? You know, the Christian, the Christian will fear at times, but the Christian should never despair.

I also remember my old minister saying that. The word despair means no hope. No hope. The Christian always has hope. because you have the Lord on your side.

And he says that he will go before you as a breaker up of your way. He says that he will come behind you, and he'll be watching your back, as it were. He says that he will never leave you nor forsake you.

The apostle says that God before you, who can be against you? So, yes, you've got difficult things. Yes, you're going to feel fierce.

[40 : 41] Yes, your emotions are going to get the better of you at times, but why are you so fearful? Why are you forgetting the promises? Why are you neglecting your past?

The boat, the psalmist said, against me, the one most in camp, my heart is fearless. The one that may be surrounding him with all of their armory and weaponry, yet his heart is fearless because the Lord himself is worth him.

You know, what you'll find is that little faith often poses bigger problems than great stories. Little faith poses great problems for us.

What we're called to have is great faith. And great faith, you don't need to be a great person to have great faith. You don't need to be a very smart person to have great faith. You don't need to have letters after your name to have great faith.

anybody can have great faith. It is to come out of yourself and to look to the Lord and to put all into his hands. And such faith, great faith, moves mountains.

[41 : 52] Such great faith can calm storms to an extent because it remembers what God has done in the past and so trusts that God will do the same in the future.

Great faith remembers that all things work together for good, the dark things, the difficult things, the trials and the sorrows. They work for good to those who love God, who are the called according to his purpose.

Great faith remembers that though weeping may endure for a night and that though the night may be long, that joy cometh in the morning. That's what great faith remembers.

Do you have faith? Do you have faith for your own situation? Do you have faith which is greater than your trial, which is stronger than your storm? Do you believe?

Do you trust that whatever you're going through that God is in control? Do you trust that your father is at the helm and that he has your good in view even if you can't see that good just now and even if you can't see where that good might come from just now?

[42 : 55] Do you believe the Lord is in control of your situation? That's what faith does. It believes. It doesn't believe against the evidence. It believes because of the evidence.

It believes because like Samuel it can raise up its Ebenezer and say hither too hath the Lord helped me. That's why I trust that he will help me again. And so Jesus comes and he rebukes the disciples and he teaches the disciples but then he turns to rebuke the sea and he says to the sea and to the wind he says peace be still.

Peace be still. How quickly he turned it all around and how apparently simple it was for him to change the situation altogether. In the Greek two words two words from the Lord and there is quiet.

It's as if he's saying to nature the creator is here. The creator of the Lord of the heaven and the earth he is here. The Lord who is mightier who is of greater might by far than voice of many waters or great sea billows are.

He's here and he's commanding. And so the storm is changed into a calm at his command and will so that the waves which raged before now quiet are in the snow.

[44 : 22] And I'll be glad because I rest and quiet now may be flow to the heaven and he's high he brings them. There they are saved.

What caused the fear is brought to nothing. The threat it evaporates. I do wonder if they were ashamed. Ashamed of themselves. Ashamed of the way they reacted.

Have you ever been in that kind of situation where tensions rise? Where tempers rise? Where something has gone drastically wrong? and there's a great worry.

You say things, you perhaps do things which you're ashamed of afterwards. You wonder if that's how the disciples felt here. How often we're the same? How often we're the same in the spiritual life?

Our fears can be brought with it to nothing very quickly. Very quickly at times. Our troubles can be even turned into blessings for us in hindsight. We're left feeling ashamed.

[45 : 24] Ashamed of our lack of faith. We should have reacted differently. We should have responded differently to the storm. How quickly the Lord can do it. Two words. Sometimes you know it's not so quick.

And that's maybe when it's more difficult for us. Sometimes these kind of storms can rage for years. And the waves can beat against your life, your home, your family for a long time.

And the Lord, he allows these winds to blow. And he allows these trials to continue. The Lord allows it. And yet he gives you a perfect calm in the midst of the chaos, in the midst of the storm.

He gives you peace in your turmoil. And he gives you grace to help you in your time of need. That's what makes a Christian to differ.

You know, when the Lord in his providence takes a trial away, Christian can be at peace then, and the unbeliever can be at peace then. But only the Christian really can be at peace in the midst of the storm.

[46 : 33] When everything is going wrong, when everything is going against you, when there is trouble on every side, only then, only the Christian can have that peace which passes all understanding, which keeps his heart or her heart and mind through Christ Jesus.

And he can make you a wonder to yourself in the midst of your sorrow and your agony and your uncertainty and your insecurity. Has he done that for you?

But be mindful that whatever your situation, that Christ isn't a slave, he's with you. He's calming the inner storm, or he's offering to do so, if he will allow you to do so.

quickly, I don't have a watch, but quickly let me conclude by seeing the change in the disciples' mindset, temperament.

In verse 41, they were filled with great fear and said to one another, who then is this that even the wind and the sea obey him? They feared.

[47 : 42] They feared exceedingly. They're filled with great fear. Now, the word for fear here is different. It's different to the word that Jesus used in verse 40, why he's so afraid.

