

“Lessons in the Storm”

Mark 4:35-41

Introduction

- Put your books away – take out a blank piece of paper and something to write with – it is time for a Pop Quiz!!!!
 - Oh!!! - Did any statement ever strike so much fear in you as young students as a Pop Quiz
 - I did pretty well in school but it was all with much preparation
 - I don't like to wing things

I know some of you think I must just wing these Bible studies, but believe it or not, I actually work hard to be this corny – shocking I know, but I need to prepare

- So in High school and even in college when I would hear, “Pop Quiz”
 - I would think – oh no – I have not prepared

Well, I am sharing this with you, because in our text today, the Disciples are getting a pop quiz

- Remember Jesus has just spent the day teaching important truths
 - I know it was two weeks ago but hopefully you have not forgotten –
The Sermon by the Sea

The Sermon by the Sea – Mark 4:1-34

5 Point Message on Growing in Christ and Expanding the Kingdom

#1 – Our heart needs to be good soil – Mark 4:1-20

#2 – Don't hide your light – Mark 4:21-23

#3 – Be careful how you listen - Mark 4:24-25

#4 – Do your job, then trust the Lord – Mk 4:26-29

#5 – Watch out for the birds – Mark 4:30-32

Jesus has been teaching some important truths

- But now after teaching always comes testing
 - Testing follows teaching – that is the way it is in school, hopefully
 - And that is the way it is with our walk with God

Jesus sets up a test, as He does with each of us, to show us how we have grown and how much we still need to learn

- The test for the disciples comes in the form of a storm on the sea of Galilee
 - Again Jesus and His disciples have just had a full day of teaching and ministry near His home base there in Capernaum

And Jesus then says let's go over to the other side, to the area of the Gadarenes, for Jesus knew He needed to minister to a man possessed of a demon in that region and (we will look at story next week)

- But Jesus tells the boys, we are going to go over to the other side by boat
 - and they began what would be a five mile journey to other side of the sea of Galilee from that position

- meanwhile Jesus goes below deck, put His head down on pillow and falls fast asleep

As a side note, it is amazing to see the two natures of Jesus in this story

- When God became flesh, He took on our nature, He didn't stop being God, but He took on humanity
 - Jesus was fully God and fully man
- And we see it so clearly in this text this morning

Jesus was fully man

- after a day of preaching and teaching, He needs a nap
 - see honey, Sunday afternoon naps are Biblical
 - WWJD – what would Jesus do? Jason do? – nap is the answer to that question – golf perfect

Jesus in His humanity was tired

- but in just a few minutes we are going to see Him command the wind and the waves and they obey Him
 - a great picture of His deity
 - Jesus was both fully God and fully man in one person

And in His humanity, He goes below deck to get some shuteye

- now archeologists have discovered boats from the time of Christ around the sea of Galilee – see pictures
 - **Pictures of the Jesus boat**
- and if you can picture this ancient boat with a deck, 12 men sitting on the deck and that area below having small storage space, Jesus is down there, resting on pillow
 - how tired would you have to be to sleep on that?
 - to sleep during a storm
 - Jesus was truly tried

Now speaking of this storm

- I have to admit that when I first had the privilege of going to Israel, I looked out at the sea of Galilee for the first time and really wondered about this story
 - **Pictures of the Sea of Galilee**
- You see from these pictures - the sea of Galilee is 8 miles across, 16 miles long from north to South
 - So it is a medium size lake
 - And so to be honest when I first saw it and thought of this story, I thought, man what kind of fishermen were the disciples – how big of a storm can really happen out here – I mean it's not the Pacific Ocean or even Lake Michigan

But the Lord is so gracious, that afternoon we got into a motorized boat that looks just like this, and they take you out to the middle and Pastor Chuck Smith started teaching – and almost on queue, the storm clouds rolled in, the wind started to blow, the waves began to rock the motorized boat and I look up into the

heavens and said – “Uncle” – I don’t need anymore lessons, I believe, get me back to shore

The reason such storms can happen on a relatively small body of water is the Sea of Galilee sits right in the middle where the warm air from the region the Dead Sea, the lowest place on earth, that hot air mixes with the cold air that flows off of Mount Hermon – a 9,000 foot mountain in Northern Israel – pictures of Mount Hermon

- and if you have lived in Texas or Kansas or Oklahoma, then you know what happens when super cold air meets super warm air
 - serious storms unlike we ever experience in southern California – it’s storming – no it’s not
- And you couple that with the fact that the cliffs around the sea of Galilee act as a funnel to push air through
 - And it doesn’t take much for serious storms and by them, wind and waves to kick up

So that is what is happening

- warm air from the south, cold air from the north were being mixed together, right above the sea of Galilee
 - the wind was being funneled through the hills and you had a serious, scary moment happening on the sea

Now where was Jesus while all this was happening?

