

Light On Dark Clouds: Fear

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 19 March 2023

Preacher: Walt Alexander

[0 : 0 0] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

Mark chapter 4, verse 35. Word of God 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 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. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion.

And they woke 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!

[1 : 2 1] And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 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?

May God bless the preaching and the hearing of his word this morning. Well, how many times have you heard someone say, I found Christ to be my greatest treasure when I won the lottery?

Or I found Christ to be my greatest treasure when I was on my honeymoon with my sweetheart? Or I found Christ to be my greatest treasure when I finally put in the pool that I had been longing to throw in the backyard?

Never! But how many times have you heard someone say, I found Christ to be my greatest treasure when my wife died with cancer? I found Christ to be my greatest treasure when I was piecing my life back together after bankruptcy.

[2 : 4 3] I found Christ to be my greatest treasure when tragedy struck and rearranged my life before God. The Puritan Richard Baxter once said, Suffering so unbolts the door of the heart that the word hath found entrance.

You know, had found easier entrance. I think that's the way it often works. Suffering suddenly opens up our heart to receive the word of God in a way that we've never received it before.

But it's not always true, is it? Way back from Ethiopia several weeks ago, I watched a movie that captured the other side of the coin. It was about a father who had lost his son to cancer at seven or eight years old.

It crushed him. Like the sudden loss of anyone in your life, it ripped up so many different hopes and expectations about life, about the future, about identity.

He isolated himself from everyone. He began drinking and drinking a lot. He lost so much of the respect he used to have and he became bitter.

- [3 : 59] D.A. Carson once said, Pain tends to make people better or bitter. Pain tends to make people better or bitter.
- You know, why does suffering, why does the same suffering make some people better and some people bitter? I think the answer is not always obvious.
- Often we search for the answer someplace that it's not. It's precisely here that we must lean forward. Paul Tripp hits at something that I believe is very important when he says this.
- Here's what every sufferer, and I said already today, Every Christian is a saint, sinner, and a sufferer. Here's what every sufferer needs to understand.
- You never just suffer the thing that you're suffering, but you always also suffer the way that you're suffering that thing. Now that sounds like a run-on sentence.
- [4 : 56] It's a little confusing, but you never just suffer the thing that you're suffering. You always suffer, also suffer, the way that you're suffering that thing. You and I never come into our suffering empty-handed.
- We always drag a bag full of experiences, expectations, assumptions, perspectives, desires, intentions, and decisions into our suffering. So our lives are shaped not by what we suffer, but by what we bring to our suffering.
- You never just suffer that thing, cancer, betrayal, something like that. You never, you always also suffer what you bring to it.
- Your suffering, therefore, is more shaped by what's in your heart than by what happens. It's more shaped by those desires, expectations, hopes, dreams, whatever.
- It's more shaped by those things than by what happens to you. That's why two people can walk through very similar circumstances, and yet one of them end up better, and one of them end up bitter.
- [6 : 07] This morning, we're going to begin a short series called Light on Dark Clouds. Suffering well is not about avoiding certain things. You know, sometimes we think that's the way life is.
- If I just avoid certain things, then I'll suffer well. Challenging circumstances, dark clouds. Suffering well is about avoiding certain temptations that arise in suffering.
- The great challenge to faith is not suffering, but the temptations that emerge in suffering. The Bible wonderfully presses forward a number of temptations that are very great.
- No temptation in suffering is greater than the temptation to fear. The most frequent command in the Bible is do not fear, because the most common response to something unexpected or uncomfortable is fear.
- And yet, under the dark clouds, we must learn to walk with God in the light of his word, of truth.
- [7 : 14] All these things. Our passage this morning comes from a string of scenes around the Sea of Galilee. Probably verses you're very familiar with. In the first scene, Jesus is confronting the greatest fears of the age.
- So first, he calms these waves. And then in the second story, Jesus conquers the man possessed by a demon whose name is Legion. Then in the final story, Jesus heals a woman ravaged by disease and also raises a young girl from the dead.
- Jesus is teaching his disciples that because he is with them, they have nothing to fear. And a word where we're going is, Do not fear.
- It's the Father's good pleasure to give you everything he has. Do not fear. It's the Father's good pleasure to give you everything he has. We're going to break this out in three points, unpacking the great things going on in this passage.

