

## Lessons from the Storm

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[illegible]

Thank you.

And I'm not quite sure yet. I'm not quite finished preaching through the miracles of Jesus. This has been such an encouragement for me every single week to preach these passages.

And we've been in John for quite some time. In the last several weeks, we've been just walking through the Gospel of Mark as he strings together a lot of the miracles of Jesus right here at the beginning of the book.

And so probably a few more weeks or so in this series on miracles. And so, yeah, I hope that question isn't because you're ready to move on, all right?

[ 2 : 07 ] But anyways, Mark chapter 4, we're going to look at a very familiar story, a very familiar miracle that Jesus performs here in Mark chapter 4.

I trust the music has prepared us for what we'll look at in this passage tonight. So if you're able to stand, please do so as we honor God's Word.

Mark chapter 4 and verse 35. Mark 4, 35 says, On that day when evening had come, Jesus said to them, Let us go across to the other side.

And leaving the crowd, they took Him with them in a boat, and 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.

But He, Jesus, was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. And they woke Him saying, Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?

[ 3 : 16 ]      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 the wind and the sea obey Him?

This is God's Word. I'm glad you're here tonight. God has a Word for you. Are you ready? Let's pray. Let's pray. God, thank You for the privilege.

Indeed, it is a privilege in this moment to study Your Word. Help me teach this passage faithfully. And I'm going to trust that Your Spirit is going to work in this place, and that You're going to move in our lives as we look to Your Word, and we look to Christ in Your Word.

And we pray it in His name. And God's people said, Amen. Amen. You can be seated. He had the reputation of a very powerful preacher. People loved His quick wit.

[ 4 : 40 ] They loved His humor. His cigar-smoking manliness, and His love for a good suit would have made you believe that He had it all together.

But for those who really knew Charles Spurgeon, they knew that there was another side to this man. There was a side of physical and mental pain.

Spurgeon experienced a lot in his life. He went through several tragic events. One of those occurred at age 22.

Spurgeon was pastoring a large church. He had twin babies at home. He was preaching to a few thousand people when somebody in the crowd screamed, Fire!

It was a mad rush out the door. And in that rush of people, seven died. Twenty-eight were seriously injured.

[ 5 : 45 ] And Spurgeon wondered if he ever wanted to preach again. Physical suffering. Spurgeon suffered with a kidney disease and gout that was so painful, it kept him from preaching about a third of the time.

His wife, Susanna, was bedridden for 25 years of their marriage. Criticism. During the early years in London, Spurgeon received intense slander and scorn.

He was constantly fighting critics over his sermons, and he was an outspoken critic of slavery in the United States. Add to this the weight of preaching.

This is what Spurgeon said on one account regarding his preaching. Quote, Add to that the stress of ministry.

Spurgeon said on another occasion, No one living knows the toil and care I have to bear. I ask for no sympathy, but for grace, if I sometimes forget something, I have to look after the orphanage.

[ 7 : 22 ] Take charge of the church of 4,000 members. There are marriages and burials that must be undertaken. There's the weekly sermon to be revised, the sword and the trowel to be edited.

And besides all that, a weekly average of 500 letters to be answered. One can only imagine had he had email. All of this caused Spurgeon to suffer severely with depression.

Spurgeon fought depression hard throughout his life. In fact, there were times when this is how he described it. Quote, My spirits were sunken so low that I could weep by the hour like a child and yet I knew not what I wept for.

Towards the end of his life, Spurgeon was reflecting on these and other hardships that he had endured throughout his life. And he said, he wrote what is one of my favorite Spurgeon quotes.

Notice it here on the screen. I have been cast into waters to swim in, which but for God's upholding hand would have proved waters to drown in.

[ 8 : 47 ] The waters rolled in continually, wave upon wave. I do not mention this to exact sympathy, but simply to let the reader see that I am no dry land sailor.

I love that quote. I know the role of the billows and the rush of the winds. I have learned to kiss the waves that have thrown me up against the rock of ages.

I have kissed the waves that have thrown me up against the rock of ages. Spurgeon wrote that at age 53.

