

# The Balancing Storm

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[ 0 : 00 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alpharetta, Georgia. This is the next message in our series on the book of John entitled, Jesus is God.

Well, don't you praise the Lord that He loves us and accepts us just like we are when we come to Him and He is there to bless and work in our lives. What a wonderful, wonderful Savior. What a blessing it is to be His.

What a blessing it is to be saved. Take your Bible and go with me to John chapter 6. John chapter 6. And we're going to read starting in verse 15 and we'll read down to verse 21.

And we're going to talk about storms tonight and problems that come in our life. And I want to remind you that just prior to this, they have just seen the Lord Jesus feed 5,000 men and they've given a tremendous victory.

God has just shown His power through Jesus. And so storms don't always come because you're doing something wrong. Somehow we kind of get in our heads when things go wrong.

[ 1 : 03 ] It must be because we did something wrong. And that's not at all what's going on in this story. So read with me if you would, John chapter 6, starting in verse 15. The Bible says, Father, I pray now that you would just draw us stronger to you, closer to you.

Help prepare us for the storms of life that come. Help us to look for you in the middle of the storm and to receive you and your power and what you're doing in our lives. I pray, God, that you'd help us keep the balance in our life.

That we'd understand that there'll be good times and there'll be bad times. There'll be times when you're working great miracles in our lives. And there'll be times when things seem to fall apart. But you're always there. You're always knowing and you're always working.

Do a work tonight in our lives. And I will give you great honor and glory and praise for what you do. In Jesus' precious name, amen. Well, here's a wild story. They just got through feeding 5,000 people.

That's not counting the women and the children. And at the last verse that we read this morning is the first verse I wanted you to read tonight. Would you look in your Bible? And it says in verse 15, They wanted to make him a king.

[ 2 : 50 ] They wanted to make him a king. And so he decided to get out of town and to go and be alone. So would you write this down first? There was danger facing the disciples. There was great danger facing the disciple.

The people wanted to make Jesus king. That's what it says in verse 15. And success brings danger. Anytime everything's going right, we're probably on the verge of some big problem if we don't acknowledge it.

We're probably in a position Satan could mess us up pretty bad. You see, the point was that he did not need to be made king. Jesus did not come to be made king.

Jesus came to die on a cross. They wanted to make him king. Not because he was God. Not because he was saving them. And not because he was who he really was.

They wanted to make him king because every time they got hungry, he could feed them. They were looking for a chicken in every pot. They were looking for somebody to put bread in their belly.

[ 3 : 53 ] They wanted to make him a king for the wrong reason. And you understand that in our lives, and it's amazing here, just taking the Bible as it goes. They're on the top of the mountain and now they're down in a valley.

There's a storm blowing. The boats, they're working hard. The wind won't let them get along anywhere. And all of a sudden, in a dark night, when they're all by themselves, here comes Jesus walking in the water. They think maybe it's a ghost and they're all scared.

So I want you to consider danger when things are going good. You know, maybe right now, since the economy's bad and things aren't so good, maybe you're not in that position.

But when things are going good, when things are going really good, there's great danger. They had the danger of popularity. They would have gone from being common fishermen to political players.

They would have been a common fisherman and the next day they'd have been a political player. They would have gone from having no power to being in charge. They were supposed to pray for his kingdom to come, and they already wanted prominent seats.

[ 4 : 51 ] They already wanted to know who could sit at the right hand and who could have the left hand. Boy, that would have been a real quick solution. Make him king. Let me be a big shot. I was just a fisherman in Galilee yesterday. Make him king.

I'm on his cabinet. I'm all right. Overnight prosperity. The government and all the people would have been at their feet. They'd have had position. They wouldn't have been servants. They'd have been leaders. There was great pride.

It wouldn't have been humility. It wouldn't have been their common word. It would have been we're big shots. Here's the main key. Success isn't always what it seems. Success isn't always what it seems.

It would have looked good to make Jesus king, but it would have been wrong. It would have looked good for him to be in charge, but it would have looked wrong. Satan wanted to make him king. You recall that? As soon as he gets through with his fasting and prayer and he comes to face the devil, he's been going without food for 40 days.

Satan says, take leadership. Don't die. Take leadership. Be a king. Let everybody bow down to you. But Jesus wasn't into becoming a king so quickly.

[ 5 : 53 ] We need to learn to gauge our success. Often things happen in your life and you're misled to believe that you're a success. Do you know we don't count profit, position, power, and prestige as real success?

