Lessons From A Storm
Luke 8:22-25 (NKJV)

Please turn with me in your Bibles to our scripture text in the Gospel of Luke, chapter eight. And let’s read verses 22-25.

LUKE 8:22-25 (NKJV)

22 Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side of the lake.” And they launched out.

23 But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy.

24 And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm.

25 But He said to them, “Where is your faith?” And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, “Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!”

INTRODUCTION

Fear is something we have all experienced many times over the course of our lifetime. Can you remember the scared-est you have ever been?

-Perhaps it was the first time you went out on a date.
-Or maybe it was the first time you went for big job interview.
-Or perhaps it was during those days when you were waiting to hear the results of some tests you had done.
Illustration: Several years ago I remember reading an article about a man by the name of S.L. Potter who had always had a terrible fear of heights. And so to celebrate his 90th birthday, he decided he was going to conquer that fear by bungee jumping off a 210 platform.

After making his successful jump, a local newspaper reporter interviewed him and asked him how he was doing? S.L. Potter said, “I'm cold......I'm tired.....and may I please have my teeth back?”

I have been through many fearful situations during my lifetime, but I would have to say the scared-est I have ever been was one night just a few months shy of my tenth birthday.

It was PALM SUNDAY IN 1965 (April 11, 1965). We had a huge crowd at Church that morning. And our Church song leader, Dorothy Dinsmore had sang a beautiful rendition of “His Eye Is On The Sparrow.”

When we left Church that morning, none of us could ever imagined the events that would unfold over the next twelve hours. I remember playing outside late that afternoon before the evening service. Although it was sunny, the sky had an eerie tint to it. There was a slight breeze and the air felt extremely heavy as though the oxygen had been sucked right out of it.

As the time for the evening service approached, the sky had grown cloudy and dark. A STORM WAS ON THE WAY......A STORM THAT WOULD GO DOWN IN THE HISTORY BOOKS.

About 10:00 o’clock that night a call came over my dad’s CB RADIO in our kitchen.......K- DOUBLE L—0 7 6.......K- DOUBLE L ——076 do you copy? My dad raced from the living room to the kitchen and answered the call. I stood in the doorway of the kitchen to listen. The voice on the other end said, “Bob, a tornado has hit the Dinsmore farm. They found Marvin, but they can’t find Dorothy.”

My dad got out of his pajamas and quickly dressed and left the house to head to the Dinsmore farm to help others search for Dorothy, our song leader who had sang in Church that morning.
Being just nine years old, I remember the sheer terror I felt knowing that my dad had gone out in that dreadful storm. I lay awake all night long wondering if I would ever see my dad alive again...... and being fearful of what might have happened to Dorothy Dinsmore........and being scared to death that I, along with my family, were going to die in a tornado that night.

By the next morning, there was complete calm. The fact the sun was shining brightly masked the horror of what had happened the night before. The Palm Sunday Tornado Outbreak of 1965 had killed 271 people across six mid-western states..........and 137 of those deaths were in Indiana, including 26 people in our county. Among the dead was our beloved song leader, Dorothy Dinsmore.

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Long before the Palm Sunday tornados of 1965, in a place over 6,000 miles away from Boone County Indiana, Luke tells us about another terrible storm that struck one night on the Sea of Galilee.

As we go back to our text here in Luke 8, we are going to see how Jesus' disciples rode “an emotional roller coaster” that dreadful night on the sea.

First, I would have you to notice...........

I. The Disciples Went From CALM To CHAOS (vs. 22,23)

22 Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side of the lake.” And they launched out.

23 But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy.

1. Imagine if you will, its the end of a very long day. Jesus has been teaching in the city of Capernaum all day long. Capernaum was a fairly good-sized fishing village located on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. It served as Jesus' headquarters during His Galilean ministry.
2. After a long day of teaching, Jesus and His disciples head to the Sea and get in a boat. And notice what Jesus says to His disciples in VERSE 22, "He said to them, 'Let us cross over to the other side of the lake.'" (The Sea of Galilee was also known as Lake Genneseret (GUH-NESSA-RUT)

Did Jesus know what He was getting His disciples into? Did He know before they ever set sail that they would encounter a terrible storm? Of course He did! Christ knows all!

Even though several of His disciples were professional fishermen who had sailed those waters hundreds of times, Jesus knew they would encounter something that night that would greatly test their faith.

3. Well just as Jesus had told them to do, the disciples push off from shore and set sail across the Sea. And what does Jesus do? Luke tells us in verse 23, "But as they sailed He fell asleep."

Here we see the “humanity” of Jesus. Have you ever sat down in your living room chair after a long, hard day and before you knew it you were sound asleep? Just like you and me, Jesus was “dead tired.” And with the sea breeze blowing across His face and the monotonous sound of the waves gently lapping against the side of the boat, Jesus went off to sleep.

4. But what started out as a CALM.......TWO TO THREE HOUR JOURNEY.......soon turned into total chaos!

v. 23b And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy.

5. Let me give you a little background about this region so you’ll understand how a storm of this magnitude could just seemingly come out of nowhere.
Background Info on Sea of Galilee

The Sea itself sits over 600 feet below sea level. The sea is almost completely surrounded by mountains, which forms a bowl around the sea. When strong winds blow in from the northeast, it pushes the cool mountainous air out over the sea where it collides with much warmer and more humid air; causing sudden, violent storms to come out of nowhere.