He died four years later. Faith family, have any of you here this evening ever kissed the waves?

Have any of you ever felt the sea billows roll? Do any of you know the fury of the rushing winds? Maybe for you it's the long battle with the disease.

[ 9 : 58 ] Maybe for you it's the ongoing criticism of other people. Maybe for you it's been the ongoing battle with unemployment. Maybe it's a relationship status that you didn't ask for. Maybe it's a flood of bills you don't know how you're going to pay for. Maybe it is the weight of responsibility that you carry every week.

Maybe it's the loss of a loved one that you still deal with today. But I have no doubt whatsoever that there are many of you here this evening that have kissed the waves.

And that is precisely what the disciples are experiencing in Mark 4. Look at verse 37. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling.

But Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion, and they woke Him and said to Him, Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?

[ 11 : 11 ] Here in Mark 4, the disciples find themselves on this particular evening in a storm. It's not some little sissy storm.

It is a serious, massive storm. Hurricane-like storm. How do you know? There's a few clues here in the passage. Trivia question.

What was the occupation of these men? Right? Go back to Mark 1. Mark 1 in verse 16. Passing along the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net into the sea, for they were what?

Fishermen. In other words, this is not their first rodeo. They have been through storms before. They know what it's like to be on the waters. Therefore, this storm is so severe that men who spent their lives on the water are panicking.

And then here's the second clue we have. Notice what they say, that they are present tense perishing. We are perishing. Do you not care that we're dying?

[ 12 : 22 ] This is not, Jesus, we're about to perish. Jesus, I think I see a cloud forming. That may have been lightning off in the distance. Oh, no, no, no, no, no.

This is, we are in the process of perishing. We are dying here. In other words, the disciples are kissing the waves.

And the only way out of this situation is by a what? A miracle. Now, this situation that they are in, from it, from this passage, I want to give you tonight what I'm calling lessons from the storm.

How many of you, you don't have to raise your hand, but how many of you are already like, I'm really glad I'm here tonight. Because I'm in a storm. And I could use some lessons from the storm Well, this is what God has for you tonight.

Here's the first lesson, is this. Storms can come without warning. Anybody want to amen that? Okay. Could have been a little louder, but I'll take it, alright?

[ 13 : 32 ] Storms can come without warning. Anybody just been walking along life, and before you knew it, dark clouds were forming above you? Just out of nowhere.

No warning whatsoever. Well, that's what's happening here. You say, how do you know that? How do you know that this storm happens without warning? We'll go back to verse 35. 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. A couple of things I would point out here. First of all, you see no pushback from the disciples, do you, in those verses.

There's no, hey, maybe we shouldn't go out given the weather conditions. None of that here in the text. Granted, that's an argument of silence, but we have more to go on. The text says that it's evening, which is likely when sudden storms would come upon the Sea of Galilee.

And thirdly, the historical context of the Sea of Galilee. How many of you, I'm curious, show of hands, anybody ever been to the Sea of Galilee? I highly recommend it.

[ 14 : 49 ] All right? What do we know about the Sea of Galilee? Well, the Sea of Galilee is about 13 miles long, about 8 miles wide. It's like a giant bowl, and it's more than 700 feet below sea level.

To the west of the Sea of Galilee, you have the Mediterranean Sea. To the north, you have Mount Hermon, which is about 9,200 feet tall above sea level.

So here's what's happening. In a 30-mile stretch, you can go from 9,200 feet above to 700 feet below, meaning that in this area, there is the constant clashing of cold and hot air, creating storms instantly, without notice at all.

R.C. Sproul, the late theologian, writes, he said this, not me, quote, the Sea of Galilee is like a woman whose mood is fiercely changeable.

He said that, not me, do not kill the messenger. The Sea of Galilee is like a woman whose mood is fiercely changeable because of its peculiar location between the Mediterranean Sea and the desert.

[ 16 : 00 ] The lake is exposed to a strange quirk of nature. Violent winds can come across its surface as if they're blowing through a funnel. These, listen, winds come without warning and can turn the tranquil lake into a tempest in a matter of seconds.

