

Lesson 7

Loving People Through the Storm

Class Objectives

- **We must help people find peace through God's promises, Mark 4.35.**

Jesus actually led the 12 into a storm. He wanted them to understand that they could trust God during the storms of life.

- **We must help people find peace through God's presence, Mark 4.38.**

Jesus went with them in the boat. He didn't take another boat ... or walk on the water beside them. He *was with them in the boat* ... sleeping in the stern.

- **We must help people find peace in God's power, Mark 4.39.**

Jesus trusted in the Father's love and protection, but He also acted out of love and care for the 12 by addressing their fears.

He did what He could, and we must do what we can.

Think About It

1. What has been one of the most difficult storms you've had to confront as life's difficulties have revealed themselves? How did you get through? Be specific. List out two or three things.
2. How are you using your experience in perseverance, patience, and deliverance in helping others who are going through the storms of life?
3. If you are presently going through a storm, are you reaching out for help? What are some things that might hold you back from asking? How can those concerns be addressed?

What the Savior Said

Mark 4:35–41 (CSB)

WIND AND WAVES OBEY JESUS

³⁵ On that day, when evening had come, he told them, “Let’s cross over to the other side of the sea.” ³⁶ So they left the crowd and took him along since he was in the boat. And other boats were with him. ³⁷ A great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking over the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. ³⁸ He was in the stern, sleeping on the cushion. So they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher! Don’t you care that we’re going to die?”

³⁹ He got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Silence! Be still!” The wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ Then he said to them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

⁴¹ And they were terrified and asked one another, “Who then is this? Even the wind and the sea obey him!”

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4. Spend a few moments picturing this story. What did the disciples feel?

 5. What can we learn about God in this story?

 6. What did the disciples face? How did God respond?

 7. How could you turn this story into a prayer?

This amazing story still intrigues us today. It was included in the gospels for a purpose, i.e., we need to trust in God during the storm and thereby find peace. As we think about Jesus’ actions over the course of that day, it teaches us three very important lessons on how not only to personally navigate the storms of life we encounter, but also, we learn how to help others as they go through the difficulties of life. Those lessons are:

Finding Peace in God's Promises

Notice Mark 4.35. Do you think Jesus knew the storm was coming? I think so. He did so for the purpose of teaching an important lesson that God can be trusted in the worst times of life. *Storms always have a purpose.* There are storms of correction when God disciplines us, like He did with Jonah. There are also storms of perfection, where God uses the storm as an opportunity facilitate our spiritual growth. There will be times where we are led into lessons we do not even know we know we need to learn. When this happens we need to keep a long-term view. Jesus' proposal to go across the sea was not a suggestion . . . it was a promise! Their arrival on the other side was guaranteed – even though the journey there might not be easy. It is during these types of storms we remember He brought us here for a purpose *and will see us through.*

Finding Peace in God's Presence

Notice Mark 4.38. Where is Jesus? He is **with them** in the boat. *God Himself was with them during the storm.* Now the disciples didn't put this together and we don't always either. Because they forgot about God's presence they were filled with fear. You might be able to identify with them when they asked, *God, don't you care?*

Look again at that opening sentence in v. 38. Nine simple words describe the very picture of peace. It's the only place in Scripture where we ever read where Jesus slept. And that . . . in the middle of a life-threatening storm. As Jesus was secure in the love and protection of the Father, so we must become secure in His love and protection.

Finding Peace in God's Power

Look closely at the beginning of v. 39. It was Jesus' love and trust in the Father that allowed Him to sleep peacefully that afternoon. But it was His love for the twelve that caused Him to get up. He acted . . . For them. True love is active love. He rebuked the storm and sea by the power of His Word.

Today, we trust in the fact that He possesses that same power to effectively deal with our storms and difficulties as we trust in the power of His spoken and written word. He can still speak to our storms and cause them to diminish in a flash. His word revealed in Scripture directs us to endurance, faithfulness, and patience. Will we pay attention?

