

5-Day Devotional: Peace in the Storm

Day 1: When the Storm Hits

Scripture: John 6:16-18 *"When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing."*

Reflection: The disciples were experienced fishermen. They knew the Sea of Galilee. They'd been in storms before. Yet this storm caught them off guard in the darkness.

We live in a world where we can predict weather patterns days in advance, but we can't predict when emotional, relational, or spiritual storms will hit our lives. You might be reading this in the middle of a storm right now—maybe it's been brewing for months, or maybe it hit suddenly and caught you completely unprepared.

Notice that the disciples got into the boat at Jesus' direction. Sometimes storms come not because we've done something wrong, but simply because we're following where Jesus has led us. The storm doesn't mean you've missed God's will—sometimes it means you're right in the center of it.

Prayer: Jesus, I confess that I can't always see storms coming in my life. When darkness surrounds me and the winds blow strong, help me to remember that You see me even when I can't see You. Give me strength for today.

Reflection Question: What storm are you facing right now? Have you been trying to predict and prepare for it on your own, or have you brought it to Jesus?

Day 2: The Limits of Our Strength

Scripture: John 6:19a *"When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat."*

Reflection: Three or four miles. The disciples were halfway through their journey—and getting nowhere. They were rowing with all their might, using everything they knew, drawing on all their experience. And still, the wind and waves were winning.

Sometimes God allows us to row and row and row until we realize that our strength, our wisdom, and our experience aren't enough. It's not punishment—it's revelation. We discover what we're really made of, and we discover what we really need.

The apostle Paul learned this truth: *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness"* (2 Corinthians 12:9). Our limitations aren't the end of the story—they're the beginning of discovering God's sufficiency.

What's your Alcatraz? Where have you been swimming upstream, trying with all your might, and feeling like you're going nowhere? That exhaustion you feel isn't a sign that you've failed—it might be exactly where God wants you, ready to see that He is enough.

Prayer: Father, I confess that I've been trying to navigate this storm in my own strength. I've been rowing and rowing, thinking that if I just try harder, work smarter, or push longer, I'll make it through. Help me to see my limitations not as failure but as an invitation to depend on You.

Reflection Question: What would it look like for you to stop rowing today and acknowledge that you need Jesus to carry you through?

Day 3: Jesus Shows Up in the Darkness

Scripture: John 6:19-20 *"When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat. And they were frightened. But he said to them, 'It is I; do not be afraid.'"*

Reflection: In their darkest moment, when they were exhausted and afraid, Jesus came to them. Not in a comfortable way—walking on water in the middle of a storm would terrify anyone—but in a way that revealed His power and presence.

When Jesus said "It is I," He used the phrase *"ego eimi"* in Greek—the same phrase God used with Moses: "I AM." In the middle of their storm, Jesus revealed His divine nature. He is the God who sees, the God who comes, the God who speaks peace into our chaos.

Christ often reveals Himself most clearly in our darkest moments. When everything is going well and life is sunny, we can cruise along thinking we've got it handled. But in the storm, in the dark, when we're exhausted and frightened—that's when we're most ready to see Jesus for who He truly is.

Isaiah 43:2 promises: *"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you."* Not *if* you pass through waters, but *when*. The promise isn't that there won't be storms—the promise is that He will be with you in them.

Prayer: Jesus, open my eyes to see You in this storm. I confess that sometimes I'm so focused on the wind and waves that I miss Your presence. Help me to hear Your voice saying, "It is I; do not be afraid." You are the great I AM, and You are here with me now.

Reflection Question: Where have you seen Jesus showing up in your current circumstances, even if it wasn't in the way you expected?

Day 4: Peace in the Boat

Scripture: John 6:21 *"Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going."*

Reflection: Here's what's remarkable about this moment: the text doesn't say the storm stopped. In other gospel accounts, we read about Jesus calming storms with a word. But here, Jesus gets in the boat and brings them through the storm to safety.

Jesus doesn't always stop our storms. We would love that, wouldn't we? We want Jesus to get in the boat and immediately everything becomes calm and easy. But sometimes Jesus gets in the boat and the storm continues—yet everything changes because He's present with us.

Peace doesn't come from the storm stopping. Peace comes from Jesus being in the boat.

This is the peace that Paul wrote about in Philippians 4:7—*"the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding."* It's a peace that doesn't make sense given our circumstances. It's a peace that guards our hearts and minds even when the external situation hasn't changed.