Even with today's modern equipment, some people refuse to sail the Sea of Galilee for fear of perishing under the wrath of the lake's violent moods.

That's what's happening here. The point is this. Sudden storms, that is storms that appear out of nowhere, happened frequently on the Sea of Galilee. And everybody listening to me, they happen frequently in life.

Amen? You were just going along your normal day and out of nowhere, you were called into the office after 15 years with the company.

It was just a normal medical exam that turned into months of treatment. You had driven that road every day, but on that day, you never saw the other car coming.

[ 17 : 20 ] You thought everything relationally was going fine until she said, we need to talk. How many of you, like me, wish there were a suffering meteorologist?

Anybody? Think about what I'm saying there. How many of you wish there was like a weather channel for suffering? Okay? I just want you to know before you go out today, there's an 80% chance that a storm is coming.

Oh, how great that would be, but that's not how life works, is it? Often storms come without any notice at all. Oh yes, don't misunderstand me.

The Bible promises that in this life, there will be trouble. There is a guarantee that there will be storms. But the reality is they can come upon us fast.

Second lesson from the storm is this. Storms come as you follow Jesus. In other words, the disciples here are experiencing this storm because they're doing what Jesus told them to do.

[ 18 : 26 ] Hey, we're going to go to the other side, get your stuff ready, and they're getting the stuff ready. They're gathering the boats together. In other words, they're obeying Jesus. And for the many passages that highlight the disobedience of the disciples, this isn't one of them.

In fact, it's the opposite. See, many of us have been taught a bad theology when it comes to suffering. Notice this on the screen. We've been taught that the more I serve, the less I'll suffer.

The Bible doesn't teach that at all. The Bible does not teach the more you serve, the less you will suffer. It is often the opposite. God teaches us that He often takes His people through suffering, not as punishment, but as pruning.

Not as punishment, but as pruning. I am the true vine, and those that bear fruit will be pruned so that they will bear more fruit.

Are you with me? James 1, verse 2. Count it all joy, brothers, when you kiss the waves, when you meet trials of various kinds.

[ 19 : 41 ] For you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness, and let steadfastness have its full effect that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

Peter even talks about this in 1 Peter 1, that your faith tested as fire through the trials of life. Do not think that because you are following Jesus, life will be easy.

Notice this on the screen, and I hope this has encouraged some of you. Just because you're in a storm doesn't mean you're walking in sin. Just because you're in a storm doesn't mean you're walking in sin.

It may be that you're on the very sea at the precise time of day that Jesus wants you to be. Amen?

Y'all with me? Alright. Lesson number three. Storms teach us to trust God's promises. Storms teach us to trust God's promises.

[ 20 : 41 ] In other words, what good are the promises of God if you never have to use them? I'm waiting for the amen. Alright? What good are the promises of God if you never have to use them?

What good is it to have luggage if you never travel anywhere? Does it make any sense? We have the promises of God because we need to cling to the promises of God in the storm.

And you may say, yeah, yeah, yeah, I get that generically, but where is that actually in this passage? Well, look at verse 35. What promise should the disciples have clung to in this storm?

On that day when evening had come, Jesus said to them, let us go across to the other side. In other words, what did Jesus tell them before they ever set sail?

We're going where? Talk to me. To the other side. Jesus said, we're going to the other side. And I know, trust me, I know, it is not easy when you're kissing the waves to believe in God's promises, but the disciples should have told themselves in the middle of the storm, I know it looks like we're going to die.

[ 21 : 57 ] Oh, how it looks like we're going to die. In fact, we are dying in this moment. But Jesus said, we're going to the other side, which means what?

We're going to get to the other side. I don't care how bad it gets. I don't care how many waves are crashing into the boat. It may look like I'm a second from death, but if Jesus said, we're going to get there, guess what?

We're going to get there. Hebrews 11.1, faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen.

Notice this on the screen. Faith is trusting in the promises of God because the promises of God are faithful. Amen? It's trusting in the promises of God because the promises of God are faithful.