Do you know that's not real success for us? Did you know that we are looking for the opposite of what most people in the world? We don't count our success as a bank account, a house, land, or men's applause, or what's happening on Wall Street.

Real success is more about the B level, who I am way down deep inside under all of this and under all that's going on in life. Real success is about my spiritual walk, my spiritual growth, and my walking with Jesus.

So let me just stop and say, we work for success. It's like everything in our life, we're like, man, I want to be a success. I want to have money. I want to have position. I want to be respected.

I want to get to the top. I want everybody to know who I am. I want to drive the nicest car. I want to live in a nicest house. And we push for success. Jesus was totally the opposite. He had success at his fingertips.

[ 6 : 54 ] We want to make you king. He said, nope, I'm out of here. I got other plans. Got other things. I got to be very careful. Satan would get you off track if it were possible.

Look if you would at John chapter 6 and verse 19. There's a valley after the victory. Look at verse 19. So when they had rowed about 5 and 20 or 30 furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, drawing nine of the ship, and they were afraid.

They just fed 5,000 people. They just seen people super excited. There was probably what they considered a spirit of revival in the air. Things are exciting. Can you imagine what it must have been like? Well, if you would have been sitting in that crowd of Jesus and it sets you down, only 5,000 men, forget the women and children, 5,000 men sitting around.

And all of a sudden, Jesus steps to the front, and there's 5 loaves and 2 fishes and 12 men sitting around him. And all of a sudden, he prays. And he gets through praying, and they start breaking that bread. Every person that got a piece of bread, it had to get more and more exciting in that room, in that field.

Every time that piece of bread got bigger and served more people, every time that fish got further down the line, everybody had to be saying, can you believe this? I mean, it has gone from one guy having 5 loaves and 2 fishes.

[ 8 : 05 ] Now the 12 guys all have a piece. Now the 12 guys are starting to give it out. They've given it out to 10. 120 people got the food. Man, it is wild. There is a revival wave sweeping across there.

This is a laughing revival from Pensacola. Man, it's like great things are happening in people's minds. And Jesus knows they're not really looking at him. They're not really looking at him. They're looking at what's going on.

When we have big success, we tend to let our guard down, and Satan can come along and attack us. When we have big success, we assume that we've been used of God, and we begin to see ourselves as somebody.

We begin to depend on ourselves. But now they're alone. They're in the boat. Jesus isn't with them. The wind's blowing. The waves are rolling across the ocean.

No applause. No miracles. Nothing going right. They're tired. And all of a sudden, verse 19, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and they're afraid.

[ 9 : 03 ] We know from parallel passages, other places that talk about the same thing, that it scared them to death. They didn't know if he was a ghost. They didn't know what was happening. They were scared.

They shouldn't have been. Can you imagine if you knew personally Jesus? Can you imagine if you walked with him before he fed the 5,000 guys? Can you imagine you know him personally, and you saw what happened?

Can you imagine how you ought to know what's going on? But they don't know what's going on. I'd just like to take just a few minutes tonight, and I'd like to focus on these storms, these shocking events that take place in our lives when we least expect it.

And it's liable to be a medical report that will shake us to the ground. It might be an economic report. It might be losing our job. It might be something going on in our family.

Problems that come our way as you and I are in life. Here we are. We say, man, I'm on the top of the world. I'm serving God. I can't imagine that something could go wrong. And bam, it's in your face.

[ 10 : 07 ] Life's falling apart. You're all alone. It's dark. The wind's blowing. The waves are rolling. And there's somebody walking on the water. You ain't never seen anybody walk on the water. You can't tell who it is.

And though it's Jesus, and in a minute you'll know that, it's got to be one scary time. So why in the world do storms come? Why in the world do storms come? Why is it that when we get saved, things don't just get right?

I'll tell you why. It's a balancing storm. It helps things get back in perspective. It helps things get back in perspective. It's about Jesus and not about them. I don't know if you can imagine with me, and I do think it requires some imagination, but I can see a whole lot of people glad-handing them, high-fiving them, bumping fists with them, slapping on the back and saying, man, wow, he's the stuff.

This is genuine. This is real. And I mean, they are floating around, buddy. They're the ones that know Jesus. They're the ones that knows the man who prays over food and blesses it and feeds 5,000 people.

They know him. But Jesus has a purpose, and they shouldn't allow anything to get them off track of doing his will. This storm brings them back to humility, makes them needy again.

