

“When you come out of the storm, you won't be the same person who walked in.” --Haruki Murakami

The disciples were alone in the *storm* for nine tempestuous hours.

Long enough for more than one disciple to ask, *“Where is Jesus? He knows we are in the boat. For heaven's sake, it was his idea. Is God anywhere near?”*

And from within the *storm* comes an unmistakable voice:

Matthew 14:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, *“Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.”*

“Take courage! I am here! Don't be afraid!” (Matthew 14:27, literal translation).

From the center of the *storm*, the unwavering Jesus shouts, *“I am...”*

- ...Bold against the Galilean waves.
- ...Tall in the Trade Tower wreckage, ...ICU, Battlefield, Boardroom, Prison cell, Or maternity ward--whatever your storm, **“I am.”**

Christ comes astride the waves and declares the words engraved on every wise heart: **“Take Courage! I am here! Don't be afraid!”**

With that in mind, I would like to share with you today:

“KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PILOT OF LIFE”

Scripture Reading: Matthew 14:22-33

[Illus] If He's your *Co-Pilot*—you better move over and give Him the controls!

In this passage of Scripture, we find the disciples of our Lord trapped in the grip of a fierce *storm*.

They find themselves in that *storm*, because they have been commanded by the Lord to cross the Sea of Galilee, **v. 22**.

These men are in the will of the Lord and yet, we see them struggling against the *storm*. Try as they might, however, it appears that they are unable to make any headway.

While the *storms* of life are never pleasant, they do produce certain benefits in our lives that we would do well to make note of this evening.

Hebrews 12:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

I would like for us to join the disciples this evening in their *storm*.

As we do, I want to show you that the *storms* of life contain some **hidden blessings** for the children of God.

I do not know what kind of *storm* you are facing this evening, but I do know that the Lord has a purpose in allowing that *storm* to rage in your life.

Perhaps that purpose will become clear this evening as I preach for a while on **Keep Your Eyes On The Pilot Of Life** and we extract from this sermon some of the **hidden blessings** in the *storms* of life!

I. **STORMS ARE GOD'S MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION—V. 25**

Notice how Jesus came to them that night:

A. **He Comes In The Face Of Darkness** –

The Bible says that Jesus came to them in "*the fourth watch*". Sometime between 3 AM and 6 AM, during the darkest hours of the night, Jesus came walking on the water!

Let me remind you that even in the *darkest* hours of life God is still God and He is still in **control** of your life.

1 Kings 8:12 (NKJV)

¹²Then Solomon spoke: "The LORD said He would dwell in the dark cloud.

Psalms 139:11-12 (NKJV)

¹¹If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me;

¹²Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light *are* both alike to You.

Even the *darkest* hours of life cannot hide you from the face of God. He is there even when you cannot see Him.

B. **He Comes In The Face Of Disaster** –

The disciples were in a fight for their lives. **Mark 6:48** says that they were "*toiling in rowing*".

That is, they were struggling against the storm.

I get the impression that these men were afraid for their lives.

Remember, He may not keep you from going into the *storm*, but He will keep you amid the *storm*!

Think of the 3 Hebrews, Daniel, and Noah.

God did not prevent any of these from going into the *storm*, but He saved them all amid their *storms*.

What He did for them; He will do for you!

C. **He Comes On The Face Of The Deep** –

The very thing the disciples feared, the raging **sea**, was the very thing God used as His vehicle to come to them.

What a testimony this was!

He was not telling them that the *storm* was not fierce; He was telling them that He was greater than the *storm*!

II. **STORMS ARE GOD'S MEANS OF TESTING**—**Vv. 25-31**

A. **They Reveal The Savior** - **Vv. 25-27**

When Jesus came walking on the water, the disciples did not recognize Him. They thought He was a ghost.

They cried out in fear. But thank God, Jesus came with a message of **peace** and of **power**.

He came to them with a **positive** word, "*be of good cheer*."

He came to them with a **powerful** word, "*It is I*".

He came to them with a **peaceful** word, "*be not afraid*."