The first one is the great storm. The great storm. The problem of fear does not begin with fear. The problem of fear begins with a sudden change of circumstance.

[8 : 19] The passage opens and the disciples are calm. They're collected. They're confident. Look in verse 35. On that day when evening came, Jesus said, Let us go to the other side of the sea. And leaving the crowd, they took him with them just as he was.

They obey and they take Jesus in the boat. They would have taken him in a typical first century vessel. 26 feet long or so with a mast in the middle and a deck in the front and the back.

Because several of these disciples were former fishermen, they would have been very familiar with this boat. Very familiar with how to control this boat, how to guide this boat, how to sail this boat.

They also would have known that storms are common in the Sea of Galilee. Perhaps they saw storm clouds already gathering. Nevertheless, they knew that the sea is 700 feet below sea level.

30 miles to the north is Mount Hermon, which rises 9,000 feet above sea level. And so as the cold air came down from the mountain and meets the warm air coming up from the sea, storms often occurred.

[9 : 28] But on this night, the storm is unusually intense. Let's look at verse 37. He says, Mark says, a great windstorm arose and the waves were breaking into the boat so that the boat was already filling.

It's a great storm. Same word used for a hurricane. Produces waves that crash onto the boat. I love how actively Mark tells it, they're already filling.

The first thing to notice in this story is that a sudden change of circumstances changes everything. These disciples begin their voyage confidently. They know the Sea of Galilee like a good teenager.

They're very confident in what they know. Look at verse 35. I think Mark even underlines this confidence. Jesus said to them, let us go across to the Sea of Galilee.

But then look at verse 36. It says, they took him with them. Just as he was. Jesus says, let us go. They're like, okay, Jesus.

[10 : 41] We'll handle the sea. We're the former fishermen. We'll take you across the sea. But a sudden change of circumstances changes everything.

Their confidence disappears. Their knowledge is useless. Their experience is worthless. That's what happens in suffering. Most people aren't worried about their life.

They're not wrestling with questions about the future, the meaning of life, or the problem of evil. They're not stumbling through the darkness, as Lewis said.

Falling through the darkness. They're so busy working, enjoying life, raising a family, serving the Lord, and so on. They have no time to think. But a sudden change of circumstances jolts them to the core.

It could be the death of a neighbor, a family member, the loss of a job, the diagnosis of a terminal illness. We're all just one phone call away from having our life completely rearranged.

[11 : 55] Suddenly, they're wrestling in a way that they've never wrestled before. Before this sudden change of circumstance immediately changes what we think about.

You know, that's what happens with these disciples. The great storm falls upon them, and it changes everything they're thinking about. They're no longer thinking about the miracles Jesus has been performing. They're no longer thinking about the many teachings that he had done that day.

We have all these teachings that are included in Mark 4. All these parables, the great parable section in Mark, the full day of teaching they just heard. They're no longer thinking about that.

They're thinking about the wind. They're thinking about the waves. They're thinking about the water. And so, it just happens just in the same way. A sudden change of circumstance changes everything. In a less serious example, in a sudden change of circumstance could be finding out someone in your child's class has lice.

And suddenly, you're like, oh my gosh, I feel an itch. What was that? Did her hair move? What's going on? You know, everything changes. You cannot not think about lice all the time.

[13 : 14] You're ready to throw out everything that has cotton in your house. Burn it to the ground. You know what? Just burn the whole house because we can't handle this life.

How much more serious when the sudden change is more serious? The problem of fear always begins with a problem of meditation, of thinking.

As so often is the case, the sudden change of circumstances also changes how we think about our problem. Changes what you think about it, but it also changes how you think about your problem.

The more you think about what you're facing, the bigger and scarier it is. The more you meditate on the problem, the bigger and scarier, the more serious your problem is. It may be something like lice, but it just grows.

I love the way the psalm said, when my anxious thoughts multiply. I love that because that's exactly the way they do. There is a multiplication principle in anxiety that just keeps going and going and going.

[14 : 23] And so the problem gets bigger and bigger. That's what's going on with these disciples. The wind's blowing. The waves are crashing. The water's overflowing. The disciples are doing all that they can do to get out of this water, to get across this sea.

