

Through the Storm with Jesus

Text: Mark 4:35-41

Introduction:

1. The Divine Power of Christ the Son is powerfully demonstrated in this account. In fact, the Divine Authority of the Son of God from Mark 4:35 to the end of Mark 5 will be demonstrated in 4 areas:
 - The Son's Power over Disaster (Nature) (4:35-41)
 - The Son's Power over Demons (5:1-18)
 - The Son's Power over Disease (5:25-34)
 - The Son's Power over Death (5:21-24; 35-43)
2. This account of Christ and His disciples in the storm will teach us some valuable lessons concerning the storms of life (trials and tests) we will face in the will of God. This message is so important for everyone as you are either in a storm, about to go into one or just coming out of one!
3. Faith is the central theme of the passage. The disciples' faith came under test and was found wanting. Christ used the storm in their lives to grow their faith and He deals with our lives in the same way.
4. In this lesson, we will note 5 truths about this storm and how it relates to our own walk of faith.

I. The Command leading to the Storm (Vs. 35-36)

A. The Specifics of the Command (Vs. 35)

1. The time – “the same day, when the even was come”
 - a. What an eventful day it had been! It had been a day of miracles, opposition and teaching. To then embark on a journey at night to the other side of the lake was an intriguing command on the part of Christ.
 - b. Christ didn't offer any explanation for this command. He simply gave it. The Christian life requires obedience even when things don't make sense to us on the human level.
2. The destination – “the other side” They were currently on the Western, more populated side of the lake. They would cross over to the Eastern side which was approx. 6 miles or 9.6 kms distance and had no large cities along the shore of the lake.

B. The Submission to the Command (Vs. 36)

1. The obedience of the disciples was prompt and without objection or question – “And they launched forth” (Luke 8:22)
2. Matt. 8:23 “*And when he was entered into a ship, **his disciples followed him***” The disciples were simply following Christ's lead in humble submission.

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3. Principle: Storms come into our lives when we are faithfully and obediently serving the Lord. Jonah found himself in a similar storm but that was on account of his disobedience. His storm was one of chastisement but in this case, the disciples had done nothing wrong! They had simply been loyal and obedient. God allows storms in our lives as we follow and serve Him in order that our faith might grow.

II. The Coming of the Storm (Vs. 37)

A. The Suddenness of It – “And there arose”

1. All was tranquil as they began sailing. The breeze blew softly and the waves lapped gently against the side of the ship. Christ, the Son of God was on board. A smooth night of sailing was ahead and all would be well. Suddenly the wind came howling down the mountain ravines slamming into the peaceful waters and turning the lake into a treacherous, seething cauldron of waves and foam. The thunder cracked, the lightening flashed, the wind howled, the waves crashed and the rain poured. Luke 8:23 “as they sailed...there came down a storm of wind on the lake”
2. Illustration: Fishing trip with Dad behind Bluff at Victor Harbor
3. Principle: The storms of life come swiftly and unexpectedly upon us while we are in the very act of following and serving the Master. The storms come to us when we are in the will of God.

B. The Source of It – “And there arose”

1. Consider the storm from the *Natural* Perspective
 - a. “To understand the causes of these sudden and violent tempests we must remember that the lake lies low – **680 feet (207m)** below the sea, that the mountainous plateau...rises to a considerable height, spreading backward to...the snowy Hermon; that the water- courses have worn or washed out profound ravines and wild gorges, converging to the head of this lake; and that these act like great funnels to draw down the cold winds from the mountains.” (Thomas)
 - b. The cold wind rushing down these gorges gains a terrific speed and crashing into the warm air of the sea produces a violent reaction. (Butler)
2. Consider the storm from the *Spiritual* Perspective
 - a. Question: Where were they headed on this trip? Who would they meet on the other side? They had left the multitudes and were going on a mission to rescue a special case; a man who was in deep Satanic bondage.

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- b. This is why Christ rebukes the wind later on in Vs. 39. Job 1 reveals that Satan sometimes uses natural forces like the wind (Job 1:19)
- c. Principle: Those who take on Satanic strongholds with the Gospel can expect Satanic storms to arise! Illustration: Personal experience at NBC in the lead up to souls being saved; special meetings etc...

C. The Severity of It – “a great storm of wind”

1. The Wind – comes from the Greek word meaning hurricane, whirlwind or tornado. The word is “used of a furious storm or hurricane. It never refers to a single gust.” (Wuest) Matthew describes it as “a great tempest” The word tempest is the Greek word ‘seismos’ which is the source of our English word ‘seismic’ The storm was “a terrific force...like an earthquake.” (RWP)
2. The Waves – Matthew says “the ship was covered with the waves”; Mark says “the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full” and Luke that “they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy”
3. Principle: The trials we face can seem so overwhelming that they are going to consume and destroy us. The timing of the deliverance often comes when all is hopeless on the human level. “Sometimes God allows us to have all the props knocked out from under us before He intervenes and delivers.” (Butler)

III. The Cry in the Storm (Vs. 38)

A. The Silence of the Saviour (Vs. 38a)

Christ sleeping in the midst of the storm gives us some insight into His character.