1. A Positive Message –

[**Illus**]: They were still in the storm when He told them to cheer up. By His power, the Son of God can give us **positive encouragement** and reinforcement amid our storms!

2. A Powerful Message –

When Jesus showed up, He came declaring His identity. "*It is I*", is an emphatic personal pronoun.

It is the same statement Jesus used when He said, "*I am the door*"; "*I am the way, the truth and the life*." "*I am the bread of life*"; "*I am the good shepherd*".

Do you get the picture? Jesus is telling His Disciples to "*cheer up, God is here!*"

3. A Peaceful Message –

Jesus also issued a command to His disciples: "*be not afraid*."

This statement literally reads, "*You stop fearing and don't you ever fear again*."

You see, if we can ever get hold of the fact that Jesus is in control of every area of our lives, that He is God, and that He possesses all power, then we can come to that place where we can trust Him fully through all the *storms* of life.

The *storms* of life are a blessing because they reveal the Savior in a brand-new way.

B. **They Refine The Saint** – **Vv. 28-29**

When Peter heard that it was the Lord, Peter wanted to join Jesus in walking on the water.

Jesus simply told Peter to come.

Peter obeyed and he too walked on the water.

Jesus used the *storm* as a means of helping Peter grow in the faith.

C. **They Remind The Saint** – **Vv. 30-31**

Peter wanted to walk on water like Jesus.

He put the Lord to the test and stepped onto the waves.

However, he soon took his eyes off the Lord and when he did, he found himself in trouble.

He remembered Who was in control and he called on the Lord and found the help he needed.

[Illus] The *storms* of life also serve to remind us of Who is in control.

III. **STORMS ARE GOD'S MEANS OF TESTIMONY** – **Vv. 32-33**

A. **They Testify of His Power** –

Jesus calmed the *storm*! He didn't say a thing, He just got into the boat with the disciples, and the sea was calm.

[Illus] One day, He'll do the same in your life!

The *storm* will rage until it has accomplished His purpose and then He will cause the winds to cease for you.

B. **They Testify of His Person** –

When Jesus stilled the *storm*, the disciples knew that they were in the presence of God.

They confessed to Him, and they bowed before Him in worship.

His power in the *storms* and over the *storms* of life testifies of His person.

[**Illus**] Here is a secret to making the *storm* much more bearable for you: Don't wait until the *storm* is **over** to bow before Him.

- Bow now, while the waves are still threatening your boat.
- Bow now, while the winds are still contrary to you.
- Don't wait until blue skies are seen to humble yourself before the Lord.

Nothing reveals your faith in the Lord more than you being willing to accept His will and love Him, even when things look the worst to you.

Bow before Him, it honors the Lord!

Conclusion:

- Sometimes, it is hard to see the blessings we have for the *storm* in front of us, isn't it?
- Sometimes it is hard to imagine the Lord bringing any good out of what you are going through.
- I don't know the nature of the *storm* you are facing this evening, but I know the **One** Who still walks on the waves.
- I know that if you bring your need to **Him**, He will hear you and He will help you today.
- Who knows, He might just show up this evening striding on your storm.
- If you need help from the wave walker, and **The Pilot Of Life**, then this altar is open.
- Bring your need to Jesus and let Him have His way in your life. Will you do that right now?

Prayer: Our Heavenly Father, help those who are in a *storm* this evening.

As you reminded me this afternoon in prayer, I realize that some are like Jonah and in a *storm* because of their own disobedience to you and their sin! May they confess and get right, and the *storm* will cease!

But some dear Father, are like these disciples—they are in Your will and trying their best to obey you!

May they realize that the *storm* You have sent them is for their good and Your glory!

May they **Keep Their Eyes On The Pilot of Life** and walk on their *storm* with you.

In Jesus' name, Amen!

Invitation Hymn: (old) # 55 “*hand In Hand With Jesus*” (1,2,4 verses)

OBC-A.M. 9/27/09
WHBC-Wed. 7/30/25