But they're not going fast enough. And the wind's not dying down. The waves aren't stopping. And it keeps going on and on and on. And the more they think about the storm, the more desperate and anxious and worried they become.

The same is true with us. Point two, the great calm. The great calm. Suddenly the attention shifts to Jesus.

And the miracle he performs to make a great calm. Look at verse 38. It says, but he was in the stern.

Asleep on the cushion. Jesus is there. But he's asleep. I love that. The only time in the gospel of Mark where Jesus is found sleeping is right here.

[15 : 35] Now, perhaps he was exhausted after a full day of teaching. But it's not hard to wonder that he might be sleeping for another reason. Perhaps like a farmer who sows his seed and then goes to sleep, Jesus wanted to show what trusting God looked like.

Perhaps Jesus went to sleep because without him awake and at the helm, he would see whether the disciples really trusted in him. One thing is clear, though. The disciples are not asleep.

The disciples are fully awake. They're panicking. In fact, they're angry and frustrated. They wake up. Jesus, they rebuke him. Look at verse 38. They say, the second half of the verse, teacher, do you not care that we're perishing?

Do you not care? Yeah, their question seems innocent enough in English. But another translation could be, should be, you don't care that we are perishing, do you?

That's really it. You don't care that we're perishing. Their question implies a no answer. You don't care that we're perishing.

[16 : 44] Like the Israelites before them, they're essentially saying, hey, what's going on? You said, let's go across the sea. And now you're leaving us out here to die.

And you're asleep. Like you don't even have the mercy to open your eyes and watch us go down. Disciples have now given in to fear.

The sudden change of circumstances, the storm changed what disciples thought about. Then it changed how they thought about their problem. Now it's changed the way they think about God.

As they meditate on the great storm that's fallen on them, as they try to figure a way out of the storm and find all their attempts useless, as they continue to look at Jesus sound asleep, they give in to sinful fear and conclude, God doesn't care.

What's going on? Remember a couple years ago, one of the things our family loves is the Tennessee volunteers and all things included.

[17 : 52] And so for years we've gone to the orange and white game, which is just the intramural game in the spring, the end of spring football, to see what the team looks like.

And I remember one particular year, we had gone and we were in a season, I think we were on some cash envelopes, trying to figure out our cash flow situation. And, you know, we'd gone in, we'd taken snacks and eaten them in the car and stuff, and we had just strict rules that we weren't going to spend any money.

I said, honey, we're not buying anything. I mean, you know, it's like going to Vanity Fair. It's going to Disneyland. I mean, they're just, come on, come on, spend \$100, you get a bowl of popcorn or something like that.

So it's just so enticing for the kids. And finally, after a little bit, we said, we'll get one thing of popcorn. I said, all right, honey, can you go get us one thing of popcorn?

Strict orders, you know, we've got to stick to the budget. And she went up and got popcorn, I think, with one of the kids or something.

[19 : 00] She came down and she had two things of popcorn in her hand. I was like, man, what the heck? I'm trying to lead this family.

How in the world do you have two things of popcorn? I know you got, it sounds, yeah, you should laugh at me because it's so pathetic, but I was angry. I was like, what in the world?

She got to her seat. Now, this is where God's mercy kicked in because I did not open my mouth. Yet, I probably would have. And one of the things of popcorn was empty.

She was going to pour the full one halfway into the other one so that the kids could share the one thing of popcorn. Now, before you think the point of that story is that I'm a big dope.

At least at this moment, there's a secondary takeaway. The point is, we do the same thing with the Lord. We say, what's going on?

[20 : 16] Why did you leave me out here? The Puritan Jesus called it, we put a harsh construction. So we look at our circumstances. We look at it. Now, something is not working out.

This is not the way it's meant to be. You're leaving me all alone. We conclude that he's asleep, that he's left us all alone, that he's left us to fend for ourselves. The real temptation in the storm is not the storm, but the temptation to forget God in the storm, to conclude that he's not at work, that he doesn't love you, that he's not after you.

That's important to clarify. It's not wrong to be scared or afraid. But it is wrong to give in to fear.

It's wrong to conclude God doesn't care. It's wrong to conclude God isn't in control. It's wrong to conclude God isn't working for good.

The deepest trouble we face in suffering is not the sudden change of circumstances, but our own fears that will lash us and drive us all over the place. And most importantly, erase God from the picture.

