



## 2020 February Sermon Series: Storm Proof

### Message #1: There's a Storm Brewing

#### Getting the Nod:

Opening Video: [Change the Story](#)

**According to the Government (NOAA Climate.gov)**, in the year 2018, storms cost America \$350 Billion dollars. That's not including other weather-related damage caused by droughts and forest fires!

**Series Overview:** In America, severe storms have caused billions in damages and taken many lives and in their wake, we see destruction and pain. While you may not have been personally touched by recent severe weather, nor may ever go through the devastation of a natural disaster, **you will face severe storms of life.**

All of us will be buffeted by temptation, betrayal, and pain from life's raging storms. We will face times of trouble, persecution, loneliness, and loss. How will you and your family prepare yourselves for these storms of life? The time to prepare for a storm is long before it's raging.

**In this series, Storm Proof, we will examine the importance of living life on a biblical foundation, acknowledging God as our refuge and source of strength.** We will learn how to prepare ourselves in advance to trust God in every circumstance, even when we don't understand all that is going on around us. (And we never will!) With God's help, we can overcome past hurts and prepare ourselves for whatever the future holds because we know the One that holds our future!

**Transitional Statement:** [NLT | Jn 16:33 I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.](#)"

#### Connecting Us:

**Three Kinds of Spiritual Storms:** (From Pastor Greg Laurie)

##### 1. Correcting storms.

- **Like Jonah.** When people choose to willfully disobey the Lord and head down a path away from where you know you need to be... God will then send a storm to correct you... like a Father should.
- **But remember this... God sends it from a heart of a father...**[NLT | Heb 12:5-6 And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, "My child, don't make light of the LORD's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. 6 For the LORD disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.](#)

##### 2. Protecting storms.

- Like Jesus with His 12. In John 6, after the feeding of another 5,000, the crowd tried to take Jesus by force to make Him King. But that wasn't what Jesus wanted for His ministry and disciples.

- So, Jesus sent them in a boat to go to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. He sent them into a storm... to show them more than a King... but much more.

### 3. Perfecting storms.

- Then there's Matthew 8. It was a storm that was sent to perform a work... a preferred result in His followers.
- NLT | 2 Co 4:17-18 **For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! 18 So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.**

**Transitional Statement:** Let's read together the storm found in Matthew 8...

#### God's Word on World Changing Love:

NKJV | Mt 8:23 Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. 24 And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. 25 Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" 26 But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. 27 So the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

**I have a question... How do you wake up Jesus when the storm is too much to handle?** We're taught to pray. We pray to Jesus for provisions, we pray for lost souls, we pray that God might bring relief to the suffering. But what kind of prayer should we offer up to God when the storms of life hit us? **Remember what has happened over the last 12 to 14 hours...**

#### What set this passage up?

- **They just finished feeding the 5,000.** This miracle ends up being the multiplication of provision. 12 Baskets were collected, and the crowd was filled... but realized this was not a mere preacher.
- **Jesus gets in a boat and the disciples follow Him.** Sometime during their trip, a great storm arose, and the waves were so high that their boat could not be seen for the waves.
- Not bothered by the storm's intensity... **Jesus was asleep.**
- **The disciples woke Jesus up and cried for Him to save them from death.** But Jesus rebukes them for their fear and calls them **men of little faith.**
- **Then Jesus stands up and rebuked the storm...** which immediately calmed the entire storm to a GREAT CALM.
- **Imagine that dramatic shift in volume...** movement... shouting... crying... no more need to get the water out of the boat... no more worry or fear... just silence. **I makes a new thought of "Be still and know that I am God!!!"**
- **The disciples marveled.** This miracle proved to take their concept of Jesus' power and authority to a new level... **they knew the forces of nature are under His command.**

#### It had been a long day!

- **The disciples: who had just had a long day of activities.** First there was the teaching of Jesus that drew a crowd of 10,000 plus. This was considered to be **an all-day conference.**
- **Then there was the serving time** where they literally saw to it that those thousands were fed.

- **Then they had to go around and collect the scraps** because Jesus told them to.
- **Then they jump in a boat and row several miles**, only to be overcome with this dramatic storm to the point of sinking. Think how feverishly they rowed for safety... or to not sink.
- **Jesus: Had the same long day.** The teaching which is estimated to be several daytime hours. To speak to 10,000 people requires more than sitting on a rock and speaking to a small group.
- **Then He feeds them massive crowd...** holding each loaf and fish as He breaks the bread over the many baskets. There's the interaction and times of blessings... then after a couple of hours... they're off to a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee.
- **A sea that is 13 miles long and no wider than 8 miles across.** It didn't take Jesus long to be rocked to sleep by all the rowing.
- **Then came the storm.** How do you wake up Jesus in a storm? **Just know this... that when we take our DRAMATIC fears and worries to Him... AND HE ANSWERS...HE WILL TEACH US SOMETHING ABOUT HOW TO HANDLE THIS STORM AND THE STORMS TO COME!!! Because Jesus is all about learning to live victorious and how to overcome!!!**

**Transitional Statement: So, what lessons does this storm have to offer us?** Well, I believe they give us seven spiritual keys to storm proofing our lives...

