

B. They Testify Of His Person - When Jesus stilled the storm, the disciples knew that they were in the presence of God. They confessed Him and they bowed before Him in worship. His power in the storms and over the storms of life testify of His person. They tell us that He is God and that He is in control of all the affairs of life. When the storms come, they are designed to bring us to the place the disciples found themselves in at the end: on our knees in worship before Him.

(III. Here is a secret to make the storm much more bearable for you: Don't wait until the storm is over to bow before Him. Bow now, while the waves are still threatening your boat. Bow now, while the winds are still contrary to you. Don't wait until blue skies are seen to humble yourself before the Lord. Nothing reveals your faith in the Lord more than you being willing to accept His will and love Him, even when things look the worse for you. Bow before Him, it honor the Lord!)

CONCLUSION:

Sometimes, it is hard to see the blessings for the storm, isn't it? Sometimes it is hard to imagine the Lord bringing any good out of what you are going through. I don't know the nature of the storm you are facing this evening, but I know the One Who still walks on the waves. I know that if you will bring your need to Him, He will hear you and He will help you tonight. Who knows, He might just show up this evening striding on your storm. If you need help from the wave walker, then this altar is open. Bring your need to Jesus and let Him have His way in your life. Will you do that right now?

DEALING WITH THE STORMS OF LIFE

Sunday, March 21, 2010

Text: Matthew 14:22-36

INTRODUCTION:

In this passage of Scripture, we find the disciples of our Lord trapped in the grip of a fierce storm. They find themselves in that storm, because they have been commanded by the Lord to cross the Sea of Galilee, v. 22. These men are in the will of the Lord and yet, we see them struggling against the storm. Try as they might, however, it appears that they are unable to make any headway. The wind is in their faces, v. 24. These 12 men are stuck in a storm and are unable to get out.

Have you ever found yourself in that place? Have you ever found yourself stuck in one of life's storms, and no matter how hard you try, no matter what you do, it seems that you cannot make any headway? Well, we all have times like that! It may seem to you like the storm will never end and that there is no possible good that can come from what you are facing. Thankfully, however, there is some good news for us tonight from the word of God. While the storms of life are never pleasant, they do produce certain benefits in our lives that we would do well to make note of this Morning. ***"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.: Heb 12:11.***

I would like for us to join the disciples this Morning in their storm. As we do, I want to show you that the storms of life contain some hidden blessings for the children of God.

I do not know what kind of storm you are facing this evening, but I do know that the Lord has a purpose in allowing that storm to rage in your life. Perhaps that purpose will become clear this Morning as we talk about **Dealing With Storms Of Life.**

I. V. 25 STORMS IN LIFE CAN TRANSFORM US!

(III. The very thing the disciples feared. The sea, was the very thing the Lord used as the vehicle to reveal Himself unto them. He will do the same in your life and mine. Notice how Jesus came to them that night.)

A. He Comes When It's The Darkest - The Bible says that Jesus came to them in "the fourth watch". Sometime between **3 AM and 6 AM**, during the darkest hours of the night, Jesus came walking on the water!

(III. You may be walking in darkness this morning and wondering where Jesus is. You may be facing some of the darkest days of your life right now.

1. Let me remind you that our God is ever with you, Heb. 13:5!
2. Let me remind you that even in the darkest hours of life God is still God and He is still in control of your life. ***1 Kings 8:12, "Then spake Solomon, The LORD said that he would dwell in the thick darkness."***;
3. ***Psalm 139:11-12, "If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."***

C. V. 30-31 They Remind The Saint - Peter wanted to walk on water like Jesus. He put the Lord to the test and stepped onto the waves. However, he soon took his eyes off the Lord and when he did, he found himself in trouble. He remembered Who was in control and he called on the Lord and found the help he needed.

(III. The storms of life also serve to remind us of Who is in control. Like Peter, there are times when we get our eyes off the Lord during our storms. When we do, we are doomed to fail. We need to remember Who is in charge of this whole thing.

You see, if we successfully navigate the stormy waters of life, we deserve no credit for our abilities or our success. If we are successful, it is because there is One Who is greater than we are holding our hand! Our success in the storms of life hinges upon our being willing to acknowledge Jesus as the Master of the storm.)

III. V. 32-33 STORMS IN LIFE BECOME OUR TESTIMONY!

A. They Testify Of His Power - Jesus calmed the storm! He didn't say a thing, He just got into the boat with the disciples and the sea was calmed.

