

From Tempest to Triumph

Matthew 8:23-34

Last week we studied Matthew 8:14-22. We talked about how Jesus was a suffering servant. The way that he suffered was by taking on the physical sickness, the grief, the sorrows, the burdens of many, but he also took the sins of the whole world upon himself.

He was human just like us, yet he did not give up when he faced hardship and challenges. We often throw in the towel very quickly in our own lives when we experience adversity. But he endured the suffering, and the rejection and continued to serve.

In 2 Corinthians 8:9 it says, "though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

He gave up all riches, all comfort, he esteemed all men above himself.

He was obedient unto the death of the cross. He set the example for us on how to suffer and serve others at the same time.

In our own lives, we need to follow that example, even when we are struggling and facing our own hardships, we can still find a way to give.

And the best thing we can give at any time is the gospel. The good news that Jesus Christ died, was buried, and rose again as a payment for our sins...The only thing you must do to be saved is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ...

Jesus Leaves Capernaum

Today we are going to study verses 23 – 34. We are going to finish up chapter 8 today.

I want you to understand all the things that led up to this point. At the beginning of the chapter, Jesus and his disciples entered the city of Capernaum.

Jesus healed a man that had leprosy, he healed the centurion's servant who was sick, he healed Peter's mother-in-law, and he healed great multitudes of people, the entire city of Capernaum showed up at the door...The disciples saw Jesus do amazing miracles all within a short period of time.

""Matthew 8:23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. **""**

Jesus and his disciples got into a ship at Capernaum and their plan was to go to the other side of the sea of galilee. We see this in Luke 8

""Luke 8:22 Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.""

Capernaum is on the north, northwest shore of the sea of galilee. So when it's talking about the other side of the lake, it's most likely referring to the south eastern shore of the sea of galilee.

And a little bit later in the chapter we will see that they entered into the land of the Gergesenes. *(Which is in this approximate area) The journey across could have been close to about 7 miles.*

A Tempest Arises

""Matthew 8:24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves... ""

A tempest is a very violent storm. This storm was so bad that the ship was being covered with waves.

The sea of galilee is essentially a large lake. It's not like you're out in the middle of the ocean. Storms are actually pretty rare in that region of Israel. But there are still very powerful storms that do occur. *(I want to show you what a powerful storm looks like on the sea of galilee)*

So we see there was rarely a dull moment in the life of Jesus and his disciples.

The disciples just witnessed many great and wonderful works that Jesus did. They were climbing that spiritual mountain so to speak. Ministering to the poor and needy. Doing great works for God.

But with every mountain, there comes a valley. With every high, there is a low point up ahead. And the disciples were now facing a low point. They were facing a physical storm, a hardship, and a trial.

In our own lives, we constantly face those ups and downs all the time. Things can go great for days, weeks, or even months, but then when you least expect it you get hit hard with the storms of life.

Life is filled with these ups and downs. I want you to think about the sea for a moment. The sea is a picture of many different things. *(we will study that in more detail in the future)* But the sea can be a picture of our own lives.

Think about how the tides go in and out every single day. There's high tide and low tide. It's a never-ending cycle.

When the tide comes in, it's physically impossible to keep the tides from going out again. You can try all you want, but God has established the cycles of the sea.

""**Proverbs 8:29** When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:.""

Just like you can't stop the tides, you can't stop the highs and lows of life.
When you get on a roller coaster, there's no getting off. Once you're on, you're in for the ride.

Those of you who are older, that have been around longer understand that there are many different seasons in life. Different seasons bring new highs and new lows.

""**Ecclesiastes 3:1-8** To every *thing there is* a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: **2** A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up *that which* is planted; **3** A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; **4** A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; **5** A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; **6** A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; **7** A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; **8** A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.""

In this passage we are given a picture of the highs and lows. The good and the bad.
The never-ending cycle that we go through in our lives. Just like the tides of the sea.

When God created the world everything was good. But because man sinned against God, sin entered into the world. And death by sin. That's one of the reasons we have to face these ups and downs in our life. Because of sin.

