

I told the storm.

I want to remind us of what we have conveniently forgotten and deliberately ignored which is the necessity and beauty of stepping into the lives of the characters we often glance over. Could you imagine what it must have been like to be a disciple of Jesus? I mean not the large crowd but the inner circle, one of the twelve. Imagine Jesus calling you to himself and you feel his strong hand rest on your shoulder, the hand that holds the entire world in his palm. He looks at you and it's as if his eyes are a time capsule, recording history from end to end. You feel the warmth of his breath, exhaling life into your weared soul. And with the eternal frequency of his voice says "follow me", every stride he takes has purpose. As you glance down you witness his feet leaving their mark on the earth's floor, there they are...the very footprints of God. The creator is now walking on his creation and every particle of dust is holy and hallowed ground.

He says "follow me", he leads you to the healing session with the leper and as he stretches out his hand it's like peeling skin from a dead corpse. He leads you to his house party, which is standing room only and displays the power to make a lame man prance like a deer. He gives you front row seats to his theological debates against the pharisees. You have behind the scenes access to the unfiltered and uncut truth of God as he tells you the purpose of parables. Yes, he has led you in the path of righteousness and truth, for there is nothing like, literally, walking with Jesus. And he says one last time "follow me", and this time he leads you into a boat, that leads you to the sea, which inevitably leads you into a storm.

Hmmm, something didn't add up, what do you do when you've lost your breath because something hit the life out of you unexpectedly? What do you do when life was going as planned and following Jesus made since, things were lining up all until that day! I was going to my routine check up when they said cancer. I was quickly checking my work email when the subject line said "cut backs". I thought he was the one for me until he said "I need more time". And now

the foundation, that once seemed so secure, is now shattering beneath your feet and come to find out the one that led you here is asleep, as if he does not care. Can I usher you into this story? For this is where these disciples find themselves and they ask the question that everyone in this room has asked or will ask, "where are you Jesus? And why have you left me here?" This perilous situation happens in Luke 8v22-25, and even in this dangerous situation the disciples are going to teach us two crucial things. First, teaching us what it means to have timely faith. Second, reminding us of who this Jesus really is. I have entitled this message "I told the storm".

You've got to go slowly into this one to appreciate it, Jesus has been preaching all day, the crowds seem to grow by the moment. The magnetism of this wonderful Jesus, for he began to speak in plain language, you and I would call it "parables". Children's eyes widened with excitement, the elderly leaned forward as if to communicate they understood. For Jesus was brilliant, he would take the natural situation and use it as an illustration of the word of God. All of a sudden complex theology became clear to them, he'd been teaching the parable of the sower (the importance of faith falling on good soil) and the parable of a lamp under a jar (this faith/knowledge must but diligently practiced). This narrative is recorded 3x's in the Gospels (Matt. 8, Mark 4, Luke 8), meaning there is something important in this story for us. And it's as if Jesus' eternal stopwatch goes off and he says "speaking of faith, let's get into a boat".

Timely Faith (Luke 8v22-25)

It was said about the Sea of Galilee that it was picturesque, within its banks were pure sweet water, fertile soil, plenty of fish and a pleasing climate. They say it was where nature had taken pride. It's the perfect ambiance for a man who had preached his soul out, to lay back and relax and that's exactly what Jesus did, so much so that he fell asleep. And without a moment's notice a violent wind terrorized the sea! Though the sea of Galilee was a serene place it was surrounded by mountains and the rush of cold air coming over the mountain mixing with the warm air from the sea caused unexpected and sudden violent storms.

These winds could blow between 50mph-125pmh, 74mph wind is considered a hurricane..and you thought to yourself “why these men complaining of a little breeze lol”. But this makes no sense, why are they in a storm? These disciples have only obeyed Jesus and did what he told them to do...let me see if I can make an application point here...you can be walking with Jesus, in fact even dancing in the middle of his perfect and glorious will and still find yourself in a storm (find yourself with your health being at risk, bank account in the negative, drama in your home). Trials do not always come because we are outside of God’s will and while that’s true it’s still a hard pill to swallow, especially for those of us who are suffering. But this should not be a big deal, the disciples were fishermen (7/12) were professional fishermen, they would have sailed this sea hundreds of times and encountered many storms, what’s the big deal? They should have been ready regardless, well this storm seemed to be different, I believe it was ordained by God, why? For nothing happens under heaven without the King's permission, in fact I believe that once Jesus falls asleep the wind quickly ascends to heavens, knocks on the door and asks God “is it ok to blow now?” Nothing happens without God’s permission.