“If only you had paid attention to my commands. Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea,” Isaiah 48.18.

A Passage to Explore

1 Thessalonians 3:1–10 (CSB)

ANXIETY IN ATHENS

3 Therefore, when we could no longer stand it, we thought it was better to be left alone in Athens. ²And we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you concerning your faith, ³so that no one will be shaken by these afflictions. For you yourselves know

that we are appointed to this. ⁴In fact, when we were with you, we told you in advance that we were going to experience affliction, and as you know, it happened. ⁵For this reason, when I could no longer stand it, I also sent him to find out about your faith, fearing that the tempter had tempted you and that our labor might be for nothing.

ENCOURAGED BY TIMOTHY

⁶But now Timothy has come to us from you and brought us good news about your faith and love. He reported that you always have good memories of us and that you long to see us, as we also long to see you. ⁷Therefore, brothers and sisters, in all our distress and affliction, we were encouraged about you through your faith. ⁸For now we live, if you stand firm in the Lord. ⁹How can we thank God for you in return for all the joy we experience before our God because of you, ¹⁰as we pray very earnestly night and day to see you face to face and to complete what is lacking in your faith?

You may remember Paul's second missionary journey was fraught with great difficulty and persecution. He and Silas were told to leave Philippi because of riots and the authorities' mistreatment of Paul and Silas, who were Roman citizens. From there they traveled to Thessalonica where they established a church. They weren't there long before trouble began, a mob formed and caused a riot. Paul and Silas were sent away by the brethren in the middle of the night for their own safety. Paul described that departure as his being ripped away from them, 1 Thessalonians 2.17.

Now in his absence, Paul finds out the Thessalonians are enduring the same storm of persecution as he did while there. And what we observe in 1 Thessalonians 3 is evidence of loving others through the storm. Although hindered from being there himself, Paul did the next best thing and sent Timothy to personally check up on them. His was a job of encouragement and care. He stood with them during their difficulty. And the faith of the Thessalonians continued to blossom. We can be sure that Timothy encouraged these brethren to:

- Find peace in the promises of Christ.
- Remember the presence of the Lord. He was with them in their persecution.
- Trust in the delivering power of Christ.

8. What can we learn about being there *with* others from this passage? Is there power in someone's presence?

9. What holds us back from being more effective in making ourselves available to others as they endure storms?

Life Application

This week, make some time each day to spend a few moments alone with God. Every day, we will consider how we can demonstrate our love by being there for others as they endure the storms of life. Take your time with each passage(s) so you can concentrate on what is being said. Use the questions as a springboard for your positive thoughts throughout your day.

Monday

10. At the beginning of this lesson, we spoke of *storms of correction* and *storms of perfection*. Read James 1.2-4, 12. The storms of life referred to here could apply in both settings. What is God's promise here? How does this passage help you discover peace as you endure the difficulties of life?

11.
How can you use this passage as you seek to encourage others through the storm?

Tuesday

12. Read Isaiah 43.1-2, 3a, 4a, 5a. What does this passage teach us about the presence of God?

13. How is God described in these verses? How are His people described in these verses? Write down the descriptive terms.

14. What are some ways you could use this passage in helping others through the storm?

Wednesday

15. Read Psalm 4. What does this passage teach you about God's presence?

16. What assurance does the Psalmist have regarding God's relationship with him and His readiness to act? How did this impact the life of the Psalmist? (4.7-8)

17. How can this passage help you as you minister to those going through the storm?

Thursday

18. Read 1 Thessalonians 5.11, 5.14. What does this passage teach us regarding our own *presence* in the the life of others as they suffer through difficulties?

19. What are some ways you can personally apply these apostolic instructions?

Friday

20. Read Ephesians 1.18-23. What does this passage teach us about God's *power*? Where is that power being directed?

21. You have been filled with the fullness of Christ, 1.23. How can this provide you and others you know with assurance, confidence, and peace while the storms of life rage?