

THE KINGDOM-DRIVEN LIFE #24

“Lord Of The Storm”

Part Two

Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone. Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, "It's a ghost!" But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!" Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water." "Yes, come," Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted. Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. "You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?" When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. Then the disciples worshiped him. "You really are the Son of God!" they exclaimed.

Matthew 14:22-34 NLT

I. Finding Our Story in God's Story

A. A Great Secret

1. The Bible is literally a living Word and gives us life when we “connect” with it.
2. We must find our story in His story-
3. So when I speak to you again today about Jesus' followers in a storm, you need to let God speak to you about **your** storm!
4. The storm in Matthew 8 was not the only storm Jesus' people had. There's another one in Matthew 14. There are striking parallels and contrasts:

Parallels

In Matthew 8, Jesus led them into the boat; In Matthew 14 He commanded them to go into the boat while He stayed behind...But in both cases there was a storm...

In Matthew 8, He was on board, but asleep; In Matthew 14, He was not on board, but came to them walking on the water.

In both cases, the Disciples were terrified with fear.

And in both cases, Jesus calms the storm, and is greatly glorified as the Great King.

II. Crash Course in Storm Survival

A. Storms Are Included In God's Will for Our Lives

Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home.

Matthew 14:22 NLT

1. Storms are inevitable. In Matthew 8 Jesus leads them into the boat; In Matthew 14, Jesus sends them ahead of Himself into the boat...in both cases, He knew a storm was coming!
2. The idea that we can ever mature to the point where we won't have problems is a false teaching called "Triumphalism", wherein Christians can become so spiritually advanced that they won't have troubles and trials.
3. The idea that storms mean we're out of the will of God is not necessarily true.

3 Great Storms Of Scripture

- **Jonah was *out* of the will of God**
- **Paul (in Acts 27) was *in* the will of God**
- **Jesus (in Matthew 8 and 14) was the will of God!**

B. A Storm Is a Problem with a Purpose

1. God allows storms to expose our fear and expand our faith.

Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

James 1:2-4 NLT

2. Remember that the disciples had just participated in the feeding of the multitude with a few loaves and fishes.

The feast in the desert was the greatest work in which the apostles were ever engaged during the ministry of Jesus....(they) had been highly exalted, now must be humbled...sent into the midst of trouble."

Henry Ward Beecher quoted in "The Biblical Illustrator"

- a. The life of the disciple is always a cycle of "blessing" and "testing"!
3. Notice that in both storms, the end result is faith in Jesus as "Lord of the Storm"!

But the men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!
Matthew 8:27 KJV

When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. 33 Then the disciples worshiped him. "You really are the Son of God!" they exclaimed.
Matthew 14:32-33

C. Jesus Seems Like a "Ghost" When He First Appears In a Storm

Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, "It's a ghost!" But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!"
Matthew 14:24-27

1. If you are in a storm, Jesus is walking your way. But can you recognize Him???

"It often happens that the coming of Christ to His disciples for their relief is that which frightens them most, because they don't know the extent of God's wardrobe. God comes to us in all our troubles...but like a great King who never wears the same garment twice, so God never appears twice in the same way. He sometimes puts on the garments of trouble; and when we are calling upon Him as though He were yet in heaven, He is walking by our side; and that from which we are praying God to deliver us is often nothing but God Himself."

Henry Ward Beecher, quoted in "The Biblical Illustrator"

2. We see so poorly. From the perspective of age, I have learned I rarely know good from bad in the moment:

- Things happen to us that seem good and later prove to be things that got us into trouble
- Things happen to us that seem to be bad-and later turn out to lead us into a great blessing
- Whether He's on the boat, (recognizable), or walking toward us on the waves of the storm, (unrecognizable), He is absolutely going to save us either way!

3. Sometimes we aren't willing to really make serious changes in our lives until the storm comes!

D. Jesus Is Lord over the Very Things You Think Are Going To Kill You

About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified
Matthew 14:25-26 NLT

1. The "waves" or "water" were what they feared the most-Jesus "walks" on the thing we're most afraid of. He is Lord over our trouble.

2. Peter wants to walk on his troubles like Jesus did.

Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water." "Yes, come," Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus.
Matthew 14:28-29 NLT

3. And here's the power of the word of God: In Matthew 8, Jesus said "Peace"; here in Matthew 14, He says, "Come". One word from God can stop the storm, or give you power to walk on water!

E. The Problem Is Always Our Focus

But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink.
Matthew 14:30 NLT

1. How do you "begin to sink"?
 - a. Ships can "begin to sink", but not men.
2. When Peter's "focus" moved from Jesus to the circumstances, his FAITH began to sink...and he was right behind!
3. Where are you looking today? Are you watching the waves? Or are you focused on Christ?

"There are three conditions of soul. (1) Some think they are sinking and are not. (2) Some are sinking and do not know it. (3) Some are sinking and miserably do know it. (When you are sinking)...it is evident. That which was below you is now over you; your servant has become your master...(namely) fears, cares and anxieties. Your escape is in looking again to Jesus.

J. Vaughan, M.A., quoted in The Biblical Illustrator

4. As Peter "began to sink", Jesus says,

"You have so little faith...why did you doubt Me?"
Matthew 18:31

5. To walk on the water is "little faith"? No! To shift our focus from Jesus to the problem is "little faith"!

- Watching the stock market or the news media
- Focusing on the shortcomings of your spouse or your boss
- Criticizing the church or doubting whether God is on your side

6. In the Book of Numbers, we see faith as a matter of focus:

So the Lord sent poisonous snakes among the people, and many were bitten and died. Then the people came to Moses and cried out, "We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you. Pray that the Lord will take away the snakes." So Moses prayed for the people. Then the Lord told him, "Make a replica of a poisonous snake and attach it to a pole. All who are bitten will live if

they simply look at it!" So Moses made a snake out of bronze and attached it to a pole. Then anyone who was bitten by a snake could look at the bronze snake and be healed!

Numbers 21:6-9 NLT

7. Centuries later, Jesus identified His cross as the fulfillment of God's solution for our own "snake bites":

And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.

John 3:14-15 NLT

III. Conclusion

A. Jesus Has a Big Wardrobe

1. He's a ***Savior***
2. He's a ***Healer***
3. He's a ***Deliverer*** from trouble
4. He is "**Lord of Your Storm**"

B. Where Is Your Focus Today?

1. Are you being bitten to death by poisonous serpents? Are you being engulfed in treacherous storms, threatening your very life? Are you rowing hard and getting nowhere?

If so, you are "beginning to sink"!

2. Your answer? Look to the Lord! Cast your gaze upon the Lord of the Storm!