Have you invited Jesus into your storm? Not just prayed about it from a distance, but actually said, "Jesus, I can't do this alone. I need You in this boat with me. I need You to carry what I cannot carry"?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I invite You into my boat. I've been trying to weather this storm on my own, and I'm exhausted. I don't just need You to fix my circumstances—I need Your presence with me right now. Give me Your peace that surpasses understanding, the peace that comes from knowing You're here with me.

Reflection Question: What would change in your heart and mind if you focused less on when the storm will end and more on experiencing Christ's presence in the middle of it?

Day 5: Pointing Others to Jesus

Scripture: John 6:22-24 *"On the next day, the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples... So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there nor his disciples, they*

themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum seeking Jesus."

Reflection: After the storm, the crowds went looking for Jesus—but not necessarily for the right reasons. They wanted more bread, more miracles, more tangible benefits. They were seeking what Jesus could give them rather than who Jesus is.

When we come through storms, we have a choice. We can point to our own resilience, our own coping mechanisms, our own "umbrellas" that got us through. Or we can point people to Jesus—the One who was present in our darkness, the One who carried us when we couldn't row anymore, the One who gave us peace that didn't make sense.

Your storm—past, present, or future—is not just about you. God can use what you're walking through to point others to the Bread of Life, to the One who offers not just temporary relief but eternal peace.

As you navigate your storm with Jesus in your boat, others are watching. When they ask how you're making it through, what will you tell them? Will you point to Jesus?

Prayer: Father, help me to remember that my storms have purpose beyond my own growth. Use my testimony to point others to You. When people ask how I'm getting through this, give me boldness to share about Your presence, Your peace, and Your faithfulness. May my storm become a signpost pointing to Your glory.

Reflection Question: Who in your life needs to hear about Jesus being present in your storm? How can you share your testimony with them this week?

Blog: When Jesus Gets in Your Boat

Finding Peace When the Storm Won't Stop

We all want the weather app for life's storms.

Imagine pulling out your phone and seeing: "Emotional breakdown coming in 3 days. Relationship crisis expected next Tuesday. Financial storm brewing 10 days out." At least then we could prepare, right? We could batten down the hatches, gather our resources, and brace for impact.

But life doesn't work that way.

The disciples in John 6 were experienced fishermen. They knew the Sea of Galilee like the back of their hands. They'd weathered storms before. But this one caught them off guard—in the darkness, in the middle of their journey, right when they were trying to follow Jesus'

direction to head to Capernaum.

And here's what gets me: they were rowing with everything they had, and they weren't getting anywhere.

Swimming Upstream

I experienced a small taste of this feeling during the Escape from Alcatraz triathlon. I'd trained for over two years (thanks to COVID postponements), studied the currents, practiced my sighting, and prepared as thoroughly as I could. But when I jumped off that ferry boat into the freezing Pacific waters, I found myself swimming upstream against a current I hadn't anticipated.

I swam and swam, sighting those buildings on shore that seemed to never get closer. Thirty minutes in, forty minutes in, and I felt like I was on a swimming treadmill—expending maximum effort and going nowhere. An hour and twenty minutes later, I finally dragged myself to shore, angry and exhausted.

The race had been moved from August to April, which changed the ocean currents completely. I'd been swimming against the flow the entire time.

What's your Alcatraz?

Where in your life are you rowing with all your might and feeling like you're going nowhere? Maybe it's a marriage that keeps struggling despite counseling and prayer. Maybe it's a prodigal child who won't come home. Maybe it's a health battle that won't resolve, a financial situation that won't improve, or an emotional weight that won't lift.

You're doing everything you know to do. You're using all your wisdom, all your experience, all your strength. And you're still stuck in the middle of the sea while the storm rages around you.

The Truth About Our Limitations

Here's what storms do: they reveal our human limitations.

The disciples were professionals. This was their wheelhouse. If anyone should have been able to handle a storm on the Sea of Galilee, it was these guys. But even their expertise wasn't enough.

And that's not a failure—it's a revelation.

Second Corinthians 12:9 tells us, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made*

perfect in weakness." God allows us to reach the end of ourselves so we can discover the sufficiency of Christ. Our limitations aren't the problem—they're the invitation.

We live in a culture that tells us to "be strong," "stay positive," "you've got this." We build bigger boats, better oars, stronger sails. We create elaborate umbrellas of our own design to protect ourselves from the rain. And there's nothing wrong with preparation and wisdom.