But you know what else is interesting to me? Is that before this incident Christ and his disciples seemed to be on the same page, before he fell asleep they seemed to be of the same mindset, sharing the same emotions...don’t believe me? Let’s go back to **Luke 8v22-23** (he said to “**His** disciples, let **us** go across, so **they** set out and as **they** sailed”). They seemed to be on the same accord, same mind but it’s when Jesus fell asleep that there seems to be a separation. For one party (Jesus) was able to sleep during the storm, for they knew and trusted the power of God. While the other party (disciples) panicked during the storm, for they questioned and didn’t believe God would take care of them. Hear me, rest assure those who trust in the Lord, for they will be able to walk through the valley of death (Ps. 127v2). They will be able to have peace when they should be losing their mind, they will be able to keep putting one foot in front of the other when others would have walked away.

Now it's interesting, while the disciples had Jesus awake with them there seemed to be no need for faith, why? The savior is here, but as soon as his eyes closed and he rested his hands, their faith was put to the test (faith that is not tested is no faith at all)x2. To walk with Jesus, I mean really to walk with him means at times you will walk through the valley, let me remind you of what James 1:1 says "consider pure joy when you face trials of many kinds" '...why? For storms are designed to increase our faith and to have a deeper experience with God (x2). Though they are problems they are problems with a purpose. And now, in Matt. 8v16 says it was evening, pitch black dark, you can't even see your hand in front of your face, hurricane winds toss your shouts for help into the sea and the rain has turned into thousands of needles piercing your flesh. All hope seems lost until you glance over and see Jesus sound asleep, as if the elements have no effect on him and in a last resort to save your life you stumble onto him saying "Master, Master we are perishing!"

Luke makes this a statement but Mark 4v38 makes it a question from the heart "do you not care?" I know many of us would never say it out loud but I do think it's a fair question, in my opinion thus far this is the most disrespectful part of the text. Jesus has intentionally led them straight into a storm and to make matters worse he is asleep and your about to drown. Come on be honest, you've been there...when you've prayed for an answer, you've prayed for help and got nothing...God do you not care? But Matt. 8v26 it says "he rises" ...I've got to preach the full Gospel, this is not the first time Christ had risen for his people, this is not the first time God would display his power on his children's behalf. What about Israel? In bondage for 400 years, did he not rise and tell pharaoh "let his people go". What about when our sin was at it's apex, Jesus would rise from his throne, come down the stairway of heaven, put on flesh and walk a mile in our shoes. Or when he rose out of the Jordan river to live the perfect life in the wilderness for our sake. Even when you and I had no way back to God he would ascend on a cross, where they hung em high and stretched him wide. And the thief questioned him "if you be the Christ, come down from the cross and save yourself and us". And to that taunt Jesus never

said a mumblin word...but the silence seemed to have said “you just wait til Sunday morning, and I’ll show ya that it’s better to rise from a grave then to come down from a cross”. And on schedule he got up with all power in his hands...Jesus Christ is Lord!

There has never been a moment in human history where Christ has not risen for his people and now the most disrespectful part of this text is to have ever questioned “do you care?” **We don’t worship a God who struggles to stand when life hits.** Remember when I asked you, what would it have been like to be a disciple? Well now you’ve just awakened God, as if he was asleep and Jesus tells the wind and waves to literally “be quiet and stay quiet” and the wind came to a screeching halt (wind noise). He looks at them with all power in his hands and say’s **“where is your faith?”** This is where things get interesting, Christ didn’t say what we are accustomed to hearing “oh you of little faith” but rather “where is your faith?” As if to imply that we’ve misplaced it, let me cut straight to it...what profit is there in believing in God if you can’t trust him in your time of need? What’s the value of faith unless you actually use it? Hear me, there is no benefit in trusting God if we can only trust him when life is good. Belief is not worth having if you can’t be certain of it. But I get it, I’ve been there, there are times when the noise and the storms of life drown out the voice of God. The danger I see becomes more real than he is but oftentimes what we see and what we feel makes us poor theologians, meaning that God is good only if I like what I see and if that’s the case then God would never be good because he uses hardships to grow us. The temptation here is to look at what’s in front of us but forget who’s beside us.

Story of the plane ride to Telguicigalpa, Honduras (Pilot’s name Theodis, Ocatavious, John, Blair Waggett). Since this was his profession, he was trained in aviation, I’m not going to panic til he panics. It’s as if the captain knew that this kind of turbulence was normal on these flights. Like the disciples, when life’s hardships come our way; we quickly forget the power and presence of God. We tend to believe that just because we are going through a life threatening situation that that somehow means God does not care. Jesus knows the storms of life are

inevitable BUT that's why he says "you will keep me in perfect peace for my mind is stayed on you for I trust you (Isa. 26:3) It's called timely faith, that even if I am caught off guard with life's storms and circumstances, I am never caught off guard with whom I believe in, for I know that my redeemer liveth. When life hits hard our job is to keep our focus on Jesus the Lord of all. For he shall never leave us nor forsake us, he is a very present help in the time of trouble. So what do I do in these times? Write down the promises of God and pray that God would build up our faith so that when the storms of life come, we are ready and able to keep our eyes fixed on the one who controls the winds and the waves. We need timely faith.