1. Christ’s Humanity – Both the Deity and Humanity of Christ are vividly portrayed in this account. Christ is all God and all Man – He is the God-Man! “From this (Christ sleeping), one can form some estimate of the tremendous drain on our Lord’s physical and nerve force by His ministry.” (Wuest)
2. Christ’s Immutability – while we are perplexed, distressed and confused about our trial, our Saviour is not distressed or changed by it. He pities us with Father-like compassion but the storm cannot change Who He is!
3. Christ’s Sovereignty – As perfect man, Christ did all things in accordance with the Father’s will. There was a purpose in this decision of Christ to sleep. He was going to use this experience to strengthen the faith of the disciples and glorify Himself. It can be perplexing when it seems God is asleep in our trials and leaving us to battle it on our own. The disciples felt Christ was neglecting them in their hour of greatest need. But let us never lose sight of the fact

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that though in His wisdom there may be periods of silence, He has not taken away His presence. His silence is not on account of any weakness on His part but in accordance with His wisdom.

B. The Supplication to the Saviour (Vs. 38b)

1. What was **right** with their prayer – they came to Christ in their hour of crisis and called on Him. This was the right thing to do! Trials have a way of driving us to the Saviour. Their prayer, no matter how imperfect, still received an answer!
2. What was **wrong** with their prayer – there was an absence of faith. They cried out in unbelief and accused the Saviour of being uncaring to their needs. This is a very human response to a severe trial and one we can identify with. The storms reveal the reality of our Christian walk. They do not produce the lack of faith but simply reveal our lack of faith.
3. Every believer at some point in their Christian experience will have to grapple with this question, “Does Jesus Care?” The answer is yes! Romans 8:28-39 “*And we know that all things work together for good...*” In the storm be sure to remember – His **Providence** placed me there; His **Presence** comforts me there; His **Prayers** sustain me there & His **Power** delivers me there.
4. “The presence of Christ on board does not guarantee a smooth passage. He promises not protection from the storm but His presence in the storm.” (Phillips)
5. Illustration: Job’s amazing example – “*In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.*” (Job 1:22) “*In all this did not Job sin with his lips.*” (Job 2:10) commendable

IV. The Calming of the Storm (Vs. 39)

A. The Rebuke of the Saviour (Vs. 39a)

1. ‘rebuked’ = all three Gospels accounts record that Christ rebuked the storm indicating there was something evil behind it. What Christ said exactly in this rebuke is not recorded. The word means “to admonish or charge sharply.” Very likely our Lord was rebuking the demonic activity behind the storm. See Mark 1:25 where Christ uses the same language to rebuke a demon
2. “peace, be still” = ‘peace’ means “be silent” and “be still” means “be muzzled”

B. The Response to the Saviour (Vs. 39b)

1. The wind and waves immediately responded to the command of their Creator. A “great storm” was turned to a “great calm”.
2. The storm was stopped by nothing but the power of Christ’s spoken Word. The stormy trials may seem to be long and drawn out but they will end exactly when our Saviour determines they are to end.

V. The Correction after the Storm (Vs. 40-41)

A. The Rebuke of the Disciples (Vs. 40)

Christ asks them two heart searching questions. He asks them...

1. Concerning their **Fear** (Vs. 40a) What's the difference between faith and fear? Fear looks at the storm, faith looks at the Saviour. Had they so quickly forgotten the supernatural miracles they had just seen? Fear is forgetful. It is interesting that the disciples will go through another storm and Christ will link their lack of faith to the fact they "considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their hear was hardened." (Mk. 6:46-52)
2. Concerning their **Faith** (Vs. 40b) Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6) Luke's account says, "Where is your faith?" (Lk. 8:25)

B. The Reverence of the Disciples (Vs. 41)

1. "they feared exceedingly" = this fear they had towards the Lord was different to the fear they had towards the storm. This was a sense of awe and reverence at the majesty of God they had just seen displayed before them. Matthew says they 'marveled' (Mt. 8:27) and Luke says they 'wondered' (Lk. 8:25)
2. The storms God leads us into, though difficult, teach us more about His Power, Character and Ways. They become occasions for the display of His Divine Power. "The greatness of the storm serves to magnify the greatness of Christ." (Butler)

Conclusion:

1. Are you saved? Is Christ in your life? Without Him, you will be hopeless in the storms of life.
2. Are you going through a storm? Christ is with you and has a Divine purpose in what He is doing. Look to Him in faith.