



## The Storms Will Come And Go

***“Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God”*** --Acts 27: 25

You never know when a squall may hit. Maybe you remember Hurricane Grace (October, 1991) which collided with a cold front from Canada and a storm from the Great Lakes off the coast of Nova Scotia, creating an extreme tempest. With waves a hundred feet tall and winds over ninety-five miles an hour, that storm-of-the-century left little warning when it struck its victims.

***“Living for the Lord, fearing Him each day, best prepares the soul for the stormy way;  
Then as trials come, tempting to despair, we can rest secure, safe within His care.”*** --Anonymous

On October 30, 1991, the sword-fishing boat named the Andrea Gail was reported overdue by its owner, Mr. Robert Brown. Its six-man crew, headed home from Grand Banks, Canada, with a hold full of fish. Sometime in the middle of the night, the Andrea Gail found herself at the center of an aggressively militant storm. *"She's comin' on, boys, and she's comin' on strong,"* radioed Captain Billy Tyne of the Andrea Gail. Soon after, Billy Tyne and his five crew mates went under without a trace. They were never seen again. It's heartbreaking when people don't make it through a storm!

Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,  
When the clouds unfold their wings of strife?  
When the strong tides lift and the cables strain,  
Will your anchor drift, or firm remain?  
We have an anchor that keeps the soul  
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll.  
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,  
Grounded firm and deep in the Savior's love.

-- Priscila Owens 1882

Maybe you have been hit by a storm this year? Not a literal storm, but a crisis or tragedy that hit your life without warning, leaving you ravaged and riddled with problems. We all face storms in life. It has been said that only two kinds of people exist in this world: those who are going through a crisis and those who are going to go through a crisis. *It's God's unseen presence that comforts me, I know He's always near; and when storms besiege my soul, He gently says, "My child, don't fear."*

One crazy night out on a radically storm-tossed Mediterranean sea, in a near waterlogged, splintery ship there was an unusual apostle. His name was Paul and he was headed for a city called Rome. This man had suffered persecution, ill-treatment and imprisonment, but he didn't even care as long as he was advancing with his God-given mission. He knew things wouldn't be easy and that he would shortly appear before Caesar for judgment. None of these things moved him. He was determined! You know his story well. Yes, on the way, a horrendous storm rose up to destroy the vessel he traveled in. It was so horrific that the

sailors on the ship thought they were all going to perish in those frigid dark waters. They hadn't seen the sun or stars for days and they probably didn't know what direction they had been drifting in.

You know, time and time again God reminded Paul of His presence, and no doubt when he needed it the most. God knows what you need, and He knows when you need it. The storm didn't blindsides God. He did fall off His throne and ask Gabriel: "Oh no, what do we do now?" He knew where Paul was and when he could use that extra assurance.

When Paul was in prison in Jerusalem, the Lord appeared to him and exhorted him to be courageous (Acts 23:11). Then from prison in Rome, he wrote to his buddy, Tim, "***The Lord stood with me and gave me strength . . .***" (2 Tim. 4:16). In some unique way, God reassured Paul of His powerful presence. Acts 27 tells us that God sent an angel to reassure Paul.

You too can take heart in the face of danger, howling storm winds or gloomy uncertainty. Yes you can because of God's perceived (or unperceived) presence with you. You've been in His presence all week long. So when your heart sinks into the drink, when it seems as though your life is falling apart... you must remember the Lord is there with you. You are not alone. No, there are not always easy answers up for grabs. But we can be sure of this: He will be with us through the storms of life.

Because of God's presence Paul was able by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to boldly stand up on the deck of that tempest-tossed ship and announce to that fearful crew, "***I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.' Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me***" (Acts 27:22–26). What courage! Man, I'd love to be more like Paul.

What a wonderful thing when we as Christians, in the face of opposition, can say those words, "***I believe God.***" It's especially great to be able to say that in this spiritually-whacked-world that only seems to get darker and stormier with every passing day. In fact, we are living during a time when the wicked accelerate their wickedness and when serious wrong is seriously called right and right is called wrong. Everything seems to be turned around.

But even in various storms, God is eternal, He never changes. He told the Prophet Malachi, "***I am the Lord, I do not change***" (Mal. 3:6). He is our firm foundation, our impenetrable harbor of stability, our Rock of defense. The Bible says, "***Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever***" (Heb. 13:8). What He did for others He could do for you. We can trust Him. Like the Apostle Paul, we can say, "***I believe God***" even when things suddenly become unbelievable.

