

CALMING THE STORM

7/1/24

There are many types of storms... there are those that are related to the weather: even our sun produces storms that cause havoc here on earth. There are emotional storms and relationship storms and health storms, etc. Every part of life is made up of many challenging moments... storms can appear without warning, often doing great damage and sometimes claiming lives. Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit is able to lead us to safety through all of life's storms.

Shortly after the death of John the Baptist, Jesus feeds the 5000 who then want to make him king. He sends the disciples by boat while he retreats to pray.

The following true account gives us a very powerful insight into the way that God can work for every individual. The story is presented from the accounts from Matthew and John. JOH 6:16 And when even (last light) was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, **17** And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. The sea is twenty kilometres by six kilometres. **18** And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. **19** So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs (half way across), they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. Windy... not cloudy or raining: he caught up at walking pace.

So far, this story is very similar to our natural lives. These men had gone from their everyday lives to be followers of Christ. They had zeal and trust, but never had the power to overcome the problems of life. Many of us were in that position before we received the Holy spirit. Many of us wanted to live a righteous life, but lacked the power to do so. Knowing about Christ is not enough... more is needed if the storm is going to be beaten.

MAT 14:25 And in the fourth watch (3-6am) of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. **26** And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. The ways of God defy logic... he can appear in an almost impossible manner at a very unexpected moment... but he comes when he is needed the most... when we are humbled by fear and hopelessness. **27** But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. **28** And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. It was too dark to see clearly... all they had was moonlight. **29** And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. Many wish to be like Jesus, but the storms within the heart have not been calmed... so it is with all those who are not Spirit filled. We may desire to be Christ like, even walk for a short distance, but we are still ruled by fear... by the natural spirit. **30** But when he saw the wind boisterous (very strong), he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. Many people hear the salvation message preached... many repent and get baptised, many even receive the anointing of the Spirit... but the storm in their heart never stops raging... they begin to sink. **31** And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? We need to have the storms calmed... to be confident and trusting... to accept the hand of the Lord when it is offered. This is also a time of temptation for many. They sink back into the world and some never surface again. **32** And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. As soon as Jesus had entered into their vessel... the storm was calmed... they were safe. This is typical of the anointing of the Holy Spirit... once the spirit enters our body, we should have peace of mind for the first time in our lives. **33** Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God. It was not until Jesus entered the boat that they found true peace of mind. Then they were able to truly worship him.

JOH 6:21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went. The most important part of this story is often unnoticed. As soon as Jesus entered the ship, not only did the storm cease, but the boat was safely at its destination. This is astonishing. The boat went from the middle of the sea to the dock in a split second. This is what happens when we receive the Holy Spirit... not only do we receive the power of God to manage and calm the storms of life, but we enter into the rest of God... the destination is immediately and safely reached.

Few will ever be on a lake in a storm (there is a much greater revelation than what first appears). **Getting us out of the Boat.** God will help us step out in faith and also support us if we weaken. This is great encouragement to also step out in faith with the use of the spiritual gifts... he remains with us at all times. Once we become one in spirit... miracles will multiply.

Paul explains the peace that the Holy Spirit brings. HEB 4: 9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. **10** For he that is entered into his rest (2663), he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Once Jesus gets into the vessel, into our body, the storms are contained and true peace rules. One of the meanings of the word 'katapausis' 2663... is 'calming of the winds.' It is interesting to note that the word for 'spirit' and 'wind' are often interchangeable. The indwelling Spirit calms the natural upheavals that rage unexpectedly in our lives. **11** Let us labour (be diligent) therefore to enter into that rest (2663), lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. Stay in the boat with the Lord... don't ever go back. Peace of mind is the greatest calm on earth... there is no greater rest. **&15** For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Having our sins and shortcomings lifted is to know the peace that passes all understanding. **16** Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Jesus Christ can calm every storm in life... therefore we need to receive his spirit and keep walking in it.

Did you know that an eagle knows when a storm is approaching long before it breaks? The eagle will fly to some high spot and wait for the winds to come. When the storm hits, it sets its wings so that the wind will pick it up and lift it above the storm. While the storm rages below, the eagle is soaring above it. The eagle does not escape the storm. It simply uses the storm to lift it higher. It rises on the winds that bring the storm.

When the storms of life come upon us (and all of us will experience them), we can rise above them by setting our minds and our faith toward God. We can allow God's power to lift us above them. God enables us to ride the winds of the storms that bring sickness, tragedy, failure, and disappointment in our lives. We can soar above the storm. Remember, it is not the burdens of life that weigh us down, it is how we handle those burdens. **ISA 40:31** But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount (raise) up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.