

8-30-09

Reflections

Weathering
the
Storms
of
Life.

*River Road
Baptist Church
Eugene, OR*



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The sea was becoming a frightening specter of doom to the disciples. Even though they were with Jesus, they still did not comprehend with whom they were being discipled. The event unfolds... *Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him.* ²⁴ *And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep.* ²⁵ *Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!"* ²⁶ *But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?"* ²⁷ *Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.* (Matthew 8:23-26 NKJ) When the sea was stilled at His command, the men were astounded at His power over the winds and waves. They had much to learn about the Lord's authority over the creation.

A second time where the disciples faced contrary winds and waves on the sea, Jesus came to them walking on the water. *Now when evening came, He was alone there.* ²⁴ *But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.* ²⁵ *Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.* ²⁶ *And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!"* ²⁷ *And they cried out for fear.* ²⁸ *But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."* (Matthew 14:23b-27 NKJ) Again Jesus had demonstrated that they were in His care, and that He did indeed have authority over all aspects of the creation.

We all face storms in life. Sometimes they are disappointing circumstances, other times they might be due to suffering the loss of a job or a loved one. Health issues can also become storms to be faced. James addresses this reality when he tells us ... *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,* ³ *knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.* ⁴ *But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.* (James 1:2-4 NKJ) These times can certainly test our faith in the Lord's care for us as we work our way through the storm being faced, but we need to remind ourselves that He has promised to never leave or forsake his children.

We know from the Scripture that Jesus faced pain, hunger, rejection, and even death, when He came in flesh to become the sacrifice for our redemption, so we can have confidence in Him

regardless of our trial. He has experienced our dilemmas but did so without sin. He understands our suffering, the storms we face, and the fear that they can cause for us. He has also given us assurance that, in Him, we can trust our lives to His care even in the midst of the storms of life. He calls us to live by faith in His completed work and to focus our lives on Him.

He has given us a powerful promise regarding His loving relationship with His children when he sent them into the world. He said... *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* ¹⁹ *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:* ²⁰ *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.* (Mat 28:18-20 KJV)

With His promises ringing in our hearts, we should be able to face our storms with confidence in His care for us. Just as He demonstrated with the disciples' storm circumstances, He has, and always will have, control of every situation and we know, that regardless of the impact of life's storms on us, we are His children and are promised eternal life in His presence. As Paul has said...*For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.* (Romans 14:8 NKJ) What storm could possibly overcome us with all of God's promises assuring us of whose we are?

Let's review then, our "survival plan" when the storms of life come upon us in our walk with the Lord. Our first line of safety is to be found in Christ Jesus. His children are promised His care and love which is constantly witnessed to us by the Holy Spirit. The second facet of our plan is to know His Word and live in obedience to His commands. When we take time to become His obedient disciples, we grow in our spiritual maturity and our world-view begins to take on His perspective on life, death and eternity. His perfect love casts out fear and allows the Holy Spirit to provide us the courage and even the words to use in the challenging times of life's storms. In Christ, we can with the Apostle Paul declare...*For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,* ³⁹ *nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Rom 8:30-39 NKJ) Life's Storms will not defeat our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. We are safe in Him. **Pastor Doug**