And why are the promises of God faithful? Because they're from God who is always faithful. Now, one of the things I've taught several times and I'm going to teach it again here is this.

[ 23 : 03 ] What this means is it has to be something God has promised. It has to actually be something that God has promised.

What I mean by that is I have experienced many cases as a pastor where someone was convinced that their spouse would be healed. They were convinced that they were going to get a particular job.

They were absolutely certain of a particular outcome and it didn't happen. Why? Because God didn't promise that. Right? He never promised that you will always be healed.

He didn't promise that in the Bible, hey, you will get whatever job you want. That's not in there. The problem is, let's be honest and I'm going to be honest with my own heart here too, sometimes I mistake the will of God with the will of Wes.

And I'm certain that this is what I need so I project on God a false promise. One that He didn't actually say. But if He did actually say it, guess what?

[ 24 : 10 ] It's going to happen. A hundred percent. It's going to happen. Now, why would we even doubt God's promises in the storm?

Look at verse 40. He said to them, why are you so, say it, afraid? Why are you so afraid?

When the disciples are asked here, why are you afraid? I have to believe. Now, this is not in the text. This is just Wes. I can be wrong.

I have to believe Peter said something inappropriate. When Jesus looks at him and says, why are you afraid? I believe Peter probably says something inappropriate.

I know I would have. It would have been, this is when my spiritual gift of sarcasm would come out. I would be like, wait, wait, wait, wait. Why are we afraid? Oh, let me see, Jesus.

[ 25 : 03 ] Let me think about this for a minute. I don't know. Maybe it's that I tend to get nervous right before I die. Maybe that's why I'm afraid.

Like maybe Peter here, like I would be tempted to do, inserts his sarcasm. Why are you afraid? I think you know why I'm afraid.

But what is Jesus addressing here? And this is so real life. It is so practical. Look at it on the screen. And fear has a way of disorienting facts.

You see, let's be honest. I don't think clearly when I'm afraid. And neither do you. When I let fear set in, fear of the storm, it's easy to forget the facts about God.

Anybody with me tonight? Fear settles in. And I think, listen, listen. I know I'm going to make it to the other side.

[ 26 : 10 ] Jesus said so. But it sure looks like I'm going to die. I mean, it just feels like this is it. I know, I know, I know, I know.

I know what you said. But I don't feel that right now because I'm afraid. I'm afraid. I'm afraid. And by the way, guess what happened?

Verse 1, chapter 5. They came to the other side of the sea. Look at this on the screen.

To the country of the garrisons. Put that verse up if you can. They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the garrisons.

In other words, guess what? They made it to the other side. Notice this on the screen here. Even when disciples were in doubt, the destination never was.

[ 27 : 10 ] That'll preach. Even when the disciples were in doubt, the destination never was. Might I remind you, faith family tonight, that Jesus has already determined your destination also.

Anybody want to be comforted and encouraged tonight by God's word? Your destination has already been determined. Let me give you, there's a whole sermon here. I'll just give you a couple verses. Philippians 1, 6.

I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

You are going to get to the day of completion. John 10, verse 27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

[ 28 : 09 ] Ain't nobody taking you out of the hand of Jesus. That destination is secure. And then John 14, verse 1. Let not your hearts be troubled.

Believe in God. Believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will take you to myself, that where I am, you may also be.

Even in the storm of death, nothing can separate you from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus.

Amen? But storms are where we learn to hold on to these promises. I believe my destination is secure even when I'm afraid.

Lesson number four. I only have 15, so we're making good progress. Number four. Storms will make you question God's love. Storms will make you question God's love.

[ 29 : 20 ] Love. You will, in the midst of your storm, ask God, do you really love me? Because if you really loved me, why would I be going through this storm?

This is precisely the question the disciples ask. Look at verse 38 again. Notice it here. Teacher, say this with me. Do you not care?

Do you not care? Do you love me? Does it matter that I am perishing here? Do you care what I'm going through? Can you not feel the raw emotion of that verse?