[21 : 32] Now, notice though how Jesus responds with incredible compassion. So they get in his face, as it were, and say, you don't care that we're perishing, do you?

The first expression of Jesus' compassion is not calming the storm. The first expression of his compassion is not rebuking them for their frustration and anger. They're clearly frustrated.

They accuse the maker of not caring for him, of the Messiah of not watching over them. They're red-faced in anger, pointing the finger at Jesus, saying, it's all your fault. But amazingly, Jesus doesn't rebuke them.

Now, let's think about this for a minute, because a bold, brash confrontation like this is not just found in, a bold, brash confrontation of God is not just found in a passage like this.

Have you ever noticed that the Psalms and the book of Job include many prayers to God filled with frustration and anger? Many prayers filled with accusatory tone and language.

[22 : 39] Have you ever wondered why these prayers are in the Bible? What they're meant to teach us? Are they in the Bible meant to teach us that it's okay to be mad at God? Now, some people say that.

It's okay to be mad at God. It's okay to tell him how you really feel. It's okay to be frustrated, angry, and mad with him. But is that the takeaway?

Wait. I don't think so. God doesn't need your help knowing how you feel.

And God isn't pleased when his creatures act like they can run their own lives better than him. Okay. So why are these prayers in the Bible? To show, I believe, God's compassion and understanding.

I think there's two sentences by Derek Kidner are priceless. He says, the very presence of these prayers in Scripture is a witness to God's understanding. God knows how men speak when they're desperate.

[23 : 43] The presence is a witness to God's understanding. God knows how men speak when they're desperate. That's incredible. If I just think that these moments in Scripture, you don't care if we're perishing, do you?

These moments in Scripture are permitting me to say what I really feel. I'm missing the point. The Bible could have included many prayers. It could have only included prayers of people saying the right thing.

Being humble, respectful, and so on. But it doesn't. Why? To show us that God is a God of understanding and compassion and grace and second chances.

Jesus is the all-wise God. He leads them into the storm. And even though they should trust Him and believe Him, that He has good reasons for leaving them into the storm, they boil over in frustration and anger, but He doesn't rebuke them.

Jesus is compassionate with pity and patience and kindness. Wonderfully, Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The same Jesus who responds with compassion to those disciples is the one who responds to us.

[24 : 53] In fact, the most repeated command in the Bible is do not fear. And every time God says do not fear, because it is the most common temptation to something uncomfortable and surprising, God underlines a wonderful reason why.

Deuteronomy 31, 6, Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them. For it is the Lord your God who goes with you.

He will not leave you or forsake you. Isaiah 41, 10, one of the greatest promises in the Bible. Fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God.

I'll strengthen you. I'll help you. I'll uphold you with my righteous right hand. Luke 12, 32, Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

And so, the first expression, Jesus' compassion, it's not calming the waves. It's not rebuking their anger. The second expression, though, is calming the waves.

[26 : 11] Look at verse 39. He awoke and rebuked the wind, said to the sea, Peace, be still.

And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. There was a great storm, and then there's a great calm.

Jesus calms the wave. The problem that seems so big and scary to the disciples is solved so simply by Jesus. Jesus doesn't recite a prayer.

He doesn't appeal to a higher power. He doesn't cry out in the name of God for help. He just speaks a powerful word to still the wind and sea. Jesus commands the sea, Peace, be still.

There are few greater fears than the sea in the ancient world. Few things viewed as more uncontrollable or more unstoppable, and yet here the sea, this great uncontrollable and unstoppable force bows like a submissive child.

[27 : 24] Point three, the great fear of the disciples. The calming of the storm doesn't erase their fears.

It increases them. Look at their response. Look at verse 40 and 41. 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 waves obey him?

If it's not obvious already, Mark is making his point, there was a great storm, then there was a great calm, and now there is a great fear in the hearts of the disciples.

Literally, they're fearing with great fear. But why? Why is the response to this, the greatest problem they're facing right here in the midst of the sea, the sea and the waves overflowing in the boat, why is their response more fear?

[28 : 31] Well, behind Jesus' question is rebuked. Why are you afraid? Jesus is, he's saying to them, you assume I don't allow people I love to go through storms.

You assume that you're just left out here to the unruly waves of the storm, but you should have known better. You have no reason to panic.

