

SECURITY IN THE STORM #4

I. Introduction

I want to continue our timely teaching series on “Security in the Storm” with a message on...

“Withstanding the Storms of Life”

What does it mean to ‘withstand’?

Withstand

To remain undamaged or unaffected by; to stand or hold out against; to resist successfully.

Jesus specifically spoke about “Withstanding the Storms of Life” at the end of His famous “Sermon on the Mount”, recorded in the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of the Gospel of Matthew.

The Sermon on the Mount is the greatest sermon ever preached by the greatest Preacher who ever lived; we spent a whole year teaching it verse by verse in our series on “The Normal Christian Life”.

It contains the Beatitudes, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Golden Rule; but it ends with a warning! A comparison of 2 men who each built a house; each house was hit by a storm; one house withstood the storm; the other house fell.

Matthew 7:24-25

"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

Matthew 7:26-27

"But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

Takeaway For Today

The only way to withstand the storms of life is by hearing and doing what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount!

Preview

I want to show you 7 sayings from the Sermon on the Mount that we must hear and do to withstand the storm.

7 SAYINGS WE MUST HEAR AND DO TO WITHSTAND THE STORM

1. Put away anger
2. Put away immorality
3. Put away showy religion
4. Put away unforgiveness
5. Put away a critical spirit
6. Put away wrong conceptions of God
7. Put away wrong conceptions of salvation

II. Hearing and Doing These 7 Sayings of Jesus

A. First Saying: Put Away Anger

1. The first thing deals with is the problem of *unrighteous anger*.

Matthew 5:21-22

"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.

a. Paraphrase: "You know the Old Testament says 'Thou shalt not kill'. But I say to you the root of murder is unrighteous anger.

b. The Old Testament commandment focused on the outward act: 'Thou shalt not kill'; but the New Testament goes farther. It deals with the heart 'root' of all murder, which is unrighteous anger.

2. *You will not be able to withstand the storms of life if you can't get a handle on your anger.*

a. Not only the angry outbursts of yelling and screaming; the inner anger, a smoldering need for revenge or a strong resentment that needs to get even.

b. Unrighteous anger destroys relationships!

- It can split churches
- It can split a marriage
- It can separate children from their parents

3. Anger can *simmer* in the soul; or it can *erupt* at a moment's notice; often with foul language!

Colossians 3:8

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

4. Unrighteous anger will not only defile you, it will defile those around you!

Hebrews 12:14-15

Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; *lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled...*

a. Testimony: angry words 'defile' others!

5. The Apostle James tells us that unrighteous anger can ruin our witness.

James 1:19-20

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

6. All anger is not forbidden; there is such a thing as righteous anger.

a. Psalm 7:11 says "God is a righteous judge and He is angry with the wicked every day.

b. Jesus was angry when He cleansed the Temple, driving out the moneychangers with a whip of cords.

7. The Apostle Paul tells us...

Ephesians 4:26-27

Be ye angry and sin not; neither let the sun go down on your wrath; neither give place to the devil.

- a. All anger is not wrong; there is an anger that is not sin (holy anger)
- b. But anger must not abide; it must be dealt with before day's end
- c. Why? Because unrighteous anger 'gives place to the devil'!

8. Unrighteous anger 'gives place to the devil', the one Jesus said comes to 'kill, steal and destroy!

9. Unrighteous anger is like toxic waste; it builds up until it oozes out and makes people sick.

a. The late John Osteen told the story of a medical missionary who went to a town where people were dying like flies and no one knew why. The finally figured it was the water; so they went upstream and divers went down to the source and found a mother pig and piglets that had drowned and poisoned the water downstream.

b. Anger poisons the stream at the source and makes people sick when they drink it.

John Osteen

"Unrestrained anger poisons people. You need to find your pigs!"

10. Unrighteous anger is a form of unforgiveness; and the problem with anger is that you become a prisoner of the one you're angry at.

Booker T. Washington

"I will never let any man's wrath reduce me to the level of hatred."

11. Jesus said we can only withstand the storm by hearing and doing what He says. Unrestrained anger can bring the whole house down. We can't afford it.

a. The famous American steel tycoon Andrew Carnegie told this story about his trip to the home of the grizzly bear, Yellowstone National Park.

Andrew Carnegie

"The grizzly bear can tear up any animal. One night one came near our camp but a skunk came too. The grizzly could whip the skunk but he didn't. He left it alone because the cost was too high."

12. Unrighteous anger ruins true religion. Jesus said anger can bring us into judgment...

Matthew 5:23-24

Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

a. Testimony: Many times I've found myself in the middle of 2 Christians angry at each other. I show them what Jesus said and they agree. But they don't act on it. They know they need to make it right but they're willing to let it lay. But Jesus says, No! Unresolved anger is so bad it ruins true religion.

b. "First be reconciled"; do it now!