Who is this Jesus? (Luke 8v25)

By now I hope you have found yourself in this scenario, that you have embodied these characters, finding yourself in that small boat. Could you have imagined what it must have been like for them? It has been a day, you went from seeing miracles, hearing heart piercing teachings, to getting into a boat on a beautiful day and now you came within inches of your life. That must have been emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually exhausting. And the conundrum is that fact that at one point your fear was outside the boat, but in v25, now your fear is inside the boat. But why are they afraid? They knew Jesus, they had walked with him, talked with him, ate with him even doing ministry with him, they knew him.

But in v25, maybe they didn't, it says; 's they marveled in fear, why? Because Jesus did something that night that only God can do, he commanded the waves and the sea. In the OT, only God could control the wind and the sea (Ps. 65:7, 89:9). When Jesus spoke, the waves laid down upon his gentle command and the wind curled up and took a nap. Can I just take a moment and remind you of the power of God? That when he speaks things happen, things change. That night was the perfect night to demonstrate his power, that God can simply speak to your situation and like that make the noise and fear subside.

Hear me, what the disciples needed most was not to stop the storm but to hear the voice of God, what you and I need most is not for God to take away our troubles but to know that God is in control (RBJ, not getting out of trouble but what do we get out of trouble, what is God teaching us?). The lesson here was one of faith, that God can be trusted in the most dangerous of situations. Sadly, like the disciples, many of us doubt that God will protect us in our storms but God uses storms to teach us that he can protect us. Rosie always says **God is not in the business of skipping grades**, meaning God will continue to bring up a situation until we learn to trust him. He did it with the disciples, brought them back on the same sea and put them back in the same situation to make sure they knew they could trust him (Matt. 16:33).

Luke writes his Gospel to prove that Jesus really is who he says he is and owe what a blessing to know that this power to control the wind and the waves is used on our behalf and since that's true how dare we think God can not handle our future. Oh the power of God! And after witnessing Jesus tell the storm to be quiet and stay quiet, v25 "there was a calm" meaning the storm did exactly what he told it to do. Instantly they would have known that only God could do this, in that moment what Christ was displaying was "I AM GOD". Could you imagine being in their shoes? I mean you started out your journey with Jesus but you ended your journey with God. And when you see God he sees you, you see his glory, he sees your sin. It's a terrifying thing to realize that you are in the presence of God and Jesus say's "where is your faith?"

The disciples failed to believe that God would protect them, in essence it meant...you really don't know me, in fact the disciples even say "who is this?". This question I believe has two parts to it, one part is rhetorical (Jesus has just shown who he is, God) while the other part is genuine. They loved Jesus but they fully could not understand who he was. In fact many of us love Jesus but have temporarily forgotten who he is, we have temporarily questioned his power. But I was sent here today to remind you of just that, to remind you of who he is. Who is this Jesus? He's God's son, a sinners savior, the centerpiece of civilization, he's unparalleled, he's unprecedented, he is the essence of amazing grace, how sweet the sound, he is everlasting

mercy and unspeakable joy, he is the prince of peace and the Lord of Lords. He is the one who lifted every valley and brought low every mountain, the one made the crooked places straight and the rough places smooth. Who took the captive and set him free and looked at the oppressed and said "let justice roll down like the waters". He is the one who holds the waters in the hollow of his hand and meets out the heavens with a span, who comprehends the dust and weights the mountains on a scale and a hill in the balance, scooped out the seas with the palm of his hand, dug deep the gorges, piled up the hills and propped up the mountains by his will...the moon and the stars lean on his arm.

Who is this? David said that he is the good shepherd, that no matter what we go through he is our comfort and our joy. David says "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" (rest = lie down in green pastures, refreshment = leadeth me beside waters, forgiveness = restoreth my soul, guidance = leads me in paths of righteousness, companionship = walk through the valley, comfort = rod and staff, provision = table before me, joy = anoint my head, anything in life = goodness and mercy, anything in the life to come = dwell in the house of the Lord).

Do not forget who your God is, so do this, go home and write down God's resume. All the things he has done for you, protected you from, provided for you and cared for you and then on a separate sheet of paper write down your storm or problem. Place them side by side and after reading God's resume, you will have the faith to trust in him in your storm. I am trying to get you to see that whenever our problem becomes louder than God's promises we must remember who he is and never forget his power. The sermon is called "I told the storm" because we need to tell our storm who our God is, that he is the creator of all and the master of the sea, that he shall never leave us nor forsake us. Summit church, right now, in this moment tell your storm who your God is.