

## **Overcoming Fear During The Storms Of Life** **Matthew 14:22-33, Mark 6:45-52, John 6:15-21**

### **Introduction:**

1. Physical storms can be very scary (hurricanes), but the storms of life can bring incredible fear (sickness, loss of job, death of a loved one, divorce, etc.).
2. Here in our text, the disciples encounter a physical storm (vs. 22, 24). They were crossing the Sea of Galilee, which should have been a two-hour boat ride across the northern tip of this sea. Nine hours later, they are fighting for their lives in total darkness, in the middle of the sea, in the middle of the night (3 AM).
3. Christ was not in the boat (vs. 23), and they knew they could very well drown. The physical storm they encountered caused them to perceive that death was imminent. Fear gripped them (vs. 26-27, 30).
4. Fear is a terrible thing. According to God's Word, fear brings "*a snare*" (**Proverbs 29:25**), "*torment*" (**1 John 4:18**), and "*bondage*" (**Hebrews 2:15**).
5. The good news is that no believer has to be paralyzed by fear. 2 Timothy 1:7
6. Maybe you are a believer in Christ, but your heart is constantly gripped with fear. It may be that it has imprisoned and ensnared your life. However, you can overcome it!
7. There are some precious truths in this story that we will examine. If you allow them to sink deep into your heart and mind, it will release you from your fears, and you can trade your fear for the peace of God. Colossians 3:15

### **Christ is with you in the storm.**

1. The context of this story is that John the Baptist had just died. Jesus wanted to be alone, but crowds were coming to Him. While in the desert, Christ had just miraculously fed over 5,000 people with five loaves and two fishes.
2. The crowds were ready to inaugurate Him King and begin to lead a revolution against the Roman government (John 6:15). His disciples did not yet understand that the cross must come before the crown, so lest the disciples get caught up in this movement, Christ sent them away (Matthew 14:22). Christ went up into the mountain to pray (vs. 23).
3. But Christ knew **exactly** where the disciples were. Christ is the one that sent them away in the boat. He constrained (compelled) them to get into the ship.
4. He had His ever-watchful eyes on them (Mark 6:48). He may not have been there physically, but He was there in spirit. What a picture of the future day of Jacob's trouble, when dark clouds and storms will threaten to destroy Israel, but their faithful High Priest will see it all in heaven and come to their rescue. Out of Zion comes the Deliverer.
5. But did you know the same is true of you today, if you know Jesus Christ as your Savior? He knows the storm you are in; He knows all about it, and He knows all the details.
6. Not only this, He is right there **with you** in that storm. Did you notice that when the storm was at its worst, Jesus was right there in the midst? vs. 24-27

7. When we doubt God's presence in the storm, rest assured, He is there!  
Hebrews 13:5-6
8. God will not wave a magic wand and make all the storms of life go away. In Mark it says "*the wind was contrary unto them...*" Isn't that a picture of life? The winds of life won't always be at your back. Storms are a built-in part of this earth because of the curse of sin.
  - But one day, Christ will return to this earth, and upon that return the Bible says "...and there was no more sea." **Revelation 21:1**
9. One day there will be no more storms of life (Revelation 21:4). But until that day, Christ is with you through every storm of life you encounter. Nothing can separate you from His love (Romans 8:38-39) or His presence (Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30).
10. Did you notice what happened when Jesus entered the ship? vs. 32
11. If Jesus lives in your heart, He can bring a peace, calm, and tranquility that will supersede any storm of life. Philippians 4:7, 11

### **Christ is praying for you in the storm.**

1. Isn't it great to have people praying for you when you are in the midst of a storm? What if I told you that Jesus Christ himself was praying for you?
2. Look in our text. While the disciples were in the storm, Jesus was in the mountain praying for them. vs. 23
3. Today, Christ is not in a mountain, but He has risen from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father (Ephesians 1:20-21), and the Father has placed all things under His feet (Ephesians 1:22). The waves that are over our head are under His feet!
4. What is He doing in heaven today? Romans 8:34
  - The word "intercessor" means "one who pleads in behalf of another; prayer, petition in favor of another."
5. Christ is not only with you through your storm; He is pleading your case in prayer at the right hand of the Father. Again, it might not be that the storm will subside and go away, but praying for your comfort, for your growth, for your assurance, for your strength, for your faith to grow, etc.
6. Christ does not delegate this to an angel or to a dead saint. He is interceding for you personally as you and others pray to Him. 1 Timothy 2:5

### **Christ will use the storm for your good.**

1. The disciples viewed the storm as simply a tragic thing and a disaster that threatened to destroy them. Jesus, of course, had an entirely different view of this storm.
2. While there is no evidence that Christ caused the storm, Christ would **use** the storm to reveal Himself to them in an incredible way unlike He had ever done before. vs. 26-27

- Can you imagine seeing Christ walk on the water? Can you imagine being Peter and experiencing this? Imagine being in the ship (vs. 32). No wonder they reacted as they did (vs. 33).
3. Here is my point. Because of this storm, they saw Christ in an entirely different light than they had ever seen Him before. Sometimes we need contrary winds to give us spiritual perception and perspective.
  4. While the storm was certainly no joy to go through, it also served to build their faith stronger (vs. 31). It wasn't that they had no faith, but a small faith. As a result of this storm, their faith muscles were strengthened. The storms of life are where our faith grows.
  5. The storm also drew them closer to Christ (vs. 33). If we will allow them, the storms of life can lead us into a deeper, more intimate worship of our heavenly Father. They can lead us into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

### **In Conclusion:**

1. At first, the disciples thought they saw a ghost in the storm and were **more** fearful (vs. 26). When you are in the storm, it is so easy to see ghosts. You may have thought at different times in your life, "God must be mad at me and He is getting even with me." Remember, the disciples were being obedient to Christ when this storm hit. Being in the ship is exactly where Christ wanted them.
2. They toiled, rowing for nine hours before the storm finally ended. Could Christ have come to them 30 minutes into the storm? Yes! But as we said, there are benefits to storms. Christ does not swoop down and simply deliver us **out** of the storm, but He will always deliver us **through** the storm if we look to Him and trust Him!
3. Maybe you are in the midst of a storm right now. You don't see Christ anywhere in the storm. Christ says, "I'm here. It is I, be not afraid."
4. If your heart is troubled, let it be calmed by remembering three truths:
  - Christ is with you in the storm.
  - Christ is praying for you in the storm.
  - Christ will use the storm for your good.