Matthew 5:25-26

Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him in the way, or he may hand you over to the officer and you may be thrown in prison. I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

13. We live in an angry culture. A violent culture. People will sue you. Or shoot you. But we can't afford to be like them! It costs too much.

14. If we cannot put away our anger we cannot withstand the storm.

B. Second Saying of Jesus: Put Away Sexual Immorality

Matt 5:27-28

You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

1. Jesus is continuing to follow a pattern of comparing the Old Testament commandments and life in His Kingdom:

a. First He said; "You have heard of old 'Thou shalt not kill'; but I say unto you, 'You shall not be angry with your brother'.

b. Now He says: “You have heard of old, ‘Thou shalt not commit adultery’; but I say unto you that if you look at woman with lust you have already committed adultery with her in your heart.”

c. Jesus did not come to do away with the moral law contained in the 10 commandments; He came to ‘fulfil’ it! The righteousness required is not just external behavior, it deals with the heart!

2. This is really relevant to us today because we live in a culture that is saturated with lustful looking! (Lust is always connected to the eyes; to what we look at). When it comes to adultery, looking is as good as doing!

a. Testimony: I asked a Christian man once why he committed adultery. He quoted this scripture and said since he had already done it in his heart he might as well do it in the flesh! Brother!

b. Sexual sin is very serious sin.

1 Corinthians 6:15-17

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh."

c. Many young people sleep around, never realizing they are creating ‘soul ties’ with their sex partner-soul ties that can keep them bound up for years.

Pastor John Osteen

“When you go to bed with somebody you go to bed with everybody they ever went to bed with.”

3. The problem of pornography is wrecking marriages and defiling our land. And Christians aren’t immune.

CNS NEWS 8/27/15

(CNS New is a politically conservative news/commentary website)

Addiction to pornography affects millions of men and women in the United States, and many of those people identify themselves as Christians, according to a 2014 survey produced by a Christian organization dedicated to fighting pornography and sexual addiction.

And then there is this bombshell...--In some instances, Christian pornography use is higher than non-Christian.

a. 68% of Christian men view pornography on a regular basis.
(Christian pollster George Barna puts it at 64%) Either way it's about 2 out of 3!

4. Testimony of my pastoral experience with the destructive power of pornography.

Matthew 5:29-30

29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

a. It's a mistake to take this literally. (Some have!)

5. Jesus is using the strongest possible language to warn of the seriousness of the issue:

- If your eye is full of lust you'd be better off plucking it out than letting it take your whole body to hell
- If your right hand is causing you to sin, you'd be better cutting it off than to let it take your whole body to hell

6. How is it we don't hear more on this??? Do we really take it seriously or not?

Review

1. Put away unrighteous anger
2. Put away immorality

C. Third Saying of Jesus: Put Away "Showy" Religion

1. This one begins with a warning!

Matt 6:1-2

"Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you

as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

2. Here Jesus warns us to put away the kind of religion, even charitable deeds, that is done to be “seen by men”.

3. Jesus was referring to the Scribes and Pharisees, the religious leaders of His day, the ones who actually sounded a trumpet to attract attention to their spirituality. He called them ‘hypocrites’, a word that means ‘play actors’. I love the Message Bible paraphrase here:

Matthew 6:1 The Message Bible

Be especially careful when you are trying to be good so that you don't make a performance out of it. It might be good theater, but the God who made you won't be applauding.

Matthew 6:3-4

But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

4. He tells us to put away showy religion when we pray:

Matthew 6:5

And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

Matthew 6:6-7

But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.

5. He tells us to put away showy religion when we fast:

Matthew 6:16-18

Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be

fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

a. I have wondered about pastors and ministry leaders who announce they're going on a 40 day fast; they put it in their magazine and post daily diaries of each day they are fasting. Jesus seems to say it would do more good if they'd do it all without having to tell everyone.

b. Some ministers love photo ops with famous people so they can post them on their websites. Others continually drop names of celebrities they know so we will know how important they are.

c. Then there are the movie stars and singers who wear big crosses on stage when they receive their rewards; often people who live ungodly lifestyles. I asked God about it and He said:

“It is better to wear My cross in your heart than to wear it around your neck.”

6. The bottom line: Any religious thing we do to “be seen of men” will only be rewarded by men; but if we practice our piety in secret, ‘the Father who sees in secret will reward us openly’!