You should have remained calm. You should have trusted me. Why are you so afraid? Why are you so afraid? Have you no faith? It's at this moment that they realized they had Jesus all wrong.

They assumed he didn't care for them because they went through the storm, but Jesus is alerting them to what they should have realized. If there is a God that's great enough and powerful enough to be mad at in the midst of the storm for not preventing the storm, then there's a God who's great enough and powerful enough to have reasons for you being in the storm.

So he's saying, we, you, should have been calm. You should have been patient. You should have trusted me. You know, I think perhaps the most compelling witness we could give to a divided culture is calmness.

[30 : 07] We don't need to stock up. We need to be calm. Did the one who rules over all things suddenly step off the throne?

He has wonderful purposes. But that's not the only reason they're fearing with a great fear. So they are fearing with a great fear because they realize that Jesus led them out here and he has purposes for them in the midst of the storm.

But they're also fearing with a great fear because if Jesus is rebuking them for not realizing he has purposes in the storm, Jesus is also teaching them the underlying truth that he has absolute control over the storm.

John Flavel, great Puritan says, a lion at liberty is a terrible thing to me. It's terrible to me. But who is afraid of the lion in the keeper's hand?

I remember going a couple years ago going to Grandfather Mountain and they got a bunch of bears up there just, you know, calling for you to drop in a quarter and turn the dial and throw some food at them.

[31 : 16] You know, finding a bear out in the wilderness, maybe a black bear, but definitely a grizzly bear is a terrible thing to me. But finding one sitting in the zoo or sitting at Grandfather Mountain is just not scary at all.

If anything, a little bit pathetic, like, come on, man, step up your game. You're a bear. Well, that's the same way with a lion. A lion at liberty, free, is a terrible to me, but who's afraid of a lion in the keeper of the hand?

We could paraphrase Flavel's statement for this passage. A sea at liberty is terrible to me, but who is afraid of the sea in the Lord's hand? That's what he's saying to these disciples.

A sea at liberty, a sea at freedom, a sea completely free from the will of God is a terrible thing to me, but who is afraid of the sea in the Lord's hand? It all sets in for these disciples.

These are the disciples. They're the one in the know. They're the ones on the inside, and yet Jesus takes them out on a boat after teaching so many other people, all the crowds. He performs this miracle for them alone so that they would see something very important about him, that he's not another teacher, not another prophet, not another man from God, that he is the Lord.

[32 : 30] that he is Yahweh, that he is the Lord, the living God who reigns over all. No doubt their minds went to verses like Job 38, 11, who said, who said, thus far you come and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed.

That's why he rebuked the waves there, your proud waves, pushing people around. be stayed, or Psalm 65, by awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness, O God of our salvation.

The hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas, the one who by his strength established the mountains being girded with might, who stills the roaring of the sea, the roaring of the waves.

Jesus is, the Lord is inviting us, and he's inviting these disciples to take up this fear. He's also inviting us to take up this fear as well. It's not the storm we should fear.

It's not the storm that's uncontrollable. It's not the storm that has lost its leash. It's not the storm that's unstoppable. It's the Lord alone that we should fear.

[33 : 46] The Lord alone we should run to. That's what happens to these disciples. The ground underneath them has suddenly shifted.

And the shifting of the ground is not the calming of the storm. The shifting of the ground is not the solving of that problem.

The shifting of the ground is realizing that it is God alone that they should fear above all and that they are in his grip. The only way out of fear is fearing God more than all our fears.

It reminds me of the story of the bronze serpent in the wilderness. The people of Israel have been bitten by serpents. So God says, take a serpent, a golden one, and raise it up. and everybody looks at the serpent, the thing that's been biting them, to set them free because fear alone can cast out fear. We live in a culture in the grip of fear.

[34 : 57] Fear of ungodly culture, politics, inflation, war, sudden death, the unknown, so much more. So much so, the news, the only news outlets that get attention are the ones that ride in the tone of fear.

fear. While the culture continually offers us reasons to fear, it offers no way out. We know the way out.

Do not fear. It's Father's good pleasure to give you everything He has. So we know that we should fear God because He's more powerful than all our fears.

But how do we know that God will unleash His power for our good? How do we know that this Jesus is for us?

