

John 6:14 – 21 *Then those men* [who had followed Jesus from Capernaum], *when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said,* ¹⁵*This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world* [This man must be God's Prophet that was promised in His Word]. *When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king¹, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.* ¹⁶*And when even* [evening] *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* [Jesus had not gone with them to the boat]. ¹⁸*And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew* [a fierce storm developed around them]. ¹⁹*So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs* [about three or four miles], *they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto* [and getting close to] *the ship: and they were afraid.* ²⁰*But he saith unto them, "It is I; be not afraid."* ²¹*Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went* [ship arrived at their destination].

- I. Introduction: storms of life, and how to deal with them.
 - A. Physical storms: This story is about a group of experienced fishermen who have been through many storms on this sea (the Lake of Galilee)
 - B. Emotional storms occur regularly in life. We tend to try to navigate around (or through) these storms as best we can
 - C. Spiritual storms are usually the root of the emotional storms, but few people realize their underlying cause
- II. Weather is Often Unpredictable (verses 15-18)
 - A. Storms cannot be anticipated. Men plan based on:
 1. Their current situation: The crowd knew they were ruled and taxed by the hated Romans, but longed for the former glory of Israel they had been taught
 2. Their current understanding: They knew the promises of a Savior to come, but they thought this person would be a political or military leader concerned with their life on this earth, not the eternal Savior concerned with their eternal life

¹ These people tried to make Jesus their king for many reasons, the most immediate being that He had just fed a great crowd of people, about 15000, in a remote place. The Jewish people were anticipating their Messiah would come at any time, and they thought he would restore the Nation of Israel to greatness and evict the Roman occupiers. Jesus knew His time to be King would come, but was focused on obeying His Father and not on pleasing those around Him.

3. Their immediate future: They saw that this Man did miracles and could lead and motivate people, but failed to see He was concerned with each individual rather than just the Jewish nation.
- B. Storm come unexpectedly. These men's plans were changed by:
1. Jesus not cooperating: **The crowd expected** Jesus to cooperate with their plan to make Him king immediately, but Jesus withdrew far from the crowd.
 2. The sudden storm: **The disciples expected** Jesus to meet them in Capernaum after they had sailed across the lake (see parallel passages in Matthew 14:22 and Mark 6:45) but had not anticipated a storm of such ferocity. The Sea of Galilee is ~ 600 feet below sea level and storms can happen with very little warning.
 3. **Our own expectations** are affected in this same way: **We often plan** as this crowd did, but sudden changes (pandemics, earthquakes, car accidents, etc.) become storms in our lives. Even Jesus' Apostles have their plans changed by storms in their lives. Consider the Apostle Paul:
 - a. **He planned to go to Rome** freely as a missionary
 Romans 1:15 *So, as much as in me is [it is my sincere desire], I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.*
 - b. **His plans were changed** by the events of others. Paul was arrested before he could fulfill his plan.
 Acts 21:30 – 36 *And all the city [Jerusalem] was moved, and the people ran together [was upset, and a crowd formed]: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut. And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band [him, a report came to the captain of the military police], that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Who immediately took soldiers and centurions [officers], and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left [stopped] beating of Paul. Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded [and arrested Paul, tied him up, and inquired] who he was, and what he had done. And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult [know why the crowd was upset], he commanded him to be carried into the castle [carried into the soldier's fort for safety]. And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for [when they got to some stairs the soldiers had to carry Paul because of] the violence of the people. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him [crying, "this man deserves to die"].*

4. **His plans were adjusted** to fulfill God's plan for his life. He was forcibly taken to Rome as a prisoner

Acts 25:11 For if I [Paul] be an offender [have broken any law], or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die [I am willing to accept my punishment]: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me [if I am innocent of all these charges], no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar [appeal to the highest court in Rome].

Acts 28:16 And when we² came to Rome, the centurion [officer] delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard [prison officials]: but Paul was suffered to dwell [was allowed to live] by himself with a soldier that kept him [so he didn't escape].

- C. Storms upset the plans of our lives. We need to understand that storms are in our lives for God's good purposes.