But eventually, every single one of us will face a storm that our umbrellas can't handle.

Storms remind us that our strength, wisdom, and experience are not enough. And praise God for that, because it's in that realization that we become ready to see Jesus.

Jesus in the Darkness

After rowing three or four miles—halfway through their journey and getting nowhere—the disciples saw something that terrified them: a figure walking on the water in the darkness, coming toward their boat.

And then they heard His voice: *"It is I; do not be afraid."*

In Greek, Jesus said *"ego eimi"*—"I AM." The same name God gave Moses at the burning bush. In the middle of their storm, in their darkest moment, Jesus revealed His divine nature. He showed up not to lecture them about their fear, but to remind them of His presence.

Here's a truth that will change everything: **Christ often reveals Himself most clearly in our darkest moments.**

When life is sunny and easy, we tend to cruise along thinking we've got things handled. But in the storm? In the dark? When we're exhausted and frightened and at the end of ourselves? That's when we're most ready to truly see Jesus for who He is.

Isaiah 43:2 promises: *"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you."*

Not *if* you pass through waters. *When.*

The promise isn't that there won't be storms. The promise is that He will be with you in them.

The Peace That Doesn't Make Sense

Here's where the story takes an interesting turn. John 6:21 says, *"Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going."*

Notice what the text doesn't say: it doesn't say the storm stopped.

In other gospel accounts, we read about Jesus calming storms with a word. But here, Jesus gets in the boat and brings them through the storm to their destination. The circumstances may not have changed, but everything changed because Jesus was present.

Peace doesn't come from the storm stopping. Peace comes from Jesus being in the boat.

This is the peace Paul wrote about in Philippians 4:7—the peace of God that surpasses all understanding. It's a peace that doesn't make sense given your circumstances. It's a peace that guards your heart and mind even when the external situation hasn't changed.

We want Jesus to calm our storms. But sometimes Jesus gets in the boat and says, "I'm going to carry you through this storm instead."

And honestly? That might be an even greater miracle. Because when Jesus calms the storm immediately, we learn about His power. But when Jesus carries us through the storm, we learn about His presence. We learn what it means to have Him with us in the darkness. We learn that His grace really is sufficient.

The Invitation

So here's the question this story asks us: **Have you invited Jesus into your boat?**

Not just prayed about your storm from a distance. Not just asked Him to fix it or stop it or make it easier. But actually invited Him to be present with you in the middle of it?

Maybe you're in a storm right now. Maybe you've been rowing for three days or three months or three years, and you're exhausted. You feel like you're getting nowhere. The wind is strong, it's dark, and you're scared.

Jesus is walking toward you in your storm saying, *"It is I; do not be afraid."*

He's not asking you to row harder. He's not critiquing your technique. He's simply offering His presence.

Will you invite Him into your boat?

You don't have to have it all figured out. You don't have to be strong or have the right words. You just have to be honest: "Jesus, I can't do this on my own. I need You. Get in my boat. I need You to carry what I cannot carry."

After the Storm

One more thing: when the disciples made it to shore and the crowds came looking for Jesus,

it was an opportunity to point others to Him. Your storm—past, present, or future—is not just about you.

When you come through a storm with Jesus in your boat, people notice. They see a peace that doesn't make sense. They see endurance they can't explain. They see hope in the middle of hopeless circumstances.

And they want to know your secret.

You can point to your umbrellas—your coping mechanisms, your strategies, your own resilience. Or you can point them to Jesus. You can say, "Let me tell you about the One who got in my boat. Let me tell you about the One who carried me when I couldn't row anymore. Let me tell you about the peace that comes not from the storm stopping, but from His presence."

It Is Well

There's a hymn that the church has sung for generations: "It Is Well With My Soul." It was written by Horatio Spafford after he lost his four daughters in a shipwreck. In the midst of unimaginable grief, he penned these words:

*When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

That's the peace Jesus offers. Not a life without storms, but a presence in the storms. Not the promise that the seas will always be calm, but the promise that He will be in the boat with you when they're not.

Your storm may not stop today. It may not stop tomorrow. But Jesus is walking toward you in the darkness, saying, *"It is I; do not be afraid."*

Will you invite Him into your boat?

Jesus, I invite You into my storm. I've been trying to navigate this on my own, and I'm exhausted. I don't just need You to fix my circumstances—I need Your presence with me right now. Give me Your peace that surpasses understanding. Be in my boat. Amen.