

Jesus Calms the Storm

Lesson 01 of the Series: "Storm Stories"

1. One evening Jesus and his disciples were caught in a terrible storm.

"As evening came, Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let's cross to the other side of the lake.' So they took Jesus in the boat and started out, leaving the crowds behind (although other boats followed). But soon a fierce storm came up. High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water." Mark 4:35-37 (NLT)

a. Jesus never promised to keep us from experiencing storms.

"Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." John 16:33 (NLT)

Life Application: God often uses difficulties and trials to strengthen our character.

"We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation." Romans 5:3-4 (NLT)

b. Jesus promised to be with us always.

"Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God is with us.'" Matthew 1:23 (NLT) (see also Isaiah 7:14)

"And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:20 (NIV)

"I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:38-39 (NLT)

2. The disciples were terrified that they were all going to drown.

Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, "Teacher, don't you care that we're going to drown?" When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the water, "Silence! Be still!" Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. Then he asked them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" The disciples were absolutely terrified. "Who is this man?" they asked each other. "Even the wind and waves obey him!" Mark 4:38-41 (NLT)

a. The disciples underestimated Jesus' ability to handle their crisis.

"...in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body." Colossians 2:9 (NLT)

"Where is there anyone as mighty as you, O LORD? ...You rule the oceans. You subdue their storm-tossed waves..." Psalm 89:8-9 (NLT)

"For nothing is impossible with God." Luke 1:37 (NLT)

Life Application: We must trust that Jesus is able to handle our crises.

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

b. The disciples didn't know Jesus well enough to have faith/confidence in Him.

"Have mercy on us and help us, if you can." "What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes." Mark 9:22-23 (NLT)

"Have you never heard? Have you never understood? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth. He never grows weak or weary. No one can measure the depths of his understanding. He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint."

Isaiah 40:28-31 (NLT)

Life Application: The best way to grow in our faith is to grow in our relationship with God. To do this we must:

- Surrender
- *Listen*
- Pray
- Obey

“Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them.”

John 14:21 (NLT)

3. God is able to use storms in our lives to help us know Him better.

“We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it.” 2 Corinthians 1:8 (NLT)

“As it turned out, it was the best thing that could have happened. Instead of trusting in our own strength or wits to get out of it, we were forced to trust God totally—not a bad idea since he's the God who raises the dead! And he did it, rescued us from certain doom. And he'll do it again, rescuing us as many times as we need rescuing.” 2 Corinthians 1:9-10 (MSG)

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Discussion Questions

1. Read Mark 4:35-41. Looking back at your notes from this week's lesson on this passage was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?
2. What is the most terrifying storm or difficult circumstance you have ever been through? What happened? How did you get through it? What did you learn from the experience?
3. Read John 16:33. Why doesn't God protect us from all trouble, sorrow and pain? Now read 2 Corinthians 1:8-10 and Romans 5:3-4. Describe one time in your life where you matured in some important way because of a trial or problem.
4. Spend some time as a group discussing some of the painful and/or difficult situations you are facing right now. Then spend some time praying for each other asking God to give you the strength you need to get through trying circumstances and to help you grow in your faith.
5. At Centerpoint we often discuss the following four steps to knowing God more:
 - Surrender
 - Listen
 - Pray
 - Obey

Go around your group and share one insight from your past week of personal devotions which challenged you to surrender more fully to God. Do you take time to listen to God each day? Why? Why not? What clear teaching in the Bible is God challenging you to obey right now? Pray that God will help each of you prioritize your lives around God's Word and surrender to whatever He says.

6. Discuss the following quotations:

"Trouble never troubles God." Woodrow Kroll

"You may readily judge whether you are a child of God or a hypocrite by seeing in what direction your soul turns in seasons of severe trial. The hypocrite flies to the world and finds a sort of comfort there. But the child of God runs to his Father and expects consolation only from the Lord's hand." Charles Spurgeon

"There are two ways of getting out of a trial. One is simply to try to get rid of the trial, and be thankful when it is over. The other is to recognize the trial as a challenge from God to claim a larger blessing than we have ever had, and to hail it with delight as an opportunity of obtaining a larger measure of divine grace." A. B. Simpson

“God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His

megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” C.S. Lewis

Resources:

Disappointment with God: Three Questions No One Asks Aloud, by Phillip Yancey. ©2015, Zondervan
When God Doesn't Make Sense, by James Dobson. ©2012, Tyndale House Publishers