

When The Tempest Roars

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Date: 22 March 2026

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[0:00] I'm saying life. How many actually have experienced actual storms that could have actually was risking your life?

! You have, Ellen.! When was that?! We were actually on the road trip, but we did not take that path, praise the Lord, otherwise we wouldn't be standing here.

But we did actually, and our Airbnb was right across Napier, the waves were pounding. And I was wondering, goodness, we were just across the road from it.

Actually, there was a house right in front, across the road, and I was just wondering of that night, how the people in the house could have slept.

You know? And, yeah, at times that we were in the middle of a storm, and actually at times it would be pretty fearful.

[1:18] And we've been praying for Abraham and Cardia's family. They are in the midst of storms. And Hakan and Teng Teng, the family, right?

It just happened so suddenly. Never expected. And I pray that the Lord will speak to us through this passage today, Mark 4, 35 to 41.

A famous event, but we all know it. But just imagine, if we're on that boat, how would we have reacted?

In this passage, Jesus, he admonished the faithlessness of his disciples. And you just think, we're fearing for our lives, and Jesus, you woke up and told us off?

Is Jesus like that? But it happened. But he did not just told them off, but he also calmed the storm and to demonstrate his divinity.

[2:34] I think Jesus is, you know, his deeds and his action really amazes us. At times, we know we deserve that rebuke from Jesus because we, you know, all these we have experienced from Jesus, and we're still lacking a lot of faith.

You know, in good times, we think we can all do it by ourselves. But in bad times, we suddenly realize, oh, Jesus, you're here. You're here? You're here. But when we called for Jesus, we kind of, a little bit impolite.

Jesus, do you actually care for me? I've experienced that myself. I think we're all kind of guilty at times.

So let this passage today, may God speak to us. In good times, in bad times, we are to hold on to the lordship of Jesus.

Easier to say in good times. But if during these troubling moments, are we still able to embrace the lordship of Jesus?

[3:48] Jesus, and we entrust all of our circumstances of life into his hand. If we don't do it in good times, it will be pretty hard in troubled times.

So while we are pretty safe and sound, let us trust the lord. Okay. In verse 35, Jesus says something.

We shall go across the other side. Why did he say that? Now, in the context of the passage, Jesus has been amongst the crowds, right?

Busy teaching through parables and preaching the kingdom of God, healing the sick, even driven out demons.

All right? Jesus was all full on. But that night, he told his disciples, we shall go across to the other side.

[4:54] Now, from where to where? I think the context was he was actually in this place called Campunium. Now, much of Jesus' early ministry was actually around the Sea of Galilee.

We have heard or heard about this Sea of Galilee, right? But it actually was not a sea. It was a lake. It was actually the lowest freshwater lake in the world.

All the water was coming down from Mount Hermon up north, all the way down to Galilee, and then flows down to River of Jordan, and then goes straight down to the Dead Sea.

All right? Can't be lower. Cannot be anything lower than the Dead Sea, right? So it was all coming down. And they were actually traveling from Campunium maybe to this city here.

Now, I'll give you an idea of the size of the Sea of Galilee. I think it's pretty much equivalent to the size.

[6:07] All right? This is Lake Rotorua. Lake Rotorua is around, the length is about 11km and to, no, about 12km and 10km wide.

How many have actually driven around the Lake of Rotorua? How many? How long did it take you? Now, if you drive around the Sea of Galilee, add another one-third of your time.

It was about 21km plus 13km wide. So it's not a small lake. Okay? So much of the people, Peter and John and the fishermen, before they actually followed Jesus, they had all the times fishing in this lake.

So they have known, they've seen all the storms that happened. All right? And Jesus told them, let's go across the other side.

Now, this storm happened in this, while they traveled across from Campunium to this, how do you pronounce that?

[7:21] Gerssetza. Gerssetza. Right? And it happened in Chapter 5. When they went across over there, and a man with demon possessed.

And Jesus driven out those evil spirits. Okay. So, we'll try to understand this passage in four points. One, the ferocity of the storm. Second, the edginess of the disciples. The admonition of Jesus. But eventually, they turned from fear to reference.

After Jesus has rebuked the storm and the wind. So let us understand this bit by bit. Firstly, the storm. That day, when evening came, he said to his disciples, let us go over to the other side. Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along. Just as he was in the boat, there were also other boats with him. A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped.

[8:42] According to some Bible scholars, it said because of the cool air from the Mount Hermon, and coming down to meet the warmer airs down south.

So, it's quite common that sudden storms will break out in the Sea of Galilee. How many actually have been to the Sea of Galilee?

I was asked last night when I was sharing this, and actually the lady who had been there said, Oh, you know, it's lovely. I mean, the Sea of Galilee and the good day, it's just like Lake Taupo.

It's so nice and lovely. And I asked, have you actually eaten the fish from the Sea of Galilee? It's so yummy. I said, no, I wish I could, you know, the Sea of Galilee.

But it could change just so suddenly from a nice, peaceful lake into a stormy rough waters.