III. Review and Close

A. Are You a Wise or Foolish Builder?

1. Are you a ‘wise’ builder? Are you building your life on ‘hearing and doing’ these ‘sayings of Jesus’? Or are you a foolish builder? Are you building your life on ‘hearing’ but not ‘doing’ these sayings of Jesus?

2. Either way, the storm will reveal it! Those who ‘hear and do these sayings’ have a house that can withstand the storm! We looked at 3 of 7 sayings:

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3. We will finish this message next week. Meanwhile, know that as a Pastor, I want you to live in a house that can withstand the storm!

Title Slide

Closing Prayer

Offering

Just before he died, Colonel Harlan Sanders, the Founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken, was asked why he gave \$2 million to Christian missions...

Colonel Harlan Sanders

“There’s no reason to be the richest man in the cemetery. You can’t do any business from there.”

Jesus told us to ‘lay up treasure in heaven, where moth and rust cannot corrupt’. There is no safer place for our treasure than investing in the advancement of the Kingdom of God! We thank you for your support of this ministry!

Closing Prayer

DEVOTIONAL #1

Coping With A Pandemic

Last week I came across an article in our Nashville newspaper...

“How Do We Cope With A Pandemic?”

Tennessean 4/10/20

It was interesting to see how the secular world is dealing with the problem.

“Psychologists say uncertainty is unsettling because human nature demands predictability. People count on it in daily life, in the structures around them to function. When they don’t have it, they can become uncomfortable and insecure.”

It’s amazing how the storm of the Corona virus is forcing society to deal with some of the great questions of life...

Can we be certain about anything?

How can we really predict when all this will end?

The lack of security and certainty is causing psychological problems. The article quotes...

Dr. Melanie Greenburg, Psychologist

“The Stress Proof Brain”

“The things we rely on for stability in our lives are all under siege. Our brains are designed to predict what comes next and to try to prepare for it. Right now the response isn’t clear.”

The one thing that is clear, even to the mental health people, is that there is a metaphysical benefit here...

Nancy Colier, Psychotherapist

“This uncertain time offers people the space to grow more certain about who they are and who they want to be. To watch what crumbles, to see what remains.”

I’m in the middle of a series of messages on “Security in the Storm”; how the Bible believer can be sheltered in the peaceful protection of God.

Isaiah 26:3

**You (God) will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You,
because he trusts in You.**

Falling short of ‘perfect peace’ tells us our minds are not ‘stayed on God’; we’ve allowed the circumstances to make us feel uncertain and insecure.

Philippians 4:6-7

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

I want to pray...

“Lord, keep us in perfect peace; teach us to keep our minds stayed upon you; teach us to trust you in a deeper way than we’ve ever know before! In Jesus name,
Amen!

DEVOTIONAL #2

“The Perfect Storm”

I hope you are following our new teaching series on “**Security in the Storm**”, a series of messages the Lord has given me to minister during these terrible times. In the closing verses of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus speaks of 2 men who each built a house; and both of which were tested by a terrible storm...

Matthew 7:24-25

"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

Matthew 7:26-27

"But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the

floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

Many years ago the Lord called my attention to the nature of the storm:

The 'Perfect' Storm

- The rain descended
- The flood came
- The wind blew and beat on the house

I believe 'rain' speaks of storms that originate in heaven. Most storms come from the heavens so these are the storms that God allows in our lives.

Psalm 107:25

For He commands and raises the stormy wind, which lifts up the waves of the sea.

Jonah ran from God and God raised a stormy wind to bring him back...

Psalm 148:7-8

**Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all the depths;
Fire and hail, snow and clouds; stormy wind fulfilling His word.**

Then Jesus says 'the flood came'; floods rise up from beneath and I believe the flood here speaks of demonic attacks from the lower world

Isaiah 59:19

When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.

The stormy rain comes from heaven; the flood rise up from beneath; but then Jesus says, 'and the winds blew and beat against the house'; I believe the winds speaks to us of the things of earth; the things that are common to this world.

Sometimes we have a storm from heaven; sometimes we have a storm from hell; sometimes the winds of the world blow against us. But when you put the 3 together, all at once, you have a "Perfect Storm".

THE 'PERFECT' STORM

- **The rains fall (from heaven)**
- **The floods come (from beneath)**
- **The winds blow (in the world)**

This is the storm we face today; attacks from the world, above and beneath; on all sides. But rejoice! Jesus is “Lord of the Storm”. And this storm will reveal our foundation. Are we building on the rock or on the sand?

The day will reveal it. I want to pray...Lord I thank you that you give us a life built on the rock; and when the rains fall, the floods come, and the winds blow, EVEN ALL AT ONCE, a “perfect storm”, our house will stand; because we are those who hear and do your Word. Thank you, Lord, in Jesus name, Amen!