And some of you, I know that you ought to be able to connect with that because you've asked that question. Maybe you didn't have the guts to say it out loud, but you felt it. God, how can you sleep at a time like this?

I mean, get that image in your mind with me right now. The disciples are panicking. The disciples are like all up in knots and fear and dismay.

[ 30 : 26 ] And what is Jesus doing? On a cushion, the text says. Thank you, Mark, for including that detail.

At least he was comfortable, right? But you just sat there like, what are you doing? I mean, all appearance right now is that Jesus, you don't care what I'm going through.

My encouragement, it may not feel like encouragement, is to say to you, faith family, that at some point in your journey, you will wonder if God cares. And here's what I want to say to you. Are you all still with me tonight?

You're normal when you ask that. What I'm on a campaign against is churches or pastors or teachers or whatever that make you feel guilty for asking that.

Right? Because this is the normal experience. You are in a long line of people that felt alone in the storm. Joseph felt abandoned as he sat in the prison cell.

[ 31 : 31 ] David felt forgotten as he was alone in the cave. Naomi felt like the hand of God was against her. Paul felt alone and discouraged in the ministry in the book of Acts.

And even Jesus cried out, my God, why have you forsaken me? Faith family, the Bible is full of people who kissed the waves and wondered if they had been left to die all alone.

And notice what Jesus says to the disciples. in this situation. Verse 40, he said to them, why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?

Do you not have faith? In other words, here's what Jesus is saying and I believe he's saying this to us tonight as well. Have I not by now proven how much I love you?

Are you listening to me tonight? I died. Now we have the fuller revelation of what Jesus is going to do. The disciples didn't even know this part yet but Jesus could say I died because I love you.

[ 32 : 45 ] You don't ever have to doubt my love in the storm. I have proven time and time again because God so loved the world that's why I'm here.

and I get that fear is making you say things that you don't really know but I'm telling you you are loved.

Look at this on the screen faith family don't let the fear of the storm wash away the fact of God's love. I know it feels like he's asleep and doesn't care but he has proven his love time and time again.

Lesson number five is that storms pass but they take time to get over. Storms pass but they take time to get over.

What happens in this passage would be funny if it weren't true in life. Look at verse 40 it says he said to them why are you so afraid have you still no faith and they were filled with what great fear and said to one another who then is this that even the wind and the sea obey him.

[ 33 : 58 ] Now listen listen when does that verse happen? I need you to think with me so bring your minds in. When did that verse happen? Answer after the storm had been calmed.

In other words we tend to think of the disciples once the storm is calmed of being like whoo everything's good now. No no no they are still freaking out.

In fact if they were afraid during the storm they're even now more afraid after the storm. They're not sure should I be afraid of the storm or afraid of this guy who calms it. I mean they are terrorized.

So don't think that just because the storm has passed means that they're over it. They are still shaking. I wonder if they woke up in the middle of the night later that evening did that just actually happen?

Any of you ever woken up in the night and your heart is racing and you're nervous or you have that thought in the middle of the day? I wonder how long this lingered with the disciples.

[ 35 : 05 ] My point here is that keep in mind and I hope that this will be true here at Faith Family keep in mind that it takes people time to shake off the fear they had in the storm.

Can I get an amen? One of my favorite verses here is Job 6 26 that says do you think you can reprove words when the speech of a despairing man is wind what that means is have you ever known anybody to nitpick the words of somebody who's suffering I just I just don't feel like God loves me oh you John 3 16 come on brother cheer up stop let me grieve I don't I don't really believe that God doesn't love me but I feel that way so let me just express how I feel without reproving the words of a despairing man when those words are wind in other words what I'm preaching after is that we will have the kind of culture at faith family that allows others time in their grief and hurt yeah the storm may pass and the storm will eventually pass but it does take time to get over