(III. One day, he'll do the same in your life! The storm will rage until it has accomplished His purpose and then He will cause the winds to cease for you. All He is trying to get us to see this evening is that He is in control of the storms of life. It isn't me and it isn't you. Jesus is the Master of the Sea and He is the Master of the Storm as well.)

3. A Message Of Potential - Jesus also gave a command to His disciples: "be not afraid." This statement literally reads, "*You stop fearing and don't you ever fear again.*" You see, if we can ever get hold of the fact that Jesus is in control of every area of our lives, that He is God, and that He possesses all power, then we can come to that place where we can trust Him fully through all the storms of life.

(III. The storms of life are a blessing because they reveal the Savior in a brand new way.)

B. V. 28-29 They Refine The Saint - When Peter heard that it was the Lord, Peter wanted to join Jesus in walking on the water. Jesus simply told Peter to come. Peter obeyed and he too walked on the water. Jesus used the storm as a means of helping Peter grow in the faith.

(III. When the storms of life are howling all about us, if we can get hold of the truth that Jesus is the Master of the Storm, then we too can rise above our circumstances and walk on the waves with the Lord. I realize that Peter's walk didn't last long. In just a moment he took his eyes off the Lord and he began to sink. However, Peter had a story that none of the other disciples had! Peter was the only one who could say, "I walked on my storm!" The storms of life will focus our faith if we will allow them to. God can use the difficult days to teach us more about Himself and to help us grow in the Lord. He will use the storms to make you more like Him. Remember, there were 12 men in that boat, but only one could say he walked on the storm like Jesus.)

4. Even the darkest hours of life cannot hide you from the face of God. He is there even when you cannot see Him.)

B. He Comes When We Face Disaster - The disciples were in a fight for their lives. Mark 6:48 says that they were "toiling in rowing". That is, they were struggling against the storm.

I get the impression that these men were afraid for their lives. When they thought all hope was gone and that they were doomed, Jesus came walking on the waves!

(III. There are times when we all feel like we have lost the battle with our storm, but may I remind you that just as surely as the Lord is in control of your blessings, He is also in charge of your storms? When things look the bleakest, just look around, Jesus is about to show up! Remember, He may not keep you from going into the storm, but He will keep you in the midst of the storm! Think of the 3 Hebrews, Daniel, and Noah. God did not prevent any of these from going into the storm, but He saved them all in the midst of their storm. What He did for them, He will do for you!)

C. He Comes When We're In The Deepest - The very thing the disciples feared, the raging sea, was the very thing God used as His vehicle to come to them. What a testimony this was! He was not telling them that the storm was not fierce, He was telling them that He was greater than the storm!

(III. That is still His word to you this evening! Regardless of what you are facing in life, remember that Jesus is greater than that storm you may be facing. If you will be patient and wait for Him, He will show up right on time. You will see that the storm was used by the Lord to make Himself clear to you. The very thing you fear will be the vehicle He uses to show up in your life!)

(III. The Apostle Paul - **2 Cor. 12:1-10**. God used Paul's storm, a thorn in the flesh, to show up in and on Paul's life.)

(III. What I am trying to tell you is this: "Do not fear the storms of Life! They have been designed by the Lord as a means of bringing Him closer to you. He planned them and they are for your good - Rom. 8:28")

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28, NKJV).

II. V. 25-31 STORMS IN LIFE TEST US!

A. **V. 25-27 *They Reveal The Savior*** - When Jesus did come walking on the water, the disciples did not recognize Him. They thought He was a ghost. They cried out in fear. But, thank God, Jesus came with a message of peace and of power. He came to them with a;

- Word of peace, **"be of good cheer."**
- Word of power, **"It is I"**.
- Word of potential, **"be not afraid."**

(III. The storms of life have the potential to reveal the Savior to us in a way we may have never considered before. When He comes to us, walking on our storm, He gives us the same message of hope that He gave to the disciples that stormy night.

1. A Message Of Peace - Note: They were still in the storm when He told them to cheer up. By His power, the Son of God can give us peace in the midst of our storms. That is the peace He refers to in ***Phil. 4:6-7***.

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6, 7, NKJV).

2. A Message Of Power - When Jesus showed up, He came declaring His identity. "It is I", is an emphatic personal pronoun. It is the same statement Jesus used when He said, "I am the door"; "I am the way, the truth and the life."; "I am the bread of life"; "I am the good shepherd". Do you get the picture? Jesus is telling His Disciples to "cheer up, God is here!" If we can ever grasp the truth that Jesus is the great I AM. That He has all power in Heaven and in earth, Matt. 28:18, then we can enjoy peace in the midst of trials.

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (Matthew 28:18, NKJV).