Even though the Sea of Galilee is only 7 1/2 miles wide and 12 miles long, waves have been measured as high as 20 feet during some of these violent storms.

6. So what started out as a CALM voyage across the Sea, suddenly turned into CHAOS.

7. It has been said, “Life can turn on a dime!” How quickly, our lives can go from TOTAL CALM to TOTAL CHAOS!

One day, you're just sailing along in life without a worry or care in the world, then out of nowhere a “powerful, unexpected” storm comes into your life turning your CALM into CHAOS!

-Your boss says, “I need to see you in my office.”
-Your doctor says, “I'm afraid I've got some bad news.”
-Your spouse says, “I've found someone else.”
-Your teenage daughter says, “I'm pregnant.”
-A family member calls and says, “Dad just died!” or “Mom just died!”

And just like that (snap of the fingers) the waves come crashing in!

8. How quickly we can go from CALM TO CHAOS!
Secondly, we see..........

II. The Disciples Went From PANIC To PEACE (v.24)

v. 24 And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing.”

1. In the midst of this violent, chaotic storm, the disciples reacted just like you and I probably would have reacted: THEY PANICKED!

2. Even though several of the disciples were professional fishermen and had no doubt been caught in a number of storms over the years, this storm was so powerful and so violent, they literally feared for their lives.

3. You see, as long as they were in control of their situation.....as long as they could rely on their nautical experience and their human strength, they had total confidence in their own ability to deal with the storm.

   But this storm is so big, so strong, and so deadly, their human strength and nautical experience were of no use.

   And it was that sense of total helplessness that caused them to turn to the only One who could help them. They cried out to JESUS!  “Master, Master, we are perishing!”  “Master, we're all going to DIE!”

4. Notice Jesus’ response in the latter part of VERSE 24.....

   verse 24c “Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm.”

5. When Luke says, Jesus “rebuked the wind” it literally means Jesus “put a muzzle” on the wind or He “told the wind to be quiet!”

6. In Mark’s account of this same event, Jesus said three simple words: “Peace be still!” In a single “breath,” Jesus took His disciples from TOTAL PANIC to TOTAL PEACE.
7. Just like the disciples, one of our greatest liabilities in the Christian life is our own **self-sufficiency**.

   We like to think we are STRONG enough and SMART enough and EXPERIENCED enough to handle anything life throws at us. We have a tendency to place way too much FAITH in our own knowledge and ability.

8. But then the LORD allows us to go through **“a storm”** that is so BIG, so STRONG, so OVERWHELMING, that we realize all our human strength and knowledge and ability is absolutely useless to us.

9. And in a **state of panic** we finally cry out to the only One who can help us and that is JESUS CHRIST!

   And its only when we “let go” and let Jesus be in control that **OUR PANIC IS TURNED INTO PEACE!**

   **The Disciples went from CALM to CHAOS!**

   And they went from PANIC to PEACE!

   And thirdly, I would have you to notice............

**III. The Disciples Went From A Fearing The STORM To Fearing The SAVIOR (verse 25)**

**verse 25** But He said to them, “Where is your faith?” And they were afraid, and marveled saying, “Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water and they obey Him?”

1. After “rebuking” the winds and the waves, Jesus “rebuked” the disciples for their **lack of faith.**

   The storm exposed how much the disciples were trusting in themselves and how little they were trusting in Jesus.
2. The storms of life will do the same thing to you and me. You see, its easy to “fake our way” through the Christian life when the waters are calm and we don’t have any troubles to deal with.

We can impress others with our “religious sounding talk” and appear to really have our spiritual act together, when we are sailing along smoothly.

3. But then when the storm of health problems........or the storm of family problems........or the storm of financial problems........or the storm of job-related problems........or the storm of death and grief and loss comes........it will either reveal the strength of our faith or expose the weakness of our faith.

4. The disciples cried out, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” They forgot who was in the boat with them! They forgot that Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God and God’s promised Messiah was in the boat with them!

It was not until they heard Jesus utter those three little words, “Peace be still” and felt the winds die down and the seas grow calm that they realized just who was in the boat with them.

They said, “Who is this that even the winds and waves obey Him?

5. Oh brothers and sisters, how many times do we find ourselves in the midst of a life storm and forget that JESUS is in the boat with us. He has promised us that “He would never leave us or forsake us!”

6. Let me ask you something: Do you fear your “storm” or do you fear your “Savior” who is Master over your storm?

Right now you may be going through a storm that is so big and so overwhelming you see no way out. Remember, Jesus is in your boat saying, “Peace be still........Peace be still.”
CONCLUSION

I want to leave you with these closing thoughts from my favorite devotional book, “Streams In The Desert.”

“It is in the storm that God equips us for service. When God wants an oak tree, He plants it where the storms will shake it and the rains will beat down upon it. It is in the midnight battle with the elements that the oak develops its rugged fiber and becomes the king of the forest.

Likewise, when God wants to make a person, He puts him into some storm. The history of humankind has always been rough and rugged. No one is complete until he has been out into the surge of the storm and has found the glorious fulfillment of the prayer, “O God, take me......break me......and make me.”

(Streams In The Desert, ppg. 34,35, by L.B. Cowman, edited by James Reimann, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Copyright 1997 )