

Title: **A PARABLE OF**
 EVERY BELIEVER'S LIFE

Text: Mark 4:35-41

Subject: *Christ's Calming the Storm*

Date: Friday Evening — August 30, 2019
 40th Annual Sovereign Grace Conference
 Grace Baptist Church of Danville
 Danville, Kentucky

Introduction:

(Mark 4:35-41) “And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. (36) And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. (37) And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. (38) And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? (39) And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. (40) And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?

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(41) And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

As our Lord Jesus and his disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee, a terrible storm arose. The disciples in the panic of their terror, were filled with unbelief. When they cried out, "*Master, carest thou not that we perish,*" the Lord Jesus arose, calmly rebuked their unbelief, and by the mere power of his word calmed the sea and the storm.

Few, if any, of our Lord's miracles were so likely to leave his disciples with such an unforgettable, convincing demonstration of his divine omnipotence. At least four of these men were professional fishermen and skilled seamen. In all likelihood, Peter, Andrew, James, and John were very familiar with the Sea of Galilee. They had probably been exposed to its devastating and often fatal storms from their youth. Never, not even in the greatest of our Lord's other miracles, had they seen such power

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as he demonstrated here. By the mere word of his mouth, our Savior stopped the storm!

LESSONS

There are many important lessons taught in these verses. We would be wise to ask the Spirit of God to frequently remind us of them.

1. Faith in and obedience to Christ do not exempt God's saints from the storms that other people face.
2. The fact that our Lord was weary and required sleep demonstrates clearly that he was and is a real man.
3. The fact that the wind and sea obeyed his word demonstrated our Redeemer's complete deity. This Man is the omnipotent God! The wind and the sea knew the voice of their Creator! — Only One who is both God and man could redeem us and save us from our sins.
4. The greatest saints in this world are sinners still. And the strongest believers are sometimes filled with unbelief.

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5. Our Lord Jesus Christ is a tender, compassionate, forgiving Savior. — *“Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?”*
6. Our Savior's reason for everything he does is the salvation of his elect. He went to the other side of the sea because there was a wild, lost Gadarene on the other side for whom the time of love had come.
7. All who are in the good ship Grace with Christ are perfectly safe, as they pass through the stormy seas of this world.

Those seven lessons are a sermon in themselves, a sermon that I frequently preach, in one way or another. They bear frequent repetition. However, tonight, I want to use our text in another way.

I want to use this event on the Sea of Galilee as **A PARABLE OF EVERY BELIEVER'S LIFE**. When the Son of God enters the hearts of chosen sinners in his sovereign saving power and grace, he brings us with himself into the church and kingdom of God, he brings us with himself into the ship of grace and salvation. As he does, he casts his eyes and

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ours across the waters of time to the other side of the sea of life, and says, as he did to his disciples in our text, **“Let us pass unto the other side over.”**

If you will look with me at **Psalm 107:23-31**, you will see that I have a good, biblical basis for using our text as a parable of our lives in this world.

(Psalms 107:23-31) “They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; (24) These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep. (25) For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. (26) They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. (27) They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit’s end. (28) Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. (29) He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. (30) Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. (31) Oh

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that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!”

Proposition: The believer’s life is a voyage across a troubled sea to our “*desired haven*” on the other side.

Divisions: I want to describe the believer’s life as it is portrayed parabolically in our text as...

1. A Voyage.
2. A Voyage across a Stormy Sea.
3. A Voyage with Christ.
4. A Voyage Marked by Miracles.
5. A Voyage that Should be Without Fear.

A VOYAGE

1st — I want you to see that **every believer’s life is a voyage.** — As we embark on this voyage, the Son of God takes us into the good ship Grace and says, “*Let us pass over unto the other side.*” Death is often spoken of poetically as a passing over, the crossing of a sea or a river. We sing,

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“He will keep me ‘til the river
Rolls its waters at my feet,
Then He’ll bear me safely over,
Where my loved ones I shall meet.”

However, this passing over the sea is not something we shall do some day. It is something we do every day. We are, right now, passing over the sea of time unto the other side. We are, right now, walking through the valley of the shadow of death.

The sea is a fit emblem for our lives and all the varied circumstances of our lives in this world. **How quickly we pass across the sea!**

(James 4:14) “What *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”

(Job 7:6) “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, and are spent without hope.”

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(Job 9:25-26) “Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good. (26) They are passed away as the swift ships: as the eagle *that* hasteth to the prey.”

I've watched a lot of people die! As I look into your faces, I think to myself, **“There go the ships, not painted ships upon a painted sea, but immortal souls, rising and falling upon the billows of time, disappearing one by one over the horizon of time into eternity.”** Soon, we must all pass over that horizon.