[9:49] And that was what happened. But the thing is, why did Jesus ask them to go through this if he knew it was a storm coming?

Well, we can understand Jesus as a man. I mean, he had a long day.

Not just one day. I think all the time in his ministry, every day was packed. Meeting people, demands from people, healing the sick, and providing for their needs.

All the time, Jesus was full on. Okay? I think he would be really overworked every day. So he needs time to rest.

And the passage really said that he was not just dozing off like you're hearing preachers preaching. All right? He was sound asleep. I mean, I wonder if he actually snored.

[11:00] He was sound asleep in the boat in midst of the big storm. You've got to be really tired. And you've got to really have the peace to sleep in the middle of the storm.

And there he was. You know, this story really tells us that Jesus was a fully man. 100% man in his nature.

And the gospel describes him as a son of man. He has a full human body. He has physical needs. All right?

He needs to sleep. He gets tired. Fully man. We understand that. And that's why perhaps Jesus wanted to go through this water to the other side so that he could get some sleep.

Well, if traveling on land, he probably had to walk. Right? But the thing is, he was not just fully man.

[12:08] He was also fully God. Now, this is the nature of Jesus. Fully man. Fully God. It was very controversial in the church history.

Some people would just say, oh, yes, he's 100% man. But he was not God. And the other side would say, yeah, he was God, but he cannot be man. And sometimes he was absent.

You know? And it's very hard for us to fully grasp the human and the divine nature of Jesus. We're so limited.

But we only can trust and believe this is what the Bible says. All right? But the question was, again, as I said, if Jesus in his divine nature, would he have known there was going to be a storm coming while they were at sea?

They would, right? Then the problem is, why on earth would he still ask his disciples, let us go across on a boat?

[13:24] Does it make sense to you? You know, sometimes we ask that ourselves. Lord, if you could see it coming, why you opened the path for me to walk in it?

Right? Right? Some tough questions, but I have no answers. Right? I always kind of ask, Lord, if you knew Simo, Janice, was going to have that much physical problems, why you actually allow me to have met her and to marry her?

Right? And such a big bit of, you know, demands in my life. I have no answers. But I trust this is the best path for me.

And I think same thing. When the disciples, when they were in the storm, naturally they would have fear.

Okay? Okay? And the fear actually overcame the actual storm. It was the problem. The inner storm was a bigger one inside.

[14:43] Bigger than the one outside. You know, when they said, they saw Jesus sleeping, and they tried to, and they woke him up and said, Teacher, don't you care if we drown?

They actually complained. I just wonder, how long actually did it take them to realize Jesus was actually on the boat?

Now, you can't see it, right? But look closer. He was actually on the boat. Okay.

And sometimes it takes us a while to realize, oh, Jesus, you are actually the Lord in my family, of my life.

But the thing is, and then we realize Jesus was there, but we can be very arrogant.

[15:45] Jesus, you can't actually ever sleep in this storm, and you don't even realize that we're in danger? I mean, I'm guilty a few times in my life through those storms.

Just as well, God is merciful and kind. Otherwise, I wouldn't be speaking here at all. You wouldn't be sitting here at all.

Yes, it's common for people to be fearful and complaining.

And actually, it's a pattern of mankind. Remember, in the Old Testament, when the people of Israel, when God has done ten miracles to deal with Pharaoh, and brought them out of Egypt, crossed the Red Sea, all right?

Pillars in the day and fire at night, right? They could even still grumble against, they were not against Moses and Aaron.

[17:08] God said, they were not grumbling against you, they were grumbling against me. All right? If we only had died in Egypt. How arrogant is that?

But you and I can be guilty too. So let us realize, let us be reminded, there is nothing we can brag about ourselves.

If it wasn't the Lord's goodness and kindness, I mean, we would have vanished a long time ago. But when Jesus, he was waking up, he did something.

He got up, just realized the order of his actions. He rebuked the wind and the waves first. And then he told off his disciples.

Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith? So I think for the disciples, Jesus really understands.

[18:24] For them at the time, Jesus will have calmed the wind and the waves first. All right? He does not necessarily do it every time, but during this incident, he did.

Because he really wanted his disciples to know that he actually had the power to calm the wind and the waves. And once he did, and he reminded his disciples again, look, you have already witnessed the miracles I have done for you, with you.

Do you still have no faith? Now, if you have read chapter 1, 2, 3, 4 of Mark's gospel, we realize there has been four miracles performed.

Okay? It was a healing of a leper, healing of a paralyzed man, the driven out of a demon, and healing of Peter's mother-in-law.

I mean, all these disciples, they have witnessed it. It was not a video clip. It was right there. They were right there. And they still had no faith.

[19:47] And for us too, sometimes we focus onto the circumstances more than the experience, the faith that we had experienced in Jesus.

Are we all guilty of that at times? Yes, me too. But it's a continuous learning, trusting.

I'm so grateful for God. They're so good and so patient with us. I think, look at any mothers, you know, rearing up their children, you know, from babies, trying to toilet train, trying to get rid of certain things.