Not only is the sea cycling in and out, high and low, it can also be very unstable.
Being out on the ocean, conditions can change quickly. Violent storms can come out of nowhere. Huge waves can toss boats to and fro.

When we face hardships in our lives, we can go from having stability and peace, to instability and chaos overnight. Things can change very quickly.

Many of us have already experienced that in life. Maybe you're experiencing instability and chaos right now.

So the question is, when you reach that low point, how are you handling it?

Riding Out The Storm

Let's see how Jesus and his disciples handled it.

""**Matthew 8:24** And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.""

Jesus Christ was sound asleep during this violent storm.

It says the ship was covered in waves...

""Mark 4:37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.""

""Luke 8:23 But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water*, and were in jeopardy. ""

While Jesus was peacefully sleeping during this turmoil. His disciples were handling things a little differently.

""Matthew 8:25 And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.""

""Matthew 8:26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.""

The way that the disciples handled this situation is the way most of us would probably handle this.

You have a ship filled with water. Waves continuing to beat on the ship.
They cried out in fear.
But Jesus said, why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?

Remember that the disciples had seen Jesus do many miracles up to this point.
But even though they had seen Him do those great things. They were still not fully grasping the full extent of his power.

""Matthew 8:27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!""

In our own lives, it's easy for us to forget the mighty works that God has done for us.
We too can kind find ourselves not realizing the full extent of God's power.

If you find yourself struggling with health, finances, maybe someone is sick and dying,
And you think, "God, can you really fix this?"

Understand who is in control. The one who commands the winds and the seas!
The one who has all power and authority over everything.

""Jeremiah 5:21-22 Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: **22** Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand *for* the bound of the sea by a perpetual

decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?"

""Psalm 89:6-9 For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? *who* among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD? **7** God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him. **8** O LORD God of hosts, who *is* a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee? **9** Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them."

When we live in fear, when we have lack of faith in times of trouble, we need to remember who God is, what He has done, and what He will do. He has the power to calm the sea.

How do we increase our faith during those times?

""Romans 10:17 So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

A lot of times when people face a storm and their getting beat down by the waves of life, one of the first responses they have is to call out to God. And it's a good thing to call out to God in time of need. Just make sure you're not calling out to Him with the wrong attitude.

"God, are you really there? Why are you allowing me to go through this?"

"God, when are you going to intervene and fix my problems"

This is the way many people call out to God, but instead of turning to God's Word and increasing their faith, they turn to other things for temporary relief.

Alcohol, drugs, sexual sin. Those things only mask pain for a moment and bring more destruction into your life.

Don't Waver in Faith

In those times when you're low, when you're getting beat down... Remember to come to God in faith and don't waver.

""James 1:2-8 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; **3** Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. **4** But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. **5** If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. **6** But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. **7** For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. **8** A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

When we waver in our faith, when we fear and doubt God, we are like one of the waves of the sea that's driven by the wind and tossed.

We cannot expect to receive anything of the Lord when we doubt him. You want to have that full confidence and know that He is able.

So do you have instability in your life? Are you going through a storm right now? It's time to increase your faith. It's time to read the word of God. Know who God is. Fully trust His promises. Become consistent.

You don't want to be a double minded man that is unstable in all his ways.

We cannot avoid the storms and waves of life, but we can determine how we will navigate them. The waves are unstable, but we have stability through faith in Jesus Christ.

There are many Biblical examples of people going through highs and lows and we can learn from these individuals on how to successfully navigate these trials and hardships.

Job

I want to quickly show you two examples. The first one is Job. Many of us know the story of Job. He was a great man that had great wealth and abundance.

""Job 1:3 His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.""

Satan accused Job of only fearing God because of the hedge that was placed around him. And satan said if everything was taken away from him that he would curse God.

So God allowed satan to take everything from Job. His possessions, children, and health. His friends falsely accused him, and his wife told him to curse God and die.

Even through all the pain and suffering, Job never cursed God. He was strong in faith, even though he didn't understand.

""Job 13:15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him..."

