

Elder Bobby Willis



Life's Storm Portraits

It had been a busy day for Jesus and His disciples (Mark 6:29-54). They had to deal with the beheading of John the Baptist. Jesus had taught them the Word of God (Mark 6:34), and when late afternoon came, Jesus manifested His power and glory by feeding we know 5000 men and possibly some 15,000 including women and children with five loaves and two fishes. Now, evening is approaching fast and Jesus sends His men away by boat to the other side of the lake.

There are a couple of reasons Jesus sent His men away at this time. The first had to do with the crowds Jesus had just fed. Jesus sent His men away to remove them from that kind of thinking. Jesus did not want them to get caught up in the frenzy over the miracles. The people only sought Him because He gave them bread. When the flesh gets the best of us today, we do the same and seek that which satisfies our immediate wants and do not consider that which pleases God.

Another reason Jesus sent the disciples away was so He could spend some time alone on the top of a mountain praying to His Father. He knew that the miracles and His popularity with the people would bring Him into direct conflict with the religious leaders and that intense persecution and eventually death were just around the corner. What a lesson for us! We should be people of prayer, either on a mountain where we can see the storms of life heading our way, or in our closet (Matthew 6:6), **“But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly”**.

A third reason for the disciples being sent away had to do with the disciples themselves. After all they had seen Jesus accomplish, they were still filled with doubts and unbelief. Jesus uses this storm to reveal His deity and power to His disciples one more time.

When this miracle is preached, the emphasis is often placed on the storms of life as we emphasize the truth that Jesus helps those in trouble. Those kinds of messages are well received because we live in a world of hurting people. There is a great word of comfort here for those going through one of the storms of life. You are in one of three places in your life today. You are either in a storm, coming out of a storm or headed into a storm.

There are physical storms, mental storms, emotional storms and spiritual storms. There are storms in homes, marriages, at work and at church. There are storms that rage outwardly and there are storms that manifest themselves in the secret places of the heart.

Storms are part of our human existence, (Job 14:1), **“Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble.”** Ecclesiastes 2:22-23, **“For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun? 23 For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.”** Storms touch every part of our lives. We all find ourselves in stormy situations from time to time and these verses offer help and hope for those passing through a stormy time of life.

We are told that Jesus **“constrained”** His men in Mark 6:45 to get in the ship and cross the sea. The word **“constrained”** means **“to drive or to force”**. Did He know a storm was coming? Of course! What you and I need to remember today, as we face our own stormy times, is the truth that God stands with us in all the storms of our lives. David said in Psalm 107:19, **“Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.”** David also reminds us of what we should do in times of troubling storms in Psalm 107:28-30, **“He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.”**

These men were in unbelievable stress as they labored against the sea. Even the wind was **“contrary”** which means **“in the face”**. They were fighting for their very lives on the sea and Jesus saw it all. Jesus knew their condition. He knew what they faced and, He cared for them and for their safety. Saints of God, you have not been abandoned in the storms of your life! The Lord Himself is praying for you at the throne of God

(Hebrews 7:25). It sure does comfort my heart to know that the Lord is making intercession for me in Heaven!

Isn't it true that the storms of life terrify us? Isn't it true that often the Lord will come to us, walking on the very waves we fear? I thank God for the times He has "*whispered sweet peace to me*" in the midst of a storm in my life! If we can just learn to recognize His presence, even while we are in a storm, we can have that peace "**which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**" "*Think About It!*"