

The Storms of Life

A Lord's Flock General Assembly Topic
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Storms and floods have been used universally to describe trials and sorrows. With the storm also comes darkness. These are part of the image of sufferings and trials.

Some storms can be predicted, but some people refuse to take the warnings seriously. So, even if we can predict storms, we cannot control them. Insurance companies call them, "Acts of God over which we have no control."

While the storms of life are never pleasant, they do produce certain benefits in our lives.

Types of Storms

1. There are storms that we bring to ourselves.

- Sometimes we bring storms upon ourselves because of our disobedience or failure to consult God before making a decision.
- Jonah is a good example of this truth. When the Lord asked Jonah to preach to Nineveh in order to avert its impending judgment and punishment, Jonah disobeyed God by going to the opposite direction. As Jonah sailed on a ship, he experienced a terrible storm. Then, he ended up spending three days on the belly of a large fish.
- It took a storm to bring Jonah back to his senses and to the place he should be.

2. There are storms that are necessary for building up of trust and confidence in God.

- This type will strengthen our trust in God enough for us to have confidence as we wait on Him.
- In Mt. 14:22-33, the disciples of the Lord found themselves trapped in a very fierce storm as they crossed the sea of Galilee just as Jesus commanded.
- Although they were used to fishing and were no stranger to the sea storms in the Sea of Galilee, they were terrified, for their boat was already a considerable distance

from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. So, these 12 men were stuck in a storm, unable to get out.

- **Reflection:** Have you ever found yourself stuck in one of life's storms and no matter what you do, it seemed like you would not make it?
 - We all have experienced times like that. It may seem that the storm would never end and that there is no possible good that can come out of what we are facing.
 - Maybe the Lord is disciplining us. Remember, no discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace (Heb. 12:11).
 - There are seasons of testings and Job underwent them. Despite everything that was taken away from him and having a severe skin disease, he said, "...The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised." (Job 1:21)
 - In times of testing, like Job, we should glorify God; for He will not allow us to be tested beyond our capacity; and, when we are tested, He will also provide a way out (1 Cor. 10:13). Also, He will make things beautiful in His time (Ecc. 3:11).
 - This type of storm establishes us and strengthens our character. So, do not rebuke or deny these storms; but, face them and cling to God, for He is preparing us for something big.
3. There are storms that we can rebuke.
- These are opportunities necessary for the building of our faith and they can be rebuked as Christ did in Mk. 4:39.
 - This type of storm includes present problems that give us worry and cause our heart to be troubled, distressed or disappointed. This type of storm produces fear and anxiety.
 - We can rebuke these storms for we have the authority of a believer (Lk. 10:19, Mk. 16:17-18).

4. There are storms that we need to seek shelter from.

- When this type of storm comes, we can do nothing but take refuge in God.
- This type of storm includes problems that affect many people nationwide or all over the world. Contagious diseases like COVID-19, economic problems, death, sins, and temptations are examples of this.
- We may be unable to handle this type of storms, but God can.

5. There are storms that we must face and endure.

- We cannot stop these storms so we must face them and endure.
- Sometimes, storms are sent by God for our own good.
- When David looked back on a difficult and stormy period of His own life, he concluded, "The Lord lives. Praise be to my God."
- Hopefully, like David, we become better people after the storm.
- Storms are necessary for building up our Christian character. When we endure storms victoriously, God gives us the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22).
- We must endure our trials and consider them discipline. Remember that God cuts off every branch in us that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful (Jn. 15:2-3).
- Testing produces perseverance (Jas. 1:3) and Jesus will restore, confirm, strengthen and establish us after we have suffered for a little while (1 Pt. 5:10).
- How long is 'a little while'? No one knows; but, it does not matter how long it is when we know God is in control.

God is in Control.

1. He comes in the face of disaster.

- The disciples were in a fight for their lives when Jesus arrived. Though they were fishermen, they were afraid. When they thought all hope was gone and that they were doomed, Jesus came walking on the waves.

- There are times that we feel like we have lost the battle with our storms, but we should remember that as surely as the Lord is in control of our blessings, He is also in charge of our storms.
- When the situation is at its bleakest, look around, for Jesus is about to show us that He is there. Instead of focusing on our problems, focus on Him.
- Remember, He may not keep you from going into the storm, but He will keep you in the midst of the storm. Bear in mind that God is in control of the storms.

2. He comes in the face of the deep.

- The very thing that the disciples feared was the raging sea and God used it as His vehicle to come to them.
- He did not tell the disciples that the storm was not fierce. He told them that He was greater than the storm.
- God is greater than COVID-19. He is bigger than all of the problems in the world combined.
- Regardless of what we are facing in life, remember that Jesus is greater than the storm. If we are patient enough to wait for Him, He will show up right on time.

3. His arrival reveals the Savior.

- When Jesus came walking on water, the disciples did not recognize Him. They thought He was a ghost.
- Jesus came with a message of peace and power.
- The storms of life have the potential to reveal the Savior to us in a way we have never considered before.

When He comes to us, walking on our storms, He gives us the same message of hope that He gave the disciples in that stormy weather in the Sea of Galilee.

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