One final thing we need to see in this story. The story seems to carefully align with the book of Jonah, the story of Jonah.

[36 : 04] Like Jonah, Jesus is on a boat with several boys. Like Jonah, the boat Jesus encounters includes a great storm.

Like Jonah, the sailors find Jesus sleeping through the storm. It's as if Mark is whispering to us, someone greater than Jonah is here.

But unlike Jonah, Jesus is not sleeping in disobedience. He's not on the run. Remember? He's not running away from Tarshish or running to Tarshish.

He's not sleeping because He doesn't care. He's sleeping in perfect obedience. He's showing us what trusting God looks like in the storm. He's sleeping for us.

But also, unlike Jonah, Jesus is not thrown into the storm to calm the sea. Remember, that's how Jonah was. They threw him into the storm. Suddenly, the sea is calm. But Jesus is not thrown into the sea to calm the sea.

[37 : 15] Jesus steals the sea with a word. Is that the end of the parallel with Jonah? It seems to me that Mark purposefully leaves this parallel unfinished.

See, in order to rescue us from the punishment we deserve, it will not be enough for Jesus to speak a word. He must be thrown into the storm that we were destined to face.

The storm of sin and death. The storm of wrath for sins we've committed. The storm that we deserve. There are a few better modern pictures of this than the final scene in the movie Endgame.

I'm not a huge fan of these movies, but did watch this one. The Avengers are trying to stop Thanos from getting all the infinity stones and wiping out the universe's, half the universe's population.

So, Thanos is like the ultimate bad guy. You know? And so, all the Avengers are there. They're all there assembled for the fight. As simple as the fight, you know every single one of these guys, they're there.

[38 : 31] Everyone you can imagine, they're all fighting. Thanos is trying to get these infinity stones into this massive gauntlet, into this massive glove.

If he gets them and snaps his fingers, he wins. And half of the world's population disappears immediately.

And in the end, knowing their chance is slipping away because Thanos has been waging his war against him, Iron Man rushes towards Thanos, this massive, unwieldy creature.

But before he's punched away from Thanos, he pulls the glove off. Suddenly, he has the gauntlet. He has this infinity glove with all the infinity stones in it.

Thanos tries to snap his fingers right then, but it's no use. Iron Man has the glove. Iron Man takes up the glove with all the infinity stones in it.

[39 : 37] He knows that if he unleashes these stones, their power will kill him. Nevertheless, he snaps his fingers and does it anyway. He destroys Thanos and all his cronies and rescues the world.

Iron Man has a heart. Iron Man stumbles forward and collapses dying before the Avengers eyes.

And Spider-Man, Peter Parker runs up and says, Mr. Stark, can you hear me? Can you hear me?

It's Peter. We won, Mr. Stark. We won and you did it, sir. You did it.

His girl, Pepper Potts, says, Tony, look at me. We're going to be okay.

[40 : 44] you can rest now. In a similar way, that's what it took for Jesus to rescue us completely.

Jesus could not cancel our sin and satisfy the wrath of God with a word. He couldn't send an agent. He couldn't send an ambassador.

Jesus had to become God the Son incarnate, fully God, fully man, to offer up his life, to take up our sin and step into the full, furious wrath of God so that we could be finally free.

Wonderfully, John 3, 16 and 17, for God so loved the world that he gave his only Son and whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.

The mystery of the cross that we look at the storm of wrath that falls on Jesus, we're looking at the great storm that should have fell on us. We're looking at the great storm that will fall on all those who do not turn and trust in Jesus Christ so we urge you, we invite you to come, humble yourself and receive life from him.

[42 : 14] He did not come to condemn the world but to save him, save the world. And that's the sure and steadfast anchor of the soul in the storm. The sure and steadfast anchor of the soul in the storm is that the God who's with us in the storm is the God who loves us and gave us everything he has including his Son.

Do not fear. It's Father's good pleasure to give you everything he has. Let us pray. Father in heaven, we cast ourselves onto you.

We pray for grace and help. Father, we're so vulnerable to fear and worry and anxiety.

we pray that you would come and uphold us with a willing spirit. Keep us. We pray that you would root us and ground us in a fear above all fears.

That we would be a people that are calm in every storm. because we trust you.

[43 : 35] We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. You've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee. For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at trinitygraceathens.com.