[ 11 : 19 ] So they look for Jesus. They learn to trust him more and more. It's amazing. It's amazing. This is the honest truth, and I don't know if you'll acknowledge this, but man, back when everybody we knew was poor, and back when we lived on the other side of the tracks, and back when things were difficult, people responded to Jesus a whole lot differently than they do in Alpharetta.

The honest truth is when people didn't seem to have so much education and so much money and so much security, they needed Jesus, and they knew it. Storms come even when you're in the middle of God's will.

I think that's probably the most important thing. I know that when Betty and I were down in Prud, and man, we were working as hard as we knew how to work, and we were seeing churches started, and God seemed to be doing a work. And all of a sudden, all of a sudden, one day, our son, who's 14 years old, wakes up, and he starts telling us he can't see the blackboard.

We can't figure out why he can't see the blackboard. We take him to the doctor. A neighbor tells us he's getting real skinny, and he gets where he can hardly walk, and all of a sudden, we're like, what's going on? We take him in and find out he has diabetes. And I can remember saying, I don't understand you, God.

Why in the world is this happening to me? Why would this go on in my life? I mean, if anybody's trying to serve you, I'm not living in America, and Peru is certainly not a nice place to live.

[ 12 : 33 ] And why in the world would that happen? But storms come in the middle of serving God. Storms come in the middle of the best times of your life. Storms come when there's nothing wrong between you and God.

Storms come in the middle of God's will. They hadn't sinned. They hadn't failed to God. They were obeying God. Fact is, he told them to get out in the boat and told them to go across any other stories. The testing of our faith.

That's what the storms do. We get big miracles that happen like feeding the 5,000. We see all the blessings. And so we need testings to make sure that we will believe. Sometimes testings come, and sometimes things fall apart like they did with Jonah.

And you're out of God's will. But this story is not about that. Jonah was running from God. Jonah didn't want to obey God. Jonah didn't want to go and preach. And Jonah was outside of God's will.

And the same storms come up, and the boat's about to sink. And finally, they throw him overboard, and the big fish swallows him. And that's the Jonah story. But that's not the story here. So why do storms come?

[ 13 : 33 ] Can I remind you, we need storms? Can I remind you, we need to be reminded we need God? Can I remind you that every, we used to call it when I was a kid, they used to say, you get too big for your britches.

You get to thinking you're big stuff. You get to thinking you're able, and you're powerful, and you can. And men get lifted up in themselves. That very likely could have happened that day as they fed 5,000 people.

What kind of storms are we going to encounter in life? I want to show you some Bible verses. I hope you'll write them down. First, let me just tell you, you are going to have storms. Go with me through the Bible.

I want you to know problems are coming your way. Look, if you would, at John chapter 16 and verse 33. John chapter 16 and verse 33. You can be sure things are going to fall apart.

You can be sure winds are going to come. You can be sure storms are going to happen. You can be sure no matter how much you've prepared, and no matter how well you've got everything done, storms are coming. In John 16, 33, the Bible said, You're going to have tribulation.

[ 14 : 41 ] You're going to have tribulation. You're going to have trouble. You're going to have things going wrong in your life. But don't worry. I'm bigger than the world, and I'm bigger than the problems, and I'm bigger than all that's going on.

So when it happens, trust me. In Acts chapter 14 and verse 22, the apostle Paul is getting ready to leave some of the believers he's got settled. He's got churches going. He's got some guys leaving these churches.

And look what he says in Acts 14, 22. Confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

We must through much tribulation, much, many things going wrong in life. Many things falling apart. Much of it will be persecution. We'll see that in another verse in a minute.

But you're going to have problems. You're going to have health problems, and you're going to have financial problems, and you're going to have life problems, and things are going to go wrong in your life, and you might as well know that and be prepared for it. And I can talk to you all day long about how you have your best life.

[ 15 : 40 ] You just need to know you can be on top of the mountain, and the next thing you can know, you can be alone in the sea. You can be on the top of the mountain watching God feed 5,000 people, and the next thing, you can be alone in a boat rowing as hard as you can go.

2 Timothy chapter 3, verse 12. Paul said to Timothy, If you love Jesus, there will be consequences.

If you talk about Jesus, there will be consequences. Now, Paul writes to the 1 Thessalonians letter, and he said, You know, things are going wrong in my life, and I've been put in jail, and I'm suffering for being a Christian.