""Job 19:25 For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth:""

Through faith, Job navigated the storm. He got to the other side. And God blessed him with much more than he had in the beginning.

""Job 42:10 And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.""

""**Job 42:12-13** So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. **13** He had also seven sons and three daughters.""

Joseph

This is one of my most favorite accounts in the Bible, the life of Joseph in the old testament. Joseph was one of the 12 sons of Jacob.

He was his father's favorite and he wore the coat of many colors. God gave Joseph dreams that one day his family would bow before him.

But his brothers hated him. They wanted him dead. So they cast him into a pit. But they decided to sell him into slavery.

""**Genesis 37:28** Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty *pieces* of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.""

Joseph faced many trials in Egypt, he was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife and thrown into prison. In prison he interpreted dreams, but he was forgotten by the butler that he helped.

But even through all of those hardships he maintained his integrity, he kept trusting God's plan. And he eventually became second in command in all of Egypt.

And through God's wisdom, Joseph was able to save the people from the seven years of famine that came into the land.

All of those dreams that Joseph had when he was young came true. His brothers came to Egypt looking for food. But Joseph showed mercy and kindness to his brothers.

""**Genesis 45:5** Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.""

""**Genesis 45:7** And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.""

The very hardships that he faced were the stepping stones that God used to save many people.

""**Genesis 50:20** But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive.""

In these two examples, we see God's provision and plan coming together in the end. Because Job and Joseph had faith, the Lord brought them through the storm, and what was meant for evil, God used it for good.

Very often in life, when there is something good around the corner, you can almost guarantee there is a storm that's going to come before it.

Before God placed this Church here, there were many storms that had to be faced. Many trials, many challenges, many hardships. But by the grace of God, we didn't give up and he got us to the other side.

When we go out soul winning, or preaching the gospel in the community, a lot of times we face opposition. Sometimes it's people trying to stop us, sometimes it's trains getting in the way. But when the opposition comes, we know we have to push through because something good is going to come.

And you know what happens when we push through? Someone ends up believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and is saved forever.

Let's go back to Matthew 8. They made it through the storm. Let's see what happens next.

""**Matthew 8:28-34** And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. **29** And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? **30** And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. **31** So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. **32** And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. **33** And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. **34** And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought *him* that he would depart out of their coasts.""

After they made it through the storm, two men were waiting to be delivered from these devils. Jesus cast them into the swine. He performed another great miracle. And we get a little more detail about what happened afterwards in the book of Mark.

""**Mark 5:18-20** And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. **19** Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. **20** And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all *men* did marvel.""

Closing Thoughts

As we finish Matthew chapter 8, I want you to think back on the major theme of this chapter. *(And if you haven't heard the other lessons, I want to encourage you to go back and listen to them on the website.)* One of the main themes of this chapter is Faith.

At the start of chapter 8, the leper and the centurion both showed great faith. The disciples lacked faith when they faced the storm. But as we continue through the new testament we will see their faith grow stronger and stronger as they hear the word of God. And we know they became bold preachers of the gospel.

Just like the tides of the sea will continue, the ups and downs, the highs and lows of life will also continue.

It's not a question of if a storm will come...it's when a storm comes, how will you respond?

Will you lack faith and be frozen with fear, letting the waves toss you? Or will you stand firm on the foundation of the unshakable, unchanging God?

Hear His Word. Build your faith. Believe His promises. Rest in the Savior, Jesus Christ.

""**Psalms 107:23-30** They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; 24. These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. 25. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. 26. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. 27. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. 28. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. 29. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. 30. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.""

The tempest might bring great waves in your life. The waves might mount up to the heaven and go down to the depths.

But Jesus Christ will calm the storm If you place your faith and trust in Him.

He went through the greatest storm of all, he suffered on the cross, and his soul went to the depths of hell. He paid for all your sins. He rode out the storm, he conquered death and hell so you could have everlasting life.

Make sure you're placing all your faith and trust in Him today.

When the tempest comes, you can already know that you will triumph and make it to the other side. Let's Pray