

Learn From Me - Calm the Storm

Today is week 8 of 9 in the series Learn From Me as we learn from the things Jesus DID!

Matthew 14:22-33 (NKJV)

Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. 23 And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. 24 But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

25 Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.

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

28 And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."

29 So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"

31 And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

33 Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."

This is one of the most amazing events recorded about Jesus.....He defies the physical laws of this world and does the impossible.....walks on water!

Last week we looked at feeding the 5k and this follows that up. Remember that long day of preaching, rowing across the sea, going up the mountain, preaching more, searching for food, multiplying food, collecting leftovers.....it was a whole day event Then.....

Matthew 14:22 (NKJV)

Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.

Immediately.....you ever had people over and they didn't want to leave? But you were ready for them to go?

It's been a long day....you're ready to relax....but you are so awesome and the food was so good....people don't want to leave. It's ok to send them away! "I don't care where you go but you can't stay here"

See Jesus was used to this, the multitude didn't want to leave Him and the disciples didn't want to leave Him.

He made them leave.....all of them. He made the disciples get in the boat and go to the other side of the sea. Then Jesus told the masses to leave "the show's over, nothing more to see here tonight, go home and get some rest".

Finally everyone leaves.....

Matthew 14:23 (NKJV)

And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there.

Here's the first thing we can learn from Jesus today, it's ok to send people away so you can spend time with God.

Sending the 12 off is like sending your family away, putting the kids to bed, telling your spouse or parents, to give you some space.

Sending the masses is everyone else, it could be your friends, it could be your Facebook friends....sending people out the door but also shutting that door of distraction.

You might have to go a little higher up the mountain....where ever you have to go to get away by yourself to pray. Some of you know how great that time is, refreshing, rejuvenating....you need it!

So Jesus sends the 12 off in that boat so He can get alone and pray....look what happens to them....

Matthew 14:24 (NKJV)

But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

Keep in mind that at least 4 of the 12 were skilled fishermen. They knew their way around the sea on a boat.

But now, this boat is being tossed by the waves for the wind was contrary.
THIS. SOUNDS. FUN.doesn't it?

What do we think of when we hear the word toss? I think gentle. Like tossing a ball....

toss ball

This is nothing like what the scripture is trying to describe. The word toss here means to torture, torment, harass....

It's not a tailwind, that wind that pushes you along, increases speed, that wind is fun. This is more like a headwind, that wind that blows against you, making it hard to gain ground, it's torture!

This is why the wind was contrary.....against, hostile, opponent!

John 6 - "Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing."

I can't help but wonder if this is why Jesus "made" the disciples get in the boat....the skilled fisherman probably knew the storm was coming....

Can you remember a time where you did what you felt like God was telling you only to find yourself in a position like this? and you end up saying ... "Why is this happening to me"? ... And the disciples must have thought the exact same thing that night ... "why did Jesus send us out here ... He knew there was a storm coming"

They simply obeyed.....and this is what they get????? Torture? Hostile wind?

How often does a great storm suddenly develop in our lives trying to destroy something we are doing in faith, out of obedience???

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

For we walk by faith, not by sight.

They were looking for Jesus, it was dark, He had not come to them, the storm pops up, they had rowed 3 to 4 miles (John 6).....

You develop faith that endures by going through storms....

You don't have to go storm chasing.....it will find you!

Hebrews 13:5-6 (NKJV)

Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we may boldly say:

"The Lord is my helper;

I will not fear.

What can man do to me?"

You see there are times where Jesus uses these storms in our lives to teach us to be calm and have confidence and faith in Him. It's a place where faith grows.

Just last week in bible study we looked at suffering for Jesus. How it's ultimately a good thing and we are to take joy in it, even finding joy in the fact that we are worthy to suffer for Him, but knowing that it develops more of Christ IN us.....and the storms and difficulties do not compare to the results of coming through the other side.

Matthew 14:25-26 (NKJV)

Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.

Fourth watch - between 3-6 am....Jesus purposely waited to go out to them...

He let them try it their way....row away from the storm. This clearly continued for some time, from it's getting dark until 3-6 am....5, 6, 7, 8, 9 hours?