It's a different fear. And what's happening here is that their cowardly fear is being changed into a godly fear. And their unbelief is being changed into an awesome wonder.

Because they no longer fear the storm, they're no longer fearing for their lives, but they fear the one who's in the boat with an awe and with a reverence.

Now, they weren't ignorant of who Jesus was. It seemed the kind of man he was. It seemed the power that he had over man, over illness, even over devils, even over sin, to forgive sin.

Yet now they're seeing for the first time that he has power over nature, that he has power over the storms of life. Basically, that he has power over anything. This man can do anything.

[48 : 44] This man is God. They're seeing that this is the God man. And they fear. They fear that there's a reverence there. And all such fears is where today?

The church and inside of the church. We like Jesus as a friend, but not as a king. We want him to be kind, but not powerful.

We want him to be tolerant, but not holy. But you know, when we see Jesus as what he is, when we see him working in our lives, when we see him changing our troubles into blessings, changing the

darkness into light, when we see how powerful he is.

We see how holy he is. I know that's how to create comfort. Who wants a, we praise the Lord that Jesus is a friend that staketh closer than a brother.

But who wants a Jesus who's just a friend, and who has no power, who's no king? This is the God that we need. This is the saviour that we need, the one of scripture, the one in whose hands are our times, the one who controls our storms, and who's able to turn them on and to turn them off.

[50 : 00] That is the saviour that we need, one who we can fear. You know, the disciples understand that it grew in this trial. And that's where understanding, that's where Christian understanding and experience really grows.

In the trial, there's no growth on the mountain tops, we're told, wrapping to the top of many, but you have growth in the valleys. growth in the valleys.

And as in nature, so in grace, it's often in the valleys that you grow. I remember reading Spurgeon, seeing Spurgeon saying that he fears that he never learned anything, except when he was on the anvil, on the anvil, the blacksmith's anvil, where he would hammer out the metal and bend it and mold it.

That's what Spurgeon learned and for us, it's often what many of us learn. Some of you today might not learn the lesson of this sermon until you go through a trial, until you go through an agony and there, there you'll learn, because experience is the best teacher in many ways.

We seem to learn as much as we can from scripture, from books, but experience is the best teacher. It's the storms that reveal to us the compassion, the love, how deep it is, the power of the Lord, how great it is, the patience of the Lord, how long suffering it is, the wisdom of the Lord, so that we might see all the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.

[51 : 32] The depth of it. We can learn to see what manner of man is this, what kind of man is he, that the wind and the sea obeying, he is the God-man.

It's the trials, it's the storms that enable us more and more to live loose to this world and to deepen our dependence on our Saviour. That's what he's doing. That's what he's doing perhaps for you today.

And if you know, if you know that, and I don't in any way believe it on your trials, but if you know that, and it's for your good, then don't despair.

If the Saviour has said that he will take you to the other side, if he said that when he has begun a good work that he will perform it unto the day of the Lord Jesus Christ, in your faith, you remember what manner of man the captain of the ship is, and you remember that the wind and the sea obey him, that he has command and power over the storms, life.

Finally, if you're not a believer, I should want to say to you, where do you go? Where do you go with your trials? Where do you go when things go wrong?

[52 : 42] If you don't know the captain of the ship, if you don't know the Lord of heaven and earth, the God of providence, if you don't know him, what hope do you have in the storm? Where are you?

And the council to come aboard, come aboard the gospel ship, because the captain says, as the hymn writer wrote, there's room for you, and there's room for millions more.

There may be storms, there may be trials and tribulations, but the Lord be with you in it, with no reason to pee. Amen. Let us. Gracious and ever-blessed God, we thank thee for the comfort that we receive from thy word, for the great blessing of knowing that we are not in our own hands if we are in Christ, but that we are in the hands of the Almighty, that the eternal God is our refuge.

And that underneath, through the everlasting hours, all give us greater confidence than we pray in the God who we send, and give us to dedicate ourselves more and more to thy service.

Go before us and be gracious to us, and forgive us for sin, for Christ's sake. Amen. Well, we're going to read another psalm, Psalm 46, to conclude.

[54 : 06] The psalm will be played before the benediction. God is our refuge and our strength, and strength and strength at present date. Therefore, although the earth remove, we will not be afraid.

Though hills amidst the seas be cast, though waters roaring make, and troubled be, ye, though the hills by swelling seas do shake. A river is whose streams do glad the city of our God, the holy place wherein the Lord most high hath his abode.

God in the midst of her doth dwell, nothing shall her remove. The Lord to her unhelp her will, and that right early prove. The heathen raged tumultuously, the kingdoms moved where.

The Lord God uttered his voice, the earth did melt for fear. It's the first six verses. God is our refuge and our strength, and the strength has attained.

God is our refuge and His strength is has attained.

[55 : 27] Hosmer, chatbite, grandiose, ■ Amen.

Amen. The Lord will ■■as all ■■■■ blessed men.

Let us praise the Lord, our power shall be guided. The Jamaica of Christ pass the Lamb of Christ, the Lamb of God, or the Fellowship of the and with the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Amen.