

## 07-11-2024 Lessons From the Berry Patch #13- Panic in the Stormy Berry Patch

Well, this little devotion will quickly become outdated as a topic, hopefully the lessons it contains will not...

Yep, Hurricane Beryl, what a beast. Honestly, does ANYONE really buy the official statement that she was a Category 1 hurricane? No way a Cat 1 does this kind of damage. I talked to folks who have private weather stations who clocked gusts reaching 130 mph... Can you say, Category 3?



*This broken tree greeted me right after Beryl passed over... Oh well, firewood for the winter.*

Beryl put many of us Texas Gulf Coast residents on edge for a few days. Our area started out as an outlier, but you just don't take chances with storms like that one. Sure enough we were the bullseye for that storm. I stayed up all night keeping an eye on things. The weather radar showed that the eye went just a little east of our house. We were dead center of that rascal.

I've lived on the Gulf Coast for all but 3 years of my life. During those three Pat and I were stationed at McChord Air Force Base in Tacoma, Washington. You'd think that after all these years, living in a place where I know a hurricane is possible, I would try to keep my little Berry Patch in order so the presence of a storm wouldn't make me scurry like a squirrel burying acorns for the winter... Nope.

So, there I was, for two solid days, gathering up stuff and putting it in the barn. When it is not storm season, it is easy to get complacent, but once that storm hits the Gulf I pay for my complacency.

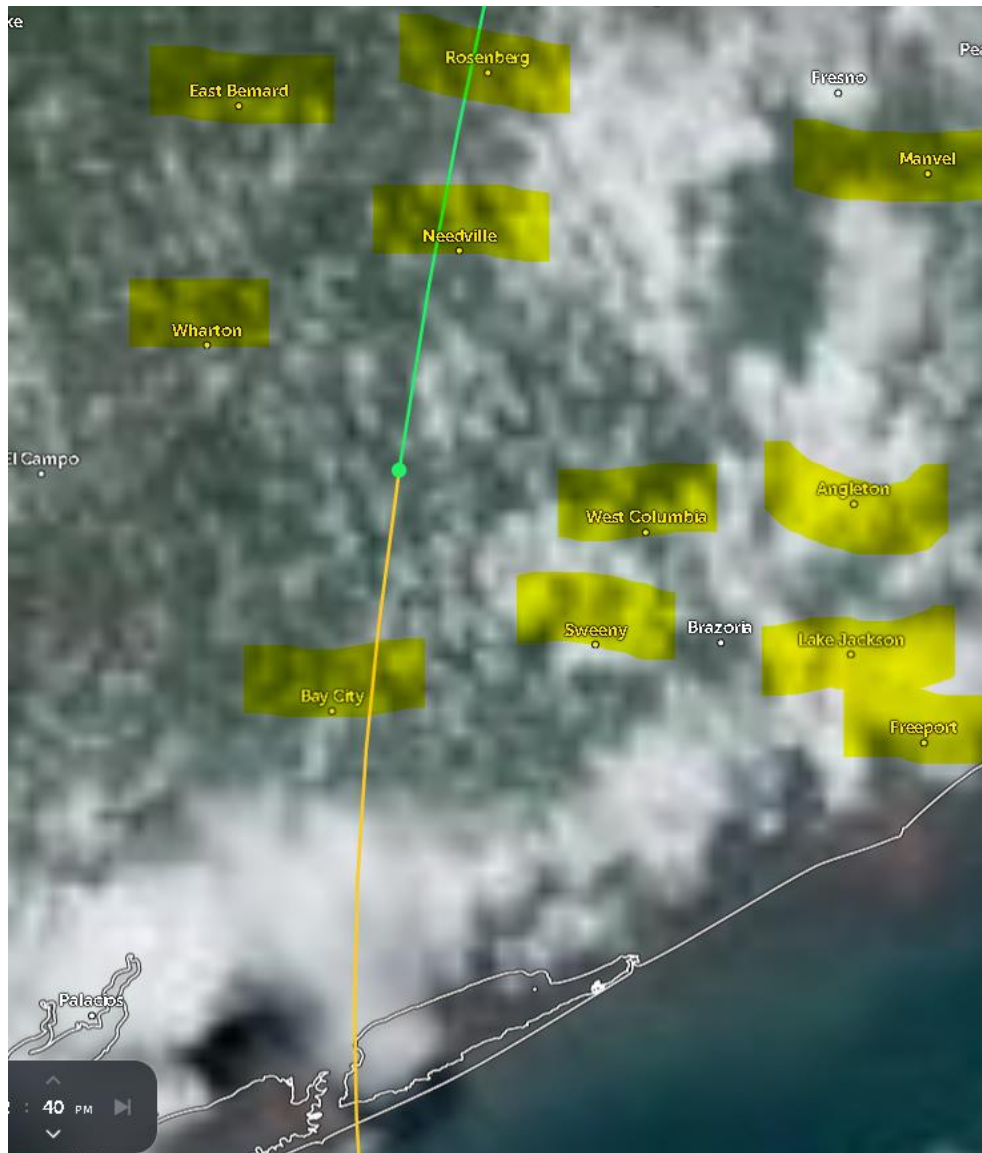
Aren't we like that with The Lord as well? As long as life is good, we have that underlying attitude "I'm OK, Lord, I don't need Your help today". My prayer can be casual, my devotion can be shallow, my service can be haphazard. BUT just let something threaten my perfect little world and I become a fervent pray-er. I double down on my devotion in hopes of finding answers. I spring into action like a wild man.

You know, I think I need to find a happy medium. I need to keep my Berry Patch in order to such a degree that a hurricane in the Gulf requires only some small adjustments instead of days of frantic labor. Come to think of it, I need to do the same thing with my spiritual life. I just want to be steady. I want to be a rock. I want to have steadfast faith.

How do we develop an authentic faith? By learning to trust with our everyday issues. I have told the people in our church that it is important to keep a "Prayer Journal" – a list of prayers that we pray with the answers that The Lord sends. If we don't do this, we won't really think that The Lord answers our prayers that much. If we do this, our Journal will show us over and over that The Lord answers our prayers. If we are confident that The Lord will hear and answer, will we pray more?

Maybe we, like those disciples on the stormy sea with Jesus will say:

“Who then is this? Even the wind and the sea obey Him!” Mark 4:41



*This is the path of the eye of hurricane Beryl.*

Folks let's remember to pray for and lend a hand to all those who have been devastated by Hurricane Beryl. Part of maturity is that we pray as fervently for others as we pray for ourselves.

Let's all seek to build more authentic faith out there in The Berry Patch!