And I just want to tell you all, I already told you all that was going to happen. Look, if you would, at 1 Thessalonians chapter 3, verse 4. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation, even as it's going to pass, and you know.

I want to stop just a second and listen to this. I heard a Christian say, and the Russian said it, and a Chinese man told me this. We ought to be more prepared for the doctrine of persecution.

[ 16 : 42 ] Prosperity kills Christianity. Prosperity kills Christians. Prosperity chokes out the word. Here's what Paul said in 1 Thessalonians chapter 3, verse 4.

Hey, boys, I'm in jail. Hey, boys, I'm getting arrested. Hey, boys, you hear my life's getting messed up, but I don't want y'all to be shocked about that. Look at what the verse says, because you remember I told you that's the way it was going to be.

I told you things were going to get messed up. I told you that we would suffer persecution, and it's happened, and you know it's happened. So just, could you look at me a second? I warned you.

i warned you that rough days dark seas windy windy uh when strong winds and high waves are coming your way be ready center yourself in the lord be ready to deal with what happens now why does it what kind of storms does he send he sends some that test us and you don't have to look them up but in luke chapter 6 verses 48 through 49 there were two houses and every little kid learned this in sunday school one's built on the rock and one's built on the sand and the and the and the winds come and the rains come and the storms come and the one that's built on the sand goes floating away and the one that's built on the on the rock stands stable and firm now look this way would you did you know when things go wrong in your life they don't cause you to walk away from jesus you listen to this you're a tad backslid you're a tad away from god and you're tired you're kind of feeling cold towards god because things haven't been going your way and you really think it's because you got problems but the truth is the problems are only revealing you had a problem before you ever had a problem the storms only reveal you're already messed up he said i'm sitting in a storm i'm letting some things happen but if you're founded on the rock you'll make it through the storm if you're founded on the rock you'll make it through the storm there was an old preacher named lester rolloff he used to say anybody could whistle and sing when the sun is shining and the laundry is hanging on the clothesline but when the wind blows it down in the mud then you'll if you love jesus you could still sing the whole point is the whole point is somehow a problem's come your way and it's shaking you and they're going to shake us we're going to find out what we're really made of we were just in the home of john and linda wilkerson and about three years ago their son was killed in a car wreck he was like a senior in high school and and uh betty sat and talked in the backseat of the car on the from the the retreat place over three hours to the airport as they rode along and linda told the story about his last week and told the story about him being at home and told the story about how that night they went to bed and he was off at somewhere else helping in a youth camp and and they said she said that at night when her husband goes to bed he walks into their bedroom and as soon as he lays down he cannot stay awake he just drops off to sleep because of the way he works he just dropped into bed and that night he couldn't go to sleep he was restless and he was stressed out and he sat up and and and he said i don't know what's wrong but i and he couldn't sleep and so they had a word of prayer and then he went on back went to sleep and a little bit later the phone rang and when the phone rang they said they said you're gonna have to call the police and his wife heard the call and they couldn't get a hold of the police and finally they called back and found out the kid was dead and brother john said this we will not let the devil win in this we will glorify god they got up took baths received guests and the next day they went the next day they went to the church service they were supposed to be at and walked in and said look our son just died if it's okay we'd like to go back home but he took the whole family the storm came sweetest wonderful testimony still loving jesus still honoring jesus you walk in the house they got a table with his pictures and a basketball and different stuff from tyler's life still loving jesus still loving jesus horrible storm came horrible storm shook them to the roots horrible storm happened but they were founded on a rock and able to stand are you ready to stand are you ready to stand this is a guy the soul winning this is a guy that literally would go out go out his shoes had holes in the bottom of them while he was giving money away to everybody he could and helping them out and a storm came sometimes these storms that'll come against us will be financial pressure do you really love god to honor him enough even when it's falling apart sometimes there'll be family problems loneliness is a time to deepen your relationship with the lord not feel he'll avoid with inappropriate things