These men have to be TIRED. Jesus has been praying, they have been rowing against this torturous, opposing wind for hours! Getting tossed around....

Jesus FINALLY SHOWS UP.....that's what I'd be thinking.....but it's storming.....and they see Him coming and they were troubled.....they were distressed, anxious, restless....."It is a ghost"

Well.....yeah, sort of.....A man filled with the Holy Ghost!

When you are in the midst of the storm.....isn't it hard sometimes to recognize Jesus as He enters the picture? Aren't we sometimes so stressed out, worn down, maybe even a little confused.....that when Jesus shows up...(often in a way we wouldn't expect) that we don't recognize Him?

But it's when we are weary of drawing from our own power to overcome, that we SHOULD most easily recognize Jesus in our midst and can draw from His power. It's just that we can't see past the storm.....we have rain on our glasses.....anyone wear glasses and been in the rain....stinks, huh? Hard to see clearly. Like a car with bad wipers....

The 12 here couldn't see clearly and were filled with fear, they cried out.....

Matthew 14:27 (NKJV)

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

Something to learn from Jesus here.....when Jesus hears one of His followers cry out, He responds immediately!

Some of you need to hear this today.....If you cry out in fear, Jesus responds with no delay.

Even if what you are afraid of is Him because He comes in unexpected ways that cause us to question and doubt.....He tells us to be of good cheer (good courage), it is I (I AM), you don't have to be afraid"

You know there's another time Jesus tells us to be of good cheer:

John 16:33 (NKJV)

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

You don't have to be afraid. You can have courage and peace and joy knowing that Jesus has overcome the world.....everything that life can throw at you, every storm, every trial, every fear-filled moment.....cry out!

Matthew 14:28-30 (NKJV)

And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."

29 So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"

Peter reminds me of Kevin, the little boy from Home Alone. Remember when Kevin crawls out from under his bed, goes marching outside and yells "I'm not afraid anymore..... I said, I'm not afraid anymore.....did you hear me, I'm not afraid anymore....."

Then the old man who Kevin thinks is a serial killer appears and Kevin goes screaming back into the house!

Peter was afraid, and says Lord if it's you, call me to you. What does Jesus say? "COME."

Can I tell you today that this is always Jesus' response to this question??? When you doubt, when you are unsure.....Jesus says COME.

The Holy Spirit is speaking this to hearts all over this globe today "Come to Jesus". He died for you and He wants you to live, to know Him, to be with Him.....

Peter hears the call and he goes....he walks on the water to head out to Jesus but then Peter sees the wind....."I remember what you did to me last time wind.....you are scary....you are strong....

And when our mind wanders down that road, what happened to Peter happens to us....we start to sink....

But if you learn anything today, learn this.....

Matthew 14:31 (NKJV)

And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Peter cried Lord, save me. And Jesus did.

When you start to sink.....even when it's your own fault.....if you cry out, Jesus will stretch out His hand and catch you.

IT IS JESUS THAT KEEPS YOU FROM SINKING.....

Job 9:8 (NKJV)

He alone spreads out the heavens,
And treads on the waves of the sea;

Even when you have little faith - faith that lacks confidence or trusts too little. Underdeveloped faith. This means it's less than it should be. It's not where it should be at.

He stretches out His hand to you and says "grab ahold....I've got you".....

Matthew 14:32-33 (NKJV)

And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

33 Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."

So often this story is about Peter getting out of the boat but I think the bigger deal is that Jesus got in the boat....because that is the only time the wind ceased.....IT STOPPED!

The storm doesn't stop when you come to Jesus. What happens is Jesus takes your hand, keeps you from sinking, and brings you to safety.....then He sits with you.

Like all who were in the boat.....

You will recognize that, truly Jesus is the Son of God.....

See no matter if your faith is little or great, Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus is the One Who saves.....

He is the One Who comes to your rescue....

Jesus is the One Who brings peace to a restless heart.....

What does your heart say today? Truly Jesus is the Son of God?

What about when you are in the storm?

In the calm after the storm?

Will you worship Him?