Perhaps, the horizon seems very far away to some of you. Do not be so foolish. Soon, you will pass from this changing world of time into the unchanging world of eternity. Here all things are temporal and changing. There all things are eternal and unchanging. **How will it be for you in that day? How will it be for you in the swelling of the Jordan?** — Trust Christ and you can die with peace.

A VOYAGE ACROSS A STORMY SEA

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2nd — Let me show you that this life is not only comparable to a voyage, but it is **a voyage across a stormy sea.**

(Mark 4:37) “And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.”

We must often sail into the tempests of sorrow, affliction, adversity, and grief; but Christ's presence assures us of safety no matter what the storm may be.

NOTICE: These disciples were not acting in disobedience. **They followed the Master into the ship at his command.** Loyalty and obedience to Christ is often the surest course to trouble. **The path of faithfulness is always right through the eye of the storm.**

Though our storms are many and varied, basically, all our trials and troubles in this world arise from two sources.

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- **The contrary winds of our circumstances without.**
- **The waves of sin and unbelief within.**

Every child of God recognizes, as the Shulamite confessed in the Song of Solomon, that he is “*as it were the company of two armies*” (Song of Solomon 6:13).

(Romans 7:14-24) “For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. (15) For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. (16) If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is* good. (17) Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. (18) For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. (19) For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. (20) Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. (21) I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present

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with me. (22) For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: (23) But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (24) O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

(Psalms 73:1-3) "Truly God *is* good to Israel, *even* to such as are of a clean heart. (2) But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. (3) For I was envious at the foolish, *when* I saw the prosperity of the wicked."

(Psalms 73:21-28) "Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. (22) So foolish *was* I, and ignorant: I was *as* a beast before thee. (23) Nevertheless I *am* continually with thee: thou hast holden *me* by my right hand. (24) Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me *to* glory. (25) Whom have I in heaven *but thee*? And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire beside thee. (26) My flesh and my heart

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faileth: *but* God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. (27) For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. (28) But *it is* good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works.”

A VOYAGE WITH CHRIST

3rd — Let me hasten to tell you that our life in this world is **a voyage with Christ.** — A voyage, yes. A voyage through stormy seas, yes. But, blessed be God, it is a voyage in the company and constant presence, protection, and care of the Son of God, our Savior.

The Lord Jesus does not say, “Go over to the other side and I will meet you there.” He said, **“Let us pass over unto the other side.”** And, though “*there arose a great storm, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was full,*” we read that the Lord Jesus “*was in the hinder part of the ship.*” **He was silent; but he**

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was there. So it is with us. Our Lord may appear to be asleep. He may be silent. It may even appear at times, to our feeble, sinful hearts, that he does not care if we perish! But he is always with us!

How I pray that God will teach me and teach you to believe him. Did not our Savior say, “Lo, I am with you alway”? Did he not promise, “I will never leave thee” (Hebrews 13:5)?

(Isaiah 41:10) “Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

(Isaiah 43:2) “When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”

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(Philippians 4:4-7) “Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice. (5) Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord *is* at hand. (6) Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (7) And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

A VOYAGE MARKED BY MIRACLES

4th — Ours is **a voyage marked by miracles.**

(Mark 4:39) “And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.”

The charismatics talk about miracles. We experience them. They put on a sham show of tomfoolery; but God's saints are men and women whose biographies are histories of God's miraculous works.

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- **The Miracle of Redemption** (2 Corinthians 5:21)
- **The Miracle of Regeneration** (John 3:3-8)

“It took a miracle to put the world in place.
It took miracle to hang the stars in space.
But when He saved my soul,
Cleansed and made me whole,
It took a miracle of love and grace!”

- **The Miracle of the Resurrection** (1 Corinthians 15:35-58)
- **The Miracle of Providence** (Romans 8:28; 11:33-36)

Still, there is more, much more to consider. **It is upon the dark background of our great troubles that our Lord most clearly displays his wondrous power and grace.** It is in the fiery furnace of adversity that we know the preserving power of his presence. It is only in the lions' den that we see the Lord's dominion over the lions. The Lord God who is

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with us and for us is the God who is able to deliver us. He is God alone. He is God indeed!

Illustration: *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*

A VOYAGE THAT OUGHT
TO BE FREE OF FEAR

5th — Now, in the last place, I want you to see that our voyage with Christ across the stormy sea of life is **a voyage that ought to be free of fear.** The voyage we are on is a perfectly safe voyage.

(Mark 4:40) “And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?”