arguments and discussions could be a time of drawing close to god or of then not of pulling away it could be physical health or mental health it could be depression storms are coming for all of us storms are coming for all of us some of you right now are in the middle of a storm i mean honestly there were days in your life and you look back and you say i remember when god had me on the mountaintop and i remember when i was feeding the 5 000 or i was taking part and i remember when i thought life was fantastic but good night i'm rowing as hard as i can row and we've come 25 or 34 longs and we're just not making any headway we're not getting ahead and it's windy and it's cold and and i'm alone and even jesus sitting with me that might be what you're thinking that's what's going on some of those storms might be when the lord comes and says i want you to take your son and i want you to walk up genesis chapter 22 and i want you to sacrifice the most precious thing i want you to put him on the altar some of those storms could be persecution in acts chapter 16 verse 23 through 25 they were they were in jail many stripes had been laid on them and the jailer put them inside locked them up in stocks and that that night i mean i mean bleeding beaten hurting locked in stocks god's abandoned them nobody's helping them and paul and silas look at each other and say hey man why don't we sing a song to jesus i think i'd have been singing a song of something else i think i'd have been crying but the storm came and paul and silas were saying things are going to go wrong things are going to go wrong sometimes it'll be because you have to choose will you choose to serve god or will you choose whatever's different right now and it's in a storm in the storm when things don't seem to be working out you'll make the wrong choice choose to serve god choose to honor god realize that god's at work in your life i'd like to give you if i could quickly some basic truths and i'll quit tonight i'd like to give you some basic truths i think we ought to know about these are the things i would like you to take home with you number one he knows they're going through a storm i wish you'd really write this one down did you know that when they got down off that mountain and got down in that boat and headed across that stream do you think it was any surprise or shock to jesus that that was going to happen do you know that there's a god in heaven far bigger and above everything that's going on he is a sovereign god a supreme god an all-powerful god nothing escapes his attention you remember he has the hairs on your head counted and he knows when a bird a little bitty sparrow falls he knows about it did you know nothing's happening to you you heard the old preacher say did it ever dawn on you nothing ever dawned on god you realize that god's above all that's going on in your life right now what it seems to be an accident to you right now what seems to be a coincidence to you right now what seems to be a rough spot in your life is not a mistake and it's not an accident there's a god in heaven i mean he knew what he was going to do when he fed the 5 000 hey philip how are we going to feed these guys philip says a 200 penny worth of bread wouldn't cover he said i already know what i'm going to do do you not think he knows what he's going to do in your life do you not think he knew what was going to happen the day tyler died tyler wilkerson died do you think that shocked him in the least do you think it shocked him in the least that our son got diabetes when we were in the middle of it do you think it shocked him in the least when our daughter got raped do you think any of that shocks him do you think where you are shocks him you ought to get a hold of something he's god and he's big he's god and he knows where i am and he knows what i'm going through he's god and he's praying for me and he cares about me he's up on that mountaintop nothing surprises him the question comes will you trust him with your life the question comes right now will you say to him i'm in the middle of the ocean i'm in the middle of the sea and i'm rowing and i've been working as hard as i can and we just can't seem to make any

[ 25 : 17 ] headway and we can't seem to get across the ocean and the wind's blowing and we're alone and we're tired and these guys weren't afraid because of a storm these are fishermen they're not afraid of that they're afraid when they see a ghost maybe but in the middle of all the storm would you trust him would you believe would you believe that god is at work in your life i'd just like to stop before i go on i got several more of these i want to show you but i'd like to ask you a question have you thought about this what's going on right now i mean i i love you and i think about you i pray what's going on in your life all right you lost your job all right you got a health problem all right you got some financial issues all right this this is going on and that's going is it ever dawned on you that god's up in heaven saying i know exactly what's going on and i've got this mapped out i'm looking to see if you'll look up here and trust me i say to you today you can trust jesus now i say to you today that you can stop and say it's time for me to quit trying to figure everything out and to trust jesus i say to you today it's time to quit being aggravated at god because your life's falling apart and there's a whole bunch of junk going on in your life and to trust jesus it's a time to run to him not hide from him second thing i'd like to show you out of this little thing go to chapter 6 and verse 20 chapter 6 it was his voice and his words that gave him comfort in the middle of the storm in chapter 6 and verse 20 he said but he said unto them it's i be not afraid you remember what's happening they're in the boat and they're tired and they're rowing and they're working as hard as they can and the wind's blowing and they haven't been able to get very far and it's like they take one step forward and two steps backwards and things aren't working out and then they look up and they see something walking on the water coming towards the ship now you got to admit that'd be a kind of a scary thing you got to admit that kind of freak you out you look out and you see somebody walking across the top of the water what in the world is that but here's the big truth i see for us when they look up and see him walking over the water he says this guys don't worry about it it's me it's i it is i and it was his word it was his voice that calmed them down and i would say to you that in the middle of the storm if i could just i mean i'd like to talk to you personally one-on-one i'd like to grab you by the by the collar and shake you a little bit i bet you you're not in the bible like you were i bet you you've been allowing us and i don't i'm discouraged today i just don't feel like praying i'm discouraged today i just don't feel like talking to god i'm discouraged i got a lot to deal with and church and god's just not the main thing on my docket i'm afraid that's going on in your life i'm afraid there's a part of you that's pushing him away when he's trying to pull you to him i don't know what you're going to do i know we've been through a lot of mess i know that when when our daughter got raped and we lived almost 30 days wondering if she'd have a baby it was from rape i spent every day boy i prayed and i begged god and i served god and i tell you what i told him in the middle of all the storm and all the mess it was going here's what i told him i said god i am begging you not to let there be a baby i'm begging you not to let her get pregnant i'm begging you let her come out on the other end of this thing without a baby but god i'll just go ahead and tell you if there's going to be a baby i'm going to trust you because i know good and well you're more than able to stop a baby from coming and if you let a baby come it'll be because you have a choice and you have a purpose and i know that if you let her have a baby that baby is going to be a special baby you let come into this earth and i'm going to trust you and i'm going to love that baby and i'm going to do everything i can and i just laid it on the altar to him and i know that in the middle of that storm though i was still terrified there was a sense of peace i ask you what are you doing i ask you i know you're hurting i know things are going wrong i know things are going