I wrote this down this didn't make it on the screen I just jotted down earlier some who have been through a storm will get nervous at a rain shower those that have been through the storm will get nervous the next time the sky even barely has a cloud in it give them grace give them compassion give them space let them say things that they don't even mean so faith family let me ask you are you encouraged by today's sermon honestly did you like it B plus higher or lower A minus maybe a C some of you are like why is he asking that he has never asked us to grade his sermons because I would give myself an

F maybe a D minus it's not because anything I've said to this point is not true on the contrary I believe that every single one of my points was taken specifically from the text itself but if I stopped the sermon here I should get an F in gospel preaching why because this passage is not about the storm this passage is not about the fear of the disciples this passage is about this the son of God is sovereign over the storms I've heard this passage preached so many times and

I'm not trying to be too picky here my point is to say that it is easy to go astray with this passage by failing listen by failing to reflect on why does Mark include this story is Mark's primary purpose to give you tips on how to be comforted in the storms of life no as I've mentioned to you before in the past few weeks Mark's primary aim is for you to see and behold Jesus as the son of God amen in fact he doesn't even wait a second right out of the gate to show you what he's trying to show you Mark chapter 1 verse 1 the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ say it with me the son of God and then he proceeds to show you why he is the son of

[ 39 : 44 ] God John the Baptist prepares the way the baptism Jesus hears this is my beloved son and what happens after that we see the son of God who has authority over Satan in the wilderness temptation he has authority to teach unlike anything they've ever heard he has authority over unclean spirits in the synagogue he has authority over disease and sickness and leprosy last week we looked at he has authority to forgive sins only God has the authority to do that and now in Mark 4 Mark is showing us that Jesus has authority over creation that he can speak to the waves and they immediately become like glass which is why we along with the disciples ought to be wondering this verse 41 and they were filled with great fear and said to one another who then is this who is this man who is this one that even the wind and the sea obey him and the answer that

Mark wants us to believe tonight is this he is the son of God he is the prophet unlike Jonah who was asleep in the boat but he isn't thrown into the sea he calms the sea he is the true Adam who has dominion over the created order and he can subdue the earth under his command he is the son of God God in the flesh why because he can do what only God can do you say what does that have to do with the storm!

verse 28 then they cried to the and he delivered them from their distress he who who's he the Lord God he made the storm be still and the waves of the sea were hushed you see faith family in the ancient near east the sea was the place of chaos the sea was the place of fear the sea was a place of death it's why in the book of revelation the sea will be no more because death is no more in other words what is Mark showing us here are you still with me just like in Mark 2 when Jesus says your sins are forgiven and the response is wait wait wait wait only God can do that exactly in the same way in

Mark chapter 4 the Old Testament teaches that only God can calm the sea so when the question is asked who is this the only answer is the Son of God notice this on the screen the point of this passage is not peace in a great storm it is faith in a great Savior Jesus the Son of God which by the way is how you find peace in a great storm amen that is what Mark wants us to see and if you think the identity of Jesus is seen in the power over the storm of Mark 4 then you should see his power over the storm in Mark 15 Mark 15 verse 33 talks about how

Jesus hung on the cross darkness covered all of the land so bad was this storm the rocks split and the tombs were opened and the temple veil was torn in too and everyone was asking then what the disciples were asking here who is this and look at Mark chapter 15 verse 39 and when the centurion who standing facing him saw that in this way he breathed his last he said truly this man was the son of God and three days later the message that came from the empty grave was peace be still and the result faith family is this when you kiss the waves do not be afraid do not let go of your faith but let them throw you against the rock of ages and all

[ 45 : 20 ] God's people said amen will you pray with me God thank you for the opportunity tonight to study your word I have no doubt that there are many if not all in this room that needed something from this message tonight there are some that are in the midst of the storm there are many in this room that have been through the great storm and I pray that we would walk away tonight with the main point of your word which isn't peace in the storm but faith in the Savior because it is faith in the Savior that gives us the peace in the storm and so I pray that you would strengthen our faith and deepen our faith in you tonight that if we walk out of this place tonight and there are storm clouds waiting for us tonight tomorrow this week that we would already know the answer to the question of who is this that can calm the storm

I pray this in Jesus name Amen Ass