James 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; [when trials of various kinds happen to you]

- III. God is the Captain of the ship of our lives, we are to be the submissive crew (verses 16- 17)

- A. The two perspectives of life

1. **Unsaved:** I am the Captain of my life. I control my own way. My destiny is determined by the decisions I make. My own pleasure is most important.
2. **Saved:** God is the Captain of my life and my destiny is controlled by Him. I make decisions based on His revealed will. My desire is to please Him.

- B. Jesus had revealed His will to the Disciples. He told them to go ahead of Him in the boat to the other side of the lake (see parallel passages in Matthew 14:22 and Mark 6:45). As God, He would know the storm would come up before they reached the other side. He permitted this storm in their lives for His good purposes.

- C. When the storm happens you won't expect it, but you can expect:

1. **God knew** the storm would happen, and that He permitted it. Storms are not (by themselves) an indication that you are out of God's will.
2. **God's plan** is to work in your life for your benefit, using this storm. Your reaction to the storm is changed by your understanding of why it happens.

² Regarding "...we...": By the time Paul got to Rome a small group of Christians had joined Paul in his journey. One of these was Luke, the physician (Colossians 4:14) who wrote the Book of Acts. They paid his expenses so he could preach and teach while a prisoner. He wrote most of his letters to churches during the time he was a Roman prisoner.

3. **God will** bring you through the storm for His good pleasure.

Psalm 107:23 - 25, 28 – 30 They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep. For **he** [God] **commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof...** Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. **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 [their safe destination].

IV. Jesus will provide all that we need to get through the storm (verses 18-19)

- A. From the Disciples perspective, they were in a storm and left to get through it by their own experience and effort. Many of them were capable fishermen and had seen storms on this lake before.

1. This storm had been fighting them for many hours.

Mark 6:48 *And he [Jesus] saw them toiling in rowing [straining with the boat's oars]; for the wind was contrary unto them [they were sailing directly into the wind]: and about the fourth watch of the night [about 3 AM] he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them [and walked as if He would pass right by the boat].*

2. The Bible doesn't say the disciples were afraid until they saw Jesus walking on the water; Matthew 14:26 (compare John 6:19 - 20 and Mark 6:49 - 50)

And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a spirit;" and they cried out for fear.

3. Jesus calmed the disciples when He spoke to them.

John 6:20 *But he saith unto them, "It is I; be not afraid."*

- B. From Jesus' perspective He is in control of the situation. He knows their situation and His plan to get them through it. Job looked all around during his storm and couldn't see God, but He knew Who was in control of it:

Job 23:8-10 *Behold, I go forward, but he [God] is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: But he knoweth the way that I take [He knows what's happening to me]: when he hath tried me [when I pass this test], I shall come forth as gold [I will be more like Jesus than when I entered the storm].*

C. From the storm's perspective it is obvious Who is in control. This storm was tossing the Disciples and their boat about like toys, but Jesus comes alone, walking on the storm. Jesus arrives after the disciples had been struggling against the storm for many hours and were near exhaustion.

2 Corinthians 12:10 *Therefore I [Paul] take pleasure in infirmities [weaknesses], in reproaches [insults], in necessities [hardships], in persecutions, in distresses [difficulties] for Christ's sake: for **when I am weak, then am I strong.***

D. From the ship's perspective, the thing to fear was the storm. Jesus, by walking on the storm, was showing that He was in control of the very thing that threatened the ship and its occupants. Jesus walked right up to the boat and stepped inside, not afraid that the boat would knock Him over in the waves.

E. From a religious perspective, Jesus was nearest the disciples when they were most in need of His help. Jesus was showing the Disciples that he was more powerful than this storm.

1. **Religions of the world state** that your own efforts determine whether or not you will survive the storm and arrive at your desired destination. God has given you the tools you need, and if you fail you can only blame yourself.
2. **God's Word states** that you are safe in the Savior regardless of the outcome. The storm happens to accomplish God's purpose in your life, and we are to focus on the things we can control and leave the things we can't control in God's hands.

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

V. After the storm, the sky will clear (verse 21)

A. This storm only lasted a few hours, but it was intense. Some storms in our lives last months or years, even an entire lifetime (deaf, blind, MS, etc.), but Jesus is always there with us. We need to learn to focus on Him and not on the storm.

B. God knows when the storm will end. We need to trust Him through the storm.

Proverbs 3:5 – 6 *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*