great and i know we're down in the bottom now we're not on the mountain and we're not seeing 20 000 people get fed and nobody's glad handing us and nobody's slapping us on the back and nobody's high-fiving us and we're our muscles are tired and and our eyes are tired and our backs are tired and we're sweating and we can't seem to get ahead and we don't know what we're going to do and now here comes a ghost walking on the water and he's coming straight at us and but here's what happened when he said it's i they said oh okay i can trust you he's got a word if anything would you run to him right now would you go to him and say i need your word i need to know i can trust you i'm going to believe you storms and testings will purify us storms and testing will purify us they reveal what we really are it's amazing how the nasty stuff comes to the top isabel coon said about the mission field on the mission field the scum rises to the top so when the scum rises scrape it off confess it and get stronger and get cleaner and get purer i'd like to ask you to look if you would with me at romans chapter 5 verses 3 through 5 you know i'd really like you to open your bible there i think this verse could help us romans chapter 5 verses 3 through 5 and you've often heard don't pray for patience but i'm going to tell you i don't really agree with that i think it's a natural part of the process whether you pray for it or not it's coming i think that's been a misapplication of this truth and i want to show it to you romans chapter 5 verses 3 through 5 the bible says not only so but we glory in tribulation knowing that tribulation worketh patience we glory we're excited we thank god that we're going through mess what did paul say in second corinthians chapter 12 he said he asked three times for god to remove the thorn from him and god didn't remove the thorn and and god reminded him he needed to know he was weak and he said therefore when i'm weak i am strong when things are going wrong that's what he is right when things are falling apart that's when he shows his strength would you look at verse 3 we're going to work our way through these verses but look at this in verse 3 he said i am excited when things are going wrong i glory in tribulation i'm excited hey my life's falling apart glory to god that's the weirdest thing i've ever heard in my life but let me show you what he was saying he said i glory in tribulation because i know that tribulation produces patience in me and i want to ask you to take a circle or draw a circle around the word patience and in the margin write the word endurance because that's really what patience is patience is the ability to endure anybody can love jesus when everything's going right anybody can love jesus when you're going to bed happy and you're waking up happy and and and the wind is just right and the sun's just right the sun's just right and the temperature is just right everything's going right but paul said i'm telling you something i love jesus and i'm getting stronger and stronger and stronger and stronger in him because every time jump comes my way i just hold on and i get stronger it's amazing you understand that about everything about everything about everything but god's stuff you know without no pain no gain you know you have to push yourself in the gym and you got to get to that point and you got to go just a little bit further i have a friend a pastor friend and he is running marathons and the other day he puts out on twitter well i'm getting ready for my next marathon just had a three mile run a little bit hard but i can feel it coming he likes his running he's coming in sweaty and tired and hurting but that's okay that's good stuff but when god sends some running some sweat and some hurt we're like uh

