

## Finding God in the Storm

- 1) Define types of storms:
  - a. Sickness – Cancer, Pain, Illness, ect.....
  - b. Loss of Employment
  - c. Loss of a loved one
  - d. Relationship issues

### When we don't understand:

We often ask why things happen the way they do. We quite often blame God. We simply do not understand why God would allow this to happen to me. Ultimately we must come to the place where we are OK with not understanding.

Luke 18 31-34

*31 Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. 32 For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. 33 They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again. 34 But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken."*

**Lord, I choose to trust that you are bigger than this storm, and I choose to trust you in it.**

When the storms hit, we often shift our focus. We focus on what people or the enemy is doing, on the wrongs done, and the darkness that seems to loom and have power. We tend to give more power to the storm and the effects it has on us than God and His promises.

But, to trust God in the storm, look at Jesus instead.

- Focus on the promises He's made you.
- Focus on what He has spoken to your heart in prayer.
- Focus on what He has already done.

We can actually rest in the storm when we trust God.

knowing that God is bigger than these storms, and whether we see Him working or not, He will carry us through to the other side of it.

God will often use trials and tribulation to refine us, to make us into the image of Christ. In the dictionary, "Refine" means several things:

1. to reduce to a pure state, as with sugar, metal, or oil

2. to free from moral imperfection
3. to improve by pruning or polishing
4. to free from what is coarse, vulgar, or uncouth, as with a refined person.

The Bible speaks of refining as God purifying His chosen.

Proverbs 17:3

*Metal is refined and purified in a furnace; the Lord purifies and tests the heart.*

Malachi 3:2-4

*He is like a refiner's fire and like launderers' soap. 3He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the Lord An offering in righteousness. 4"Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem Will be pleasant to the Lord,*

Isaiah 1:25

*He is like a refiner's fire and like launderers' soap. 3He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the Lord An offering in righteousness. 4"Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem Will be pleasant to the Lord,*

Isaiah 48:10-11

*10Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. 11For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do it;*

Jeremiah 9:7

*7Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts: "Behold, I will refine them and try them;*

Zachariah 13:9

*9 I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; and each one will say, 'The Lord is my God.' "*

This being said we can better understand why God will allow storms in our lives. However, we need to see Him in the storm. We need to know and trust that he will get us through it and it will work for our good. As scriptures tell us:

Romans 8:28

*<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*

So how do we learn to trust God and rest in the storm?

There is a basic formula for finding God in the storm.

4 Elements of the Storm:

- 1) Hearing
- 2) Faith
- 3) Surrender
- 4) Action

Lets take a closer look at each of these element

## Hearing:

There is a difference between hearing and listening.

The definition of listening is defined as:

to pay attention to sound.

Whereas hearing is defined as:

The faculty of perceiving sounds.

So we can see that we need to hear what God is saying and not to simply listen to what He is saying. There are many ways that we can hear God. He communicates through many different methods. Here are just a few of the ways God speaks to us:

- 1) Read the Bible- God's Word is the primary way He communicates with us. By reading and meditating on His Word, we will become more familiar with His voice and His ways.

### **2 Timothy 3:16-17,**

*"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that you may be complete, equipped for every good work."*

- 2) Pray- Prayer is a two-way conversation with God. Take time to be still and listen for His voice after you pray.

### **Psalm 46:10,**

*"Be still, and know that I am God."*

The Hebrew word for still is "Rapa". Which can be translated to sink down, to relax, withdraw, to abandon.

This will lead us to the 3rd element of our storm formula release. Which we will discuss in a bit.

The Hebrew word for KNOW is “Yada” yaw-dah. Which translates into to perceive, find out and discern. To know by experience.

It is a verb as well which speaks of us knowing God and His character.

- 3) Listen to Godly counsel- Seek out wise and mature Christians whom you trust, and ask them for their thoughts on a particular matter or situation.

**Proverbs 11:14,**

*"Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety."*

- 4) Observe the world around you- Sometimes God speaks to us through the circumstances and events of our lives. Look for patterns or connections that seem to point to His guidance or direction.

**Romans 8:28,**

*"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."*

- 5) Be open and receptive- God can speak to you in many different ways, but you need to be open and receptive to hearing His voice. Sometimes His message might come through a dream, a song, a verse of Scripture, or even a conversation with a stranger. So, stay alert and open to His leading.

**John 10:27,**

*"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."*

- 6) Test the spirits- If you think you've heard from God, make sure it lines up with Scripture and that it produces good fruit in your life.

**Thessalonians 5:21,**

*"Test everything; hold fast what is good."*

So we need to ensure that we are hearing God and His message to us. The next element is “Faith”.

## Faith

Scriptures tell us that it is our faith that pleases God:

Hebrews 11:6:

*And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*

We have a tendency to focus on the storm instead of God and His promises. Instead of trusting God , we worry. Jesus tells us in Matthew chapter 6 to not be anxious.