You know, there's always a process. First week, it cannot be done. Second week, a little bit better. Third week, seems to be okay, but fourth week, go back. Just relapse, right?

But mom would not, mothers would not give up. Same thing as our God to us. So patient with us.

[21:01] We're trying to learn. I think we learn it well, but then we relapse. And our faith would just, yeah, drop. But God has been so patient with us.

But it doesn't mean that we should just take it for granted, take them for granted. I think we should learn to trust. But in 1 Thessalonians 5, 18, it says Paul was trying to teach those people in a bit of difficulties, in a bit of persecutions, he taught them, say, rejoice always, pray continuously, give thanks in all circumstances.

I think there's a good antidote for our fear. It's all related. How do we rejoice? Actually, by the way, rejoice always is a command, right?

It's not whether you feel like it, oh, you feel like it, oh, rejoice. No, no, whether you like it or not, you rejoice. Because rejoice is allowing the joy of God to penetrate my heart and my soul.

It's a command. But we can do it better with praying continually and give thanks through all circumstances. It's all interrelated.

[22:31] It's a learning process. It's a discipline that we all need to exercise. Okay? And thirdly, lastly, I should say, turning from fear to reverence.

In verse 41, they were terrified and asked each other, who is this? Even the wind and the waves obeyed him. That word, terrified, is phobia.

But it's not onto the circumstances anymore. But to someone who has done amazing things, Jesus, who has come to storm, the wind, and the wave.

The focus is no longer into this storm. But the focus is onto Jesus who has done something and revealed his deity, his divinity over the nature.

So, really, do we actually focus onto the circumstances happening around us? Yes, of course.

When we are in the wind, in the waves, we are in that boat, surely it can be fearful.

[23:51] I'm really feeling for the Lee's family and the Lee's family at the moment, right? A bit of, you're a bit in the storm. And you do wish to pray, Lord, please calm the storm right now.

But we cannot control anything. We can only trust in the Lord in his time to calm the storms. You know, when I thought of this, I thought about Genesis 1 and 2.

You know, for the Jews, I'm sure the people, I mean, the disciples, would have understood in the Jewish upbringing. It's this waters.

Waters for Jews always has some sort of opposing power against God's creative orders. Now, in Genesis 1 and 2, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Now, the earth was formless and empty. It's not formless and empty. It's not nothing. It's actually aggressive. It's aggressive power.

[25:08] And the darkness was over the surface of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

It's like two forces in combat to one another. So, the waters or the formless and empty was not nothing.

It was aggressive power against the power of God. But, obviously, God's power always overcome and subdue the waters, the evil waters, the evil power.

and in the storm, the disciples knew. Those waters, those storms, the waters trying to come into their boats and Jesus by rebuking the wind and waves, the storm has come.

They were reminded that was God at work. Last week, when they had the IG worship and afterwards they had many booths for different games.

[26:28] All right? And one of the tables there, they asked people to draw a few things. So, they asked Anaya and Anaya in her two years old, that was the best she could come up with.

And when I saw that, suddenly Genesis 1 came into my mind. in this chaos, and I kind of wrote order.

And June was at the store and she took the photo and she said, and then later on, during the prize giving, and Jesus announced, this one got the prize.

I said, goodness me, yeah. But it does say something. Yes, do we focus on chaos or do we trust the order of God?

There are many, there are much chaos in our lives, right? Sudden sicknesses, and I mean, relationships broken down, high few prices, you'll, you never find a job, right?

[27:43] Or certain failures, chaos, and it can be too much for us, and it's just like many, many noises that's happening, and really sidetracked our mind and hearts, and we're in such a chaotic state, we don't know what to do, and suddenly when God said, order, order, and everything is calmed, but firstly, that calmness has to happen in me first, not necessary those in their external circumstances.

Do we have this calmness and trusting the order of God in our lives? yes, things can be fearful, but we trust all the storms are under his authority.

Nothing can separate us from the love of God, because this love is in Jesus. Jesus. I want to give you half a minute to think what may be some of the storms that you are experiencing now.

Maybe small, maybe large, maybe you're, yeah, the waves are actually pounding into my boat, my boat is sinking. Do I look at the circumstances, or do we actually see Jesus sleeping on my boat?

As a matter of faith, we can't, we can't do nothing about these storms, but we can trust the Lord, the Lord of the storms.

[30:02] shall we pray? Father God, we just pray, help us to focus our eyes unto you, and knowing that you are on our boats, and we can call upon your name, so that Lord, in our fearfulness, we can turn our eyes into you, and to be amazed and at awe of your powerful presence in midst of the storms that are happening in our lives now.

Lord, be with Pastor Barry and Jenny, Lord, be with the Lee's family, with Abraham and Cardia, Lord, be with Hakan and Teng Teng, be with Leo, June, Tanya, may they see, may they see, you are the Lord of the families, and you can, you have the power to rebuke the wind and the waves in our lives to Lord.

I pray all these in Jesus' name. Amen.