uh i don't need any more lessons on how to pray i don't need any more lessons on how to believe i don't need any more lessons on how to draw close to you look at verse three would you not only so but we glory in tribulation knowing that tribulation works patience and then look what patience does in verse four and patience experience maturity maturity maturity patience experience and experience hope hope because you know what happens you got enough experience to know this the last time something went wrong he came through didn't he you know you went through a bunch of mess and there he was on the other side of it and now that here comes another problem and as you see the problem coming you're like come on big boy i'll glory in you because on the other side i'll be stronger than i ever was god's working in my life he hasn't abandoned me he hasn't left me he's taking care of me patience experience and experience hope verse five and hope makes not ashamed we're not ashamed we're not embarrassed that we trust god because he got us through the mess and he'll get us through the mess we're not embarrassed about it we don't have to go out at church we talk about how we'll pray and at church we talk about how we trust god we got to be a shaky about that outside no and guess what happens as the as the tribulation works patience and the patience experience and experience hope hope causes love to be shed abroad in our hearts by the holy ghost which is given unto us it's we're more and more loving more and more kind and more and more tender and more and more interested in other people because of the work god's done in us we see somebody else hurting and we're like hey i've been there let me love you a little bit let me help you a little bit let me show you god's going to get you through this i know what it's like to go through the mess and i know how god used that tribulation it produced patience and that patience produced uh experience and experience produced hope and that hope produced love and i can love you today and i can love others testing will cause you to bring forth more fruit john chapter 15 and verse 2 john chapter 15 and verse 2 every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away and every branch that beareth fruit he purges it that it may bring forth more fruit you do know that you're not just here by accident right and you do know that you're not just here to get god to bless you you're here to bring forth spiritual fruit you're supposed to see souls saved you're supposed to the the fruit of the spirit the character of the holy spirit supposed to show forth our lives we're supposed to be different we're supposed to we're supposed to bring a light to the world god's at work in our lives and here's what he said he said i send purging i send cleanings i send work in your life to make you stronger so you're greater used of god i'm at work in your life you'll do more for me you'll be more used of me a friend of mine was preaching or excuse me was running from god and he lost his legs one leg ended up being 11 inches the other leg being four inches and and all of a sudden he's he's a vietnam veteran he has no legs and you would think that that would be the end of his life for him but it was what catapulted him in to being used of god to preach and to carry the gospel for tribulation that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherein we ourselves are comforted by god did you know how we're going to have in our church all the sweet people that can love others and help others and minister to others and bless others we need people who went through the rape and came out on the other side with victory to comfort others that are going to go through the rape and are going to need somebody to care we need somebody who's been through the financial reverses and their life's been a mess and they won't come out critical and haughty and proud but they'll come out tender and sweet and be able to show people how to do it we need people that have been through all the storms and seen god bring them through on the other side he's working in our lives he's working in our lives know that he does not want you to fail he does not want you to fall that is never his purpose everything he's doing is to strengthen you he has promised to never leave you

nor forsake you he wants you to stay focused on him let me get you to go back with me to the passage of scripture and just let me show you a couple things and i'm through look if you would look if you what happens verse 17 it's dark verse 19 they see jesus walking on the sea and they're afraid and he says it's me it's i it is i be not afraid verse 21 then they willingly received him into the ship and here's a funny thing and i don't have time to talk about tonight and immediately the ship was at the land whether they went you see what happened when everything was falling apart and when he wasn't in the boat with them and when they weren't trusting and when they weren't listening they were struggling on their own they were dealing with their own issues they were still out there but the second they said we want you here get in the boat with us we believe you we trust you we look to you immediately i know what you're about to say well they must have been real close already i don't know where they were but i do know this in the middle of the mess what you need more than anything else is your relationship with jesus and the minute you get it right with him immediately the calm will come the storm may not be over i'm sure the wilkerson's lay in bed at night and hurt over their son three years later tears flowed freely as they talked in the back seat tears flowed freely i'm sure that the pain and the hurt for things we've gone through is still there but listen to this when you listen to him say it is i and you receive him gladly immediately he took them to the shore father would you do a work in our church our lives and draw us close to you would you magnify yourself would you bring glory to your name would you help your hurting people trust you god i love these people and i know that it's so easy for them to to get their eyes off for you and not see what you're doing and i'm just praying god that you'd help us to trust you and believe in you and look to you and i just pray you'd show your power here tonight god do a work in our lives you have been listening to austin gardner pastor of vision baptist church for contact information location service times or more audio and video recordings log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com) 2-322-DP-4 morning a good