Matthew 6:25, 34

*25 "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"*

*34 "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."*

Hebrews 11:1

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*

Proverbs 3:5-6

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*

Jeremiah 29:11

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

Luke 1:37

*For nothing will be impossible with God."*

1 Corinthians 10:13

*No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*

1 Corinthians 2:5

*So that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*

Romans 12:3

*For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.*

Ephesians 6:16

*In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;*

James 1:6

*But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.*

God will use trials to test and strengthen our faith.

James 1:3

*For you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.*

1 Timothy 6:12

*Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*

Romans 1:17

*The righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."*

Romans 5:1

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

James 2:14-26

*What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works?*

This speaks of us truly believing that God is in the trial. We must act in faith and believe.

We must overcome the world that wants us to blame God in the storm. Through faith in God, His promises and His ability to walk us through the storm for our good.

This leads us to the next element “Release”

## Release:

A great verse to lean on when we are not trusting God in the storm is:

Proverbs 3:5

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding*

1 John 5:4

*For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.*

Luke 9:23

*And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*

Galatians 5:24

*And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

2 Timothy 2:11

*The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him;*

John 12:24

*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.*

2 Corinthians 5:17

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

Mark 8:35

*For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.*

Romans 6:11

*So, you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

Romans 12:2

*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Romans 12:2

*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

This scripture tells us that by the transforming of our minds we will be able to release our strangle hold on this worldly thinking and its devastating effects on our minds in the midst of the storm.

2 Corinthians 4:7-9

*7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. 8 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—*

This message of release can be summed up in this scripture:

Matthew 6:33

*But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

Once we have released the rights to our mind and bodies we can begin to take actions that will sustain us through the trials.

## Action:

We will look at Bible events of Faith in action. Ordinary people who believed and acted on their faith:

Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-12

*<sup>4</sup> By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks*



<sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because God had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. <sup>6</sup> But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

<sup>7</sup> By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; <sup>10</sup> for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

<sup>11</sup> By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

Mark 10:52

And Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

Matthew 15:22-28

<sup>22</sup> And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed.”

<sup>23</sup> But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, “Send her away, for she cries out after us.” <sup>24</sup> But He answered and said, “I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” <sup>25</sup> Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, “Lord, help me!” <sup>26</sup> But He answered and said, “It is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.” <sup>27</sup> And she said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.” <sup>28</sup> Then Jesus answered and said to her, “O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

Hebrews 11:7

By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

Philippians 4:13

*I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*

To get through the storms and have actions in line with the will of God, we must understand that it is Christ in us that gives us the strength to get through the storm with joy. As James tells us:

James 1:2

*My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.*

We will look at two biblical events that define our response in trials. The first is Paul's healing of the lame man in Lystra:

Acts 14:8-10

*<sup>8</sup> And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. <sup>9</sup> This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, <sup>10</sup> said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked.*

There are two elements about this miracle that we will discuss:

- 1) The crippled man heard the Gospel and believed it, He was not physically healed at the moment he was believed
- 2) his faith didn't heal him until he acted out his faith

Bible faith is believing the Word of God and acting upon the Word because you know that it is true. Bible faith is not just believing the Word and saying that you believe the Word without acting on what the Word says.

So, what causes a change in our situation is our faith acted out, or expressed, not just what we believe.

The second event was an actual storm that occurred in

Matthew 8: 18, 23-26

*18 And when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side.*

*23 Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. 24 And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. 25 Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We*

*are perishing!"* 26 But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

Hearing - First, we see that Jesus told them depart to the other side. They undoubtedly did not hear Him.

Faith – The disciples did not trust the words of Jesus as he said that they would get to the other side. Instead they chose to act in the flesh.

Release – They refused to react in faith and chose to freakout in the flesh.

Action -If they would have trusted God and his word they would have been able to relax in the situation trusting that God would be faithful to His word and that they would get to the other side.

A key to surviving trials is given to us in Psalm 23:4

Psalm 23:4

*Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*

I want to leave you with this poem:

Footprints

One night I dreamed a dream.  
As I was walking along the beach with my Lord.  
Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.  
For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand,  
One belonging to me and one to my Lord.

After the last scene of my life flashed before me,  
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.  
I noticed that at many times along the path of my life,  
especially at the very lowest and saddest times,  
there was only one set of footprints.

This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it.  
"Lord, you said once I decided to follow you,  
You'd walk with me all the way.  
But I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life,  
there was only one set of footprints.  
I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You would leave me."

He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you  
Never, ever, during your trials and testings.  
When you saw only one set of footprints,  
It was then that I carried you."

Know that you will one day stand on the other side of this storm, and will be stronger  
and more confident in God to carry you through.

The storm wants you to give up, give in, blame God and not move forward.

But when you stand through the storm through trusting, focusing on Jesus and resting in  
Him, you will come out on the other side of this, stronger than before, more confident in  
God to keep His promises to you, and carry with you that you have seen the provision  
and deliverance of the Lord.

Let's Pray