### Our Response to God's Word:

#### The Seven Spiritual Keys to Storm Proofing Our Lives:

1. **Testing. A faith that cannot be tested is a faith that can't be trusted.**
  - Faith is what we turn to when we feel like we're going under. When fear grabs you by the throat and tries to drown you... the boat you're in is faith!
  - NLT | Mt 17:20 ...Jesus told them. "I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible."
  - **Application:** Jesus gave them the answer to their cries... "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Faith is what gets us through the storms... what are we all doing to increase our faith???
  - **We need to change our perspective of the storm. THIS STORM IS WHAT WILL INCREASE MY FAITH AND HELP TO STORM PROOF MY LIFE IN THE FUTURE.**
2. **Timing. God's delays are not God's denials.**
  - Just because Jesus doesn't answer instantly... it does not mean He isn't going to answer!!! Maybe He is waiting for our persistence to provide the resistance!
  - NLT | Mt 10:22 **And all nations will hate you because you are my followers. But everyone who endures to the end will be saved.**
  - **Application: Persistence and Resistance...** it is a part of what makes us succeed. You cannot walk without the resistance of gravity. You cannot fly without air resistance. And you can't travel in a boat without the resistance of the sea.
  - The Greek word for "Endure" means to "take patiently" but it also means to preserve. **Persistence (endure) comes with resistance...** but it causes us to hold fast to faith.
3. **Arriving. God never promises smooth sailing, but He does promise to get us to the other side.**

- Jesus tells them 12 to get in the boat. Verse 23 says, **His disciples followed Him.**
- That means that Jesus led them into the storm!! He knows all things... and He knew the evening boat ride would eventually come... but He never promised smooth sailing... just the arriving!!
- **Application:** A part of storm proofing your life and faith is an acceptance of the horrific rocking to get to the heavenly rejoicing!!

**4. Clarifying. Chaos doesn't always mean something is wrong with us.**

- NLT | Jas 1:2-3 **Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. 3 For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.**
- Chaos doesn't mean that God is angry with us... that He doesn't love us... or that He has rejected us.
- **Application:** And chaos doesn't mean that you're not in the center of God's will because you're in a storm. Chaos is a normal part of life and living.
- **Illustration of a mighty oak from an acorn that has to strive through wind etc...**

**5. Trusting. Jesus uses this storm to be a University of Adversity to prove His authority.**

- It is only in the storm that you can discover the power God has to deliver you.
- It is only in the storm that you find out He's an ever-present hope in the time of need.

**6. Expanding. Riding out a storm with Jesus gives us confidence to determine our capacity as an overcomer.**

- When we gain confidence in the first storm, it will determine our capacity to be an overcomer.
- NLT | Jn 16:33 **I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."**
- **Application:** It is only in the storm that we learn to win again and again and again! God sent to David a lion... then a bear... before He sent Goliath. Let Him build your confidence... for the bigger storms to come!!!

**7. Refocusing. When we focus on the storm, we will experience fear. When we focus on Jesus, we will experience faith.**

- Every opportunity has a difficulty... and every difficulty has an opportunity.
- That truth is what defines our potential in the storm.
- **Application:** Where do we go when we are being held down by the winds of chaos, tossed back and forth by the waves of pain and sorrow? **You go to the One who the winds and seas obey!!!**

**Storms will come. We don't determine the beginning and the end of a storm. But when we cry out to the One who does control the storm... He will get us through to the other side!!!**

**Transition:** As the Praise Team comes, let's stand together. Is there anyone who God is spoken to?

Drawing the Net:

**Illustration of John Wesley afraid in a storm:** Fresh out of Oxford, John Wesley was perplexed over England's complicated social problems: slavery, economic uncertainties, corruption, drunkenness, gambling, and prostitution. This deeply religious, sensitive soul became a parish minister and, subsequently, a missionary to American Indians along the coast of Georgia. His ministries were far from successful. Disappointed and discouraged, he returned to Britain.

During the voyage, his ship was raked by a raging storm. Wesley was unashamedly frightened. In fact, the only calm persons aboard were Moravian missionaries. Noticing their behavior, Wesley asked if they were not afraid. "Why should I be afraid," one answered, "I know Christ." Then, with disarming directness, he asked, "Do you know Christ?" Wesley was uncomfortable, for in his heart he now realized he did not know Christ. [(Jones, G. C. (1986). 1000 illustrations for preaching and teaching (202--203). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.) From a sermon by Matthew Kratz, Hope That Stands in the Storm, 9/16/2011]

**I want to pray for those who are in a storm today... It could be a...**

Lost job, a marriage crisis, a failed attempt, family strife, a health issue, a tragic life-altering loss, someone has rejected you, or you've been tossed to the curb by someone you care about deeply.

Jesus finished His Sermon on the Mount with a story of a storm and how two men handled it differently. Will you today build your life on the Rock... or sand? It's your decision.

**I'm going to pray for us all.**

**I want to challenge us all to respond with a non-negotiable to live the Love of God!**

### **The Pastoral Prayer of Challenge**

(Make the congregation aware of the altar time being both now and after the service)

Truths to pray about:

- The three kinds of storms: Correcting; Protecting; and Perfecting. Show us which one.
- Lord, to some of we think you're asleep... help them to see your eyes of love.

Ways to apply this message to our lives:

- Let us accept the storms for what they are... tests, Your timing, Your chance to build our characters and our faith.
- Make us trust you. Help us look to the other side and see it's value. Build our confidence... make us overcomers.

**Join with the Praise Team and Let's close off with this song...**