

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in a time of trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth gives way, and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most-High Dwells. God is within her; she will not fail; God will help her at the break of day. For the Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Therefore, be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted over all the earth.*

"Sometimes my life is like the sea, and raging waters cover me. Sometimes my path is smooth as glass. And then a rainstorm comes to pass. But if a storm cloud brings you pain, remember rainbows follow rain. And though the journey has you worn; the darkest night will lead to dawn. Because there's a lighthouse in the storm. There is a cross at Calvary, that covers those who will believe. So, when your boat in life is tossed, you find the answer is the cross. And if a flood begins to rise, sustain your faith in Jesus Christ. So, you need never be alarmed, for He will keep you safe from harm. For there's a lighthouse in the storm. There is a lighthouse in the storm, though my sails are beat and torn. There is a light that holds the key, to peace of mind on troubled seas. And as His light is shining bright, I seem to lose my fear of night. For when you're safe within God's arms, you know you'll never be alone. For there's a lighthouse in the storm.

Have you ever noticed that when God knows you need something and feels so inclined to bestow it to you from the halls of heaven, that He's never too late or too early? Instead, He's always right on time. God knew Adam needed a wife. He was never too late or too early in giving him Eve. He was right on time. God knew Noah needed some rain, so he didn't look like a fool building a boat in the middle of the desert for 120 years. He was never too late or too early in granting that promise. He was right on time. God knew Abraham and Sarah needed a son in their old age for the promise to carry on through another generation. He was never too late or too early in granting that promise. He was right on time. God knew Israel needed a temple to make sacrifices to Him once they arrived in the Promised Land. He was never too late or too early in allowing it to be built by King Solomon. He was right on time. God knew the people of God needed prophets to warn them of judgment and encourage them with grace to prevent them from being kicked out of the Promised Land. He was never too late or too early in sending them throughout the land. He was always right on time. And God knew we needed a Savior. He was never too late or too early in sending Him. He was right on time. He was never too late or too early in sending the disciples what they needed either. He was always right on time. They needed a call to follow. He was never too late or too early in extending it. He was right on time. They needed to see evidence of Jesus' power over darkness. He was never too late or too early in showing them an exorcism. He was right on time. They needed to see that Jesus also had power to heal. He was never too late or too early in letting them see it. He was always right on time. They needed to understand the Kingdom Jesus called them to serve. He was never too late or too early in giving them a parable or two. He was right on time. But in the passage before us today, you are going to see that the disciples needed something they didn't even know they needed. And I can assure you they certainly didn't want it. It was a storm; one on the Sea of Galilee orchestrated and calmed by the Hands of Almighty God. And he was never too late or too early in orchestrating and sending it. He was right on time.

Here is why you should listen this morning. We don't like storms in our lives. They come at the most inopportune times and leave a lot of emotional, physical, and spiritual carnage to clean up. But I want to tell you today that sometimes a storm is exactly what Almighty God knows you need. And when he chooses to stir the tempest right into starboard bow of your boat, he's never too late or too early in sending it to you. He's always right on time. Why? Because if a storm cloud brings you rain, remember rainbows follow rain. And when your boat in life is tossed, remember the answer is in the cross. That's why. For the same Jesus who stirs the tempest is the same Jesus who calms the sea. He is the lighthouse. And today I want to share with you must learn when Jesus orchestrates a tempest in your lives. And you will see, I'm sure, these lessons are never come too late or too early. They come right on time. Today, in fact. To see them, please turn with me to Mark 4:35-41.

*<sup>35</sup> That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." <sup>36</sup> Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. <sup>37</sup> A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup> Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" <sup>39</sup> He got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. <sup>40</sup> He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" <sup>41</sup> They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"*

### Lessons to Learn When God Orchestrates a Tempest

#### 1. There's Always a Righteous Reason for the Tempest (35, 37)

- **The Pure and Precious Metal Miller** — (1) A lot has changed over the course of history. But there is one process that has remain unchanged since it began. It's the process of refining pure and precious metals. (2) It requires a miller. (3) The miller takes the unrefined precious metals and melts them in a fire. (4) Then he adds chlorine gas. (5) The gas turns other metals and impurities into solid forms. (6) Then he begins to separate the pure metals from the impure ones. (6) You can't have precious metals without the refiner's fire. And you can't have spiritual maturity without the tempest.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** The storm on the Sea of Galilee was necessary for the disciple's spiritual development. Without it, they couldn't grow into what they should, would, or could become. Equally, storms in our lives are necessary for our spiritual development. Without them, we can't grow into what we should, would, or could become.
- **Main Textual Emphasis — The Direct Link Between v35 and v37:** (1) Mark's Gospel comes at you very fast. It's story after story. It also builds with each scene. As Jesus performs a miracle, the crowd swells and the critics get louder. When it performs a healing, the crowds swell, and the critics get louder. When he teaches, the crowds swell, and the critics get louder. (2) The image that sets up the scene here is one of Jesus being tired from all

the aforementioned. And the disciples being wide awake; ready to do more and garner more acclaim. (3) So, Jesus gives them an assignment: “let us go over to the other side.” And there is a direct link between the directive and the storm that came via a “furious squall.” (4) The Sea of Galilee sits 600 feet below sea level. It’s surrounded by mountains with deep ravines and channels. These create a wind tunnel that blow directly into the Sea of Galilee. When they do the navigation gets treacherous. This one was awful, as noted by the “furious squall.” (5) And the reason for it has more to do with maturity and less with science: they lacked faith amid the fame, and they lacked an understanding of who Jesus really is. (6) So, he orchestrated a storm.