- He was sleeping
 - He was under deck, unaware, sleeping
 - And this bothered the disciples
- It bothered them so much they go to Jesus, wake Him and actually asked Him
 - Notice verse 38, “Do You even care that we are dying?”
 - Don’t You care about us????
 - Doesn’t it bother You that Your people are going through such a rough time???

Now let’ be honest, not religious – can’t you identify at times with the apostles, haven’t you been there?

- I would never – sure, well for the rest of us, honest people
 - You are in the midst of a huge trial
 - And you, feel like Jesus, the one who is all powerful, the one who could deal with this at any moment, but isn’t, What is the reason Lord?
- You must be sleeping or worse
 - Maybe You don’t care about me at all?
 - Maybe You don’t care that I am going through this right now in my life??
- Anyone been there before – I know I have

And then when they wake Jesus up, He rebukes the wind and waves and then He actually rebukes the disciples

- and most of us read that and think, I don't get Jesus
 - The disciples are in the midst of a huge storm
 - You are sleeping, You seem not to be caring
- And when You wake up instead of apologizing to the disciples, "sorry I was asleep at the wheel, sorry I lost control for a moment"
 - Instead of apologizing, Jesus actually rebukes the disciples – where is your faith???
- Now why would Jesus do this???
 - Sometimes it is hard to understand why the Lord works the way He does
 - Do you ever feel that way???

Well, I want to share some things with you this morning, that I pray will give you a new perspective on the storms you and I have to face as we go through this life

- and maybe a new understanding of the heart of our God in all of that - I want you to note two things about this storm the disciples were facing that day

Lessons in the Storm

#1 – Jesus knew they were going into a storm

- and I point that out to you because sometimes I think we forget that in our lives
 - we get into the storms of life and we think that God has lost His control on us
 - and our prayer life reflects that = "Lord save me from this horrible thing, remove this"
- And we need to understand that even though the trial may be the result of sin on your part or another, and the outside circumstances may not be of the Lord..
 - He knew this storm was coming and He allowed you to go in that direction

Why would God do a thing like that???

- Because He knows storms in your life are going to do one of two things

Storms in our lives are there to either Correct you and/or Perfect you

- God allows or even causes hard times to come in your life because He knows each of us at times need correcting and or perfecting

Just ask Jonah – He needed some correcting

- God called him to go to Nineveh, he runs from God and goes down to Joppa and what do you know, there is a ship going in the opposite direction. So he heads toward Tarshish and God has to send a storm
 - Jonah tells the sailors to throw him over, he is the cause. Instead of repent he would rather die.

- But God doesn't let him off that easy, God prepares a storm, God prepares a fish to swallow him for three days, and in the fish it is hot, and nasty and then to top it all off when it is over the fish barfs him up right in the place where he needs to be

For some of us that is what God has to do

- You are running in the opposite direction. And you rather die than surrender your heart to the Lord

Well Get ready – God is preparing a storm.

- And will be hot, it will be hard, it will be nasty. And in the end it may feel like the world has barfed all over you
 - But you will discover that the real truth is there is a God that loves you. Loves you so much He will not let you stay in that condition
 - He will correct you

Some storms are for correction, some are for perfection – Just ask Joseph

- Joseph finds himself cast into a pit by his brothers, but it gets worse, then he is sold into slavery, but it gets worse, when he is trying to be faithful to Potiphar, Potiphar's wife accuses him of rape and he is sent to prison, in fact for years – 13 year process
 - And anyone of us and I know Joseph was thinking this as well – God has forsaken me, You don't care, You are sleeping while I am perishing
 - But Joseph had no idea God was preparing him to be second in command of the world at that time, and the lessons of trust and faithfulness served him the rest of His life

You see sometimes God allows storms, even huge storms in our lives, not because He doesn't care or isn't concerned but because different than you might think - He actually loves you and wants to correct what needs to be corrected and perfect what you are going to need for the rest of your life and probably beyond that into eternity

- with the disciples Jesus was using the storm to do both – to correct and perfect

Jesus was correcting His disciples

- what was Jesus correcting – the fact that they were not trusting in His Word – what??? – The Sermon was on His Word – Pop Quiz – they were not trusting
 - yes – you see Jesus had told them “we are going over to the Gadarenes, not we are going under, we are going over”
- And the fact that they were panicking on the sea, shows they did not trust the Word of the Lord – “we are going over”
 - And that lack of trust needed to be corrected

Because although they had no idea, to trust in God's Word and sometimes in God's Word alone was going to be something these men would need for the rest of their lives – Peter in that cell, Acts 12, 1 Pe 1:6

- And so the storm was corrective and well as perfective, shaping them into who they needed to become

Lessons in the Storm

#1 – Jesus knew they were going into a storm

#2 – Satan was in the storm as well

- Satan???????