The disciples' fear arose from their unbelief. Fear is the rank weed of nature that grows wild in the soil of unbelief. **These poor disciples were so much like us. They should have been perfectly calm.**

- They were on the Master's business.
- They were in the Master's presence.

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- They had repeatedly seen and experienced the Master's power.

They should have most reasonably looked to Christ; but they didn't. Instead of looking to the Lord God omnipotent, they looked at...

- The Terrible Storm.
- Their Own Weakness.
- The Apparent Frailty of Their Ship.

Let us, each one, take the Lord's gentle rebuke personally. As I prepared this message, I tried to apply it to myself. I hope God will enable you to do the same. **Our greatest difficulties, our greatest temptations, our greatest falls are always the result of unbelief.** Yet, unbelief on the part of one who has experienced the saving power and grace of God in Christ is the most absurd and unreasonable thing in the world. — **“Why are we so fearful? How is it that we have no faith?”**

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Our Savior is the sovereign God of providence,
omnipotent, wise, and good. — And don't miss this:
He is in the boat with us!

- **He is in the boat of your heart.** — **He is in you!**

(Colossians 1:27) “To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:”

(1 John 4:4) “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

- **The Son of God is in the boat of his Church.**

(Deuteronomy 23:14) “For the LORD thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee.”

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(Psalms 46:5) “God *is* in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, *and that* right early.”

(Revelation 2:1) “Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.”

The Church of God, the true Church, is safe. She will pass over this sea. She will be brought to her desired haven. She will reach the other side. **Not one passenger aboard the good ship Grace will be lost at sea.**

- **Christ is in the boat of Holy Scripture.**

His Word is forever settled in heaven. It cannot be broken. All the shifting winds of pseudo-science and waves of unscholarly criticism will not sink this vessel. We have no reason to fear the carpings of reprobate men. The Word of God abides forever. When their laughter is turned to weeping and their

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criticisms burn as fire in their souls, the Word of God will still be forever settled in heaven!

- **Our Lord Jesus Christ is in the boat of Providence.**

Not only is he in the boat, he is at the helm. We do not trust providence, or worship providence. We are not Deists. But the Lord God almighty whom we do trust and worship is the God of providence; and we rejoice to know it!

The Lord Jesus Christ, who is with us, has the whole world in his hands. All power in heaven and earth is given unto him. He holds the reins of universal dominion. This omnipotent God bids us cast our care upon him with these assuring words, “*for he careth for you!*” He says to us, “*Be not afraid, only believe.*” He who is God our Savior, the God of all grace, the God of providence, is God touched with the feeling of our infirmities!

God moves in a mysterious way

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His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds you so much dread
Are big with mercy and will break
With blessings on your head.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan His works in vain;
God is His own interpreter.
And He will make it plain.

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“The God of my mercy shall prevent me” (Psalm 59:10). — “Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (Psalm 23:6).

APPLICATION

Now, let me finish by applying this story to you who are yet without Christ. I trust that God has brought you into deep waters and begun to cause you to reel to and fro like a drunken man by reason of your souls' trouble.

1. The storm of God's wrath is beating your little boat.
2. Cry out from your soul to Christ, the Master. Appeal to his great compassion. — *“Carest thou not that I perish?”*
3. May the Son of God now arise and speak peace to your troubled heart.

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4. If he will speak by his Spirit, his word of grace will bring great calm and he will bring you to your desired haven!

(Psalms 107:23-31) “They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; (24) These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep. (25) For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. (26) They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. (27) They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit’s end. (28) Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. (29) He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. (30) Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. (31) Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!”

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(Psalms 107:42-43) “The righteous shall see *it*, and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth. (43) Whoso *is* wise, and will observe these *things*, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.”

5. Believe him, only believe him, and you will see the glory of God.

(John 11:40) “Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?”

Amen.

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- ¹ Danville — (Tuesday - 09/21/99)
Danville — (Sunday PM – 06/27/04)
Danville — Sunday AM – August 8, 2010)
Danville — (Friday – 08/30/19)
Pikeville, KY - (9/23/99)
Madisonville, KY - (02/09/00)
New Castle, IN (04/30/00)
Ball, LA (03-04-00)
Spring Lake, NC (05-27-00)
Rescue Baptist Church, Rescue, CA KY — (Wednesday PM – 06/30/04)
Todds RD Grace Church, Lexington — (Wednesday 04/13/05)
Fairmont Grace Church — Sylacauga, AL — (04/24/05)
Grace Baptist Church, Taylor, AR — (Sunday AM — 06/12/05)
Wichita Falls, TX – (Mon. PM – 06/13/05)
Honiton, England — (03/02/08)
Kingsport, TN — (08/08/10)