- **App:** Noah needed a storm to learn righteousness. So, God sent him one. Jonah needed a storm to learn obedience. So, God sent him one. Paul needed a storm to learn that God’s timing is different from ours. So, God sent him one. The disciples needed a storm to learn faith. So, God sent them one. They couldn’t have learned them otherwise. They were necessary for spiritual development.

## 2. There’s Always a Provident Passenger in the Boat (36)

- **The Always Present Santa Claus** — (1) I used to be terrified of one Christmas song as a kid. (2) It was this one: “You better watch out. You better not cry. You better not pout. I’m telling you why. Santa Claus is coming to town. He’s making a list and checking it twice. He’s going to find out who’s naughty or nice. He sees you when you’re sleeping. And knows when you’re awake.” (3) I heard that song and thought Santa is always present. Always there. And my bad outweighed my good. So, no lawn darts for me.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** Jesus with them in the boat, just as He was, as the tempest stirred on the Sea of Galilee in their journey to the other side. Equally, Jesus is with us in our boat, just as He is, as the tempest stirs on our seas in the journey of our existence.
- **Main Textual Emphasis: The Humanity and Divinity of the Son of God:** (1) One of the most majestic portraits of Jesus in all the Bible is right here in this verse. It is a portrait of the incarnation; a portrait that features the humanity of Jesus and His divinity. (2) Jesus is in the boat with them just as He was. He was no different from you and me from a human perspective. Jesus is tired. He’s worn out. He’s famished. He doesn’t have the energy to even pilot the boat here. That’s how “he was” in the moment. (3) Yet He was completely different from a different perspective. He was divine. He’s asleep in the boat one minute — just like us. And the next, He’s speaking to nature and nature obeys and calls Him Lord and God through her actions.
- **App:** God was in the cave with Elijah. He was with Nathanael under the fig tree. He was with Peter in his denial. And He’s in the boat with you in the storm.

## 3. There’s Always a Perception Problem with the Pilot (38)

- **The Joy of Watching a Child Learning to Shoot a Rifle:** (1) Several years ago, I taught my son how to shoot a rifle. I taught him how to relax his shoulder and take aim. (2) The most important lesson I taught him was how to look through the scope and aim at the target. (3) When he was ready, he aimed and missed low and left. Then the same thing. Then the same thing. (4) When I told him to aim higher, he said “dad the scope is off.” (5) So, I got it from him in a “let me show you how to do it moment. Sure enough, I missed low and left. (6) We had a great shotgun. We had great technique. We even had steady hands. But the faulty scope caused a perception problem caused us to miss our target.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** To the disciples, Jesus seemed to be unaware of their plight. Their perception of Christ’s apparent obliviousness to their misery as the tempest raged is how we often feel in the middle of life’s storms.
- **Main Textual Emphasis: Don’t you Care?** (1) Verse 38 is a picture of how we perceive what God is doing when we are going through the worst storms imaginable. (2) He’s asleep in the stern on the pillow while we are trying to navigate the treacherous waters in a life-or-death situation. (3). His seeming obliviousness to our plight produces a shaking of the fist at heaven and this response: “Don’t you care if we drown?” (4). The problem is one of perception. The disciples viewed themselves — and Jesus — as being subjected to the storm. But Jesus could sleep because he wasn’t. And neither were the disciples. Both the storm and their lives were subjected to Him.
- **App:** Trusting in your perception in rough waters and then blaming God because He doesn’t see things the same way you do will eventually lead to a capsized boat. The goal of God in your storm isn’t to convince God to see things your way. It’s to get you to see things His way.

## 4. There’s Always Life Lessons when it Ceases (39-41)

- **The Greatest Lessons from the Lord Jesus:** (1) If I asked you to name the most meaningful lesson from the Lord Jesus from the Bible, I’d get a whole host of answers. (2) Love your enemies. Pray for those who persecute you. (3) It’s better to give than to receive. (4) If a neighbor smites you on one cheek, turn and offer him the other also. (5) You have not because you ask now. (6) You forgive 70x7, just as the Lord has forgiven you. (7) But one of the most significant lessons in the Bible about Jesus is not uttered by Jesus at all. It’s coming via the disciples, during the calm and after the storm: “who is this that the wind and the seas obey Him.” The lesson? All of creation is subject to His word and glory because He is the God who created them.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** There were lessons to be learned for the disciples when Jesus calmed the sea. Equally, there are lessons to be learned for us when Jesus calms our sea.
- **Main Textual Emphasis: The Three Questions:** (1) The passage ends with three questions. Jesus asked two of them. And the disciples asked one. (2) They all come not during the storm but after it. It’s the calm after the storm that gives us the best chance of reflection. (3) The first question is a lesson about the most common thing we do during a storm: we are inclined to be afraid. We shouldn’t be because Jesus controls it. (4) The next question is a lesson about what takes place when we succumb to being afraid: we lack faith. (5) And the final is the point of the whole passage. The passage isn’t about Jesus calming the storms of your life. Sometimes he will. Sometimes he won’t. The passage is about Jesus commanding the wind and waves and both obeying Him.
- **App:** So, when your boat in life is tossed, you find the answer is the cross. And if a flood begins to rise, sustain your faith in Jesus Christ. Amen.