Many Bible scholars believe as you analyze the language Jesus used to calm the storm

- He rebuked the wind, saying “peace be still”
 - That is a phrase that Jesus will use over and over again, not dealing with weather conditions but with men who are possessed with a demon
- So many Bible scholars take this to indicate that Satan was behind this storm at least the timing of it – for Satan understood where Jesus was going and who He was about to minister to (next week chapter 5)
 - A man who was demon possessed, a man under the control of Satan whom Jesus was going to meet and set free and use for eternity

And the enemy, seeing the potential of that encounter is doing everything he can to get Jesus and the disciples off track

- now if that be the case I find it so interesting
 - well, wait, wait a second pastor boy, I have my heresy meter out again
 - I thought you said Jesus was the one who was working in the storm – I did
- well now you are saying, Satan was in the storm – yes??? – oh boy

You are confusing!!!!

- now listen – many times in the New Testament the writers would use the same word for what we read in English as “trial” – which comes from the Lord to test us and “temptation” – which comes from the enemy to rip us off
 - The Bible authors often used the same word in the original language for both is often used
- A great example of this is James chapter 1 – where James uses the same Greek word for trial and temptation
 - you say – so what??
 - You are not helping me – you are making this more confusing

Here is the help

- The same circumstances and storms you and I face in our lives

- God sees them as a trial that He wants to use to do a work in your heart, to correct you, or to perfect you
- Satan wants to use the same exact circumstance, the same exact trial as a temptation to get you to doubt God's love, and to reject His leadership over your life - It's the same storm, it's the same adversity – God's in it, the enemy's in it

With the storm the disciples were facing, God wanted to use it to correct them in their not trusting His Word and at the same time He wanted to prepare them for a life where that is exactly what they needed to do

- At the same time Satan wanted to use the same storm to get the disciples to doubt God's perfect love for them and get them off track so they wouldn't be able to minister to the demonized man we will meet next week

And this truth – that God has a purpose for the storm and at the same time, Satan has a purpose for the storm, that truth is not just true for that storm that day on the sea of Galilee

- That is true for every storm you and I face for all of our lives
 - God wants to use it to correct and perfect
 - And Satan wants to use it to drive you away from the Lord that loves you so much

And the kicker is, the kicker is, you get to decide which way you are going to respond – you determine the outcome

- are you going to listen to the enemy of your soul in the difficult day and start to question God's Word and God's way
 - and move away from Him
 - or are you going to yield to God in this storm
- And let Him correct you, let Him perfect
 - You have the choice men and women

You see precious saints, just like the disciples did that day in their storm, you too have the Word of God

- He has promised you no matter what is happening in your life this morning or next week that...

You have His Word that He Loves you

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” – Romans 5:8

- while we were yet sinners Christ died for you – do you realize that – you can look at your circumstances and doubt God's love, but you need to look to the cross and see Him saying I love you this much
 - We have His Word that He loves us

We have His Word that He will never leave us

“For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” – Hebrews 13:5

- Hebrews 13:5 – I will never leave you nor forsake you
 - We have His Word that He is working all things for good in our lives – Romans 8:28

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God,” – Romans 8:28

- So we have the Word of God, just like they did that day
 - He loves us, He will never leave us, and He will work these things out for good

And because we too have the Word of God encouraging us in our dark storms that there will be another side for all of us, we will come through all this pain, and God is not allowing it for no reason, but to shape and mold us and make us like Him

- Friends, we have the Word of God
 - so we need to cling to it and to Him
 - and not just that – but I think we need to open our eyes to how God wants to use us in this trial to minister to others

You see we have this little tendency to believe we are the only ones on earth who are going through this type of pain

- nobody knows what I am going through

And we write Country Western Songs about it – “nobody knows the trouble I seen”

- but the reality is that is just not true

Back to our passage – look at [verse 36](#)

- there were other little boats out there too, going through just what the disciples were facing
 - and what a blessing the Words that Jesus said on the sea that day were to them, as Jesus words also calmed the storm in their lives as well

What I am trying to share with you is, both God and Satan have a plan and a desire for every trial in your life

- and Satan wants you to doubt God and run away from Him and other

However, precious saints – God wants to use the storm to draw you near to His side

- whether to draw you in correction or perfection, preparation
 - and then as He shares those words of life to you, God wants you to be able to look around and see others who are hurting, others who are being ripped about by the enemy through the circumstances of life
 - others in the same boat

- and He wants you to be able to share with them the same Words that lifted your heart that they may be blessed by the Words of the Servant Jesus as well

Paul writes in II Corinthians 2:3, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” – II Corinthians 2:3

God comforts us, and then part of the plan is so we can be a blessing to others

- And what a contrast that is to Satan’s plan
 - God doesn’t love you, so isolate yourself from everyone
- God says I do love you, you have my Word
 - I am going to see you through this – you have my Word
 - And I am using it in your life for good – you have my Word
 - And now I want to make your life a blessing for others, so take my Word and respond to the storms in your life with a different perspective, with a different heart and with different results
 - Amen!!!!