Paul went through stormy waters, but not because of his own choices. And maybe you are in a storm today because of the foolish decisions of others, or maybe because of the decisions of those in authority over you? Many Christians have been there at some time or another. Maybe the storm has past and you are trying to figure out where to start all over ...with your hand full of debris? The Apostle Paul and crew came out of their storm with wet planks.

He was really in deep – in a terrible ocean storm because of shallow bull-headedness. Have you ever had to deal with such close-mindedness when you saw a no-brainer situation coming? The biblical account says, "***Sailing was now dangerous***" (Acts 27:9), and he tried to warn them, but they didn't listen to him. "***The centurion was more persuaded by the helmsman and the owner of the ship than by the things***

*spoken by Paul*” (v. 11). Who does he think he is?—this scrawny little Jew that would tell us how to sail?

There are a lot of reasons why Christians struggle in storms. Sometimes it’s due to their own right or wrong choices. Sometimes it’s nobody’s fault. We live in a sin-cursed world where horrible things happen even to decent people. But our loving Lord still remains there for us, sovereign to work things out for the good of those who love Him. Romans 8:28 is still in effect. The important thing is to remain loyal to Christ.

Opposition for Christ’s followers is normal. In Matthew, we see the disciples tossed by powerful waves, fighting against a strong contrary wind. They were in a storm due to the decision of a righteous Leader. **“Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side”** (Matt. 14:25). They were really afraid too, so Jesus went to them walking on the turbulent whitecaps. He could have flown over the waves to them. Why didn’t He? I think He wanted the disciples (and you) to know that He can easily overcome the effects of any storm. Storms still don’t surprise Christ. But Pete was so excited that he also hit the waves, cruising on that H2o -- on the word he heard from Jesus.

***Standing on the promises that cannot fail, when the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,  
By the living Word of God I shall prevail, standing on the promises of God. . . .  
God may calm the storm around you, but more often He'll calm the storm within you.***

Fear only gripped Pete when he glanced away – that was when he failed. I’ve failed before. Don’t you just hate it when your faith falters when you’re in dangerous circumstances that are bent on destroying you? In trying to do what was right Pete really got himself in deep waters. It was more up-close-and-personal now. Pete was having closer fellowship with that storm in a way, after being distracted – at it was doing its best to swallow him alive. But then Jesus stretched out His hand (v. 31). When the storm doesn’t care, Jesus does! We mustn’t be distracted. It’s time to lock-on – fixing your gaze on the One above the waves!

I would like to say thank you to all of you who have tried to serve Jesus and failed. If you sought to glorify Christ and came up against hard religious persecution, or opposition from partially-ignorant-carnal Christians (maybe from those who had been watching you awhile hoping..), or even from basic sinner trouble, thanks for giving it your best! Have faith in God! Get up and try again! Lean hard on the grace in Christ and press on. **“If God is for us, who can be against us?”** (Rom. 8:31).

No matter how dark the storm clouds, no matter how the winds may blow, no matter whose decision got you in the storm, remember: 1.) There was another Passenger on board with Paul to protect him. Have you taken him onboard? 2.) Paul forgave the shortsightedness of those who put him in that situation – he kept his cool, 3) The lives of those he warned remained more important to Paul than his own life. He just wanted to be a good witness in every situation. Even though the circumstances of Paul’s life were far from perfect, he didn’t waste time thinking of himself. He was praying for and lovingly communicating truth to sinners who were bound for a shipwreck far worse. Yes Paul turned his ocean liner into a net-fishing trawler for the purpose of capturing these men for God’s Kingdom. 4.) Paul trusted God to bring him through. He never faltered in his trust in the Word of God, 5.) Paul prayerfully got over it. He didn’t live in the past – he got rid of the baggage (cargo) and people were saved.

Please know that every storm you experience was first sifted through the loving fingers of God before it reached you. He wisely decided. Think about how Satan couldn’t touch Job or go beyond the **“hedge around him and his household”** (Job 1:10) until God okayed it? The glue that held Job’s storm-tossed boat together, so to speak, was his personal faith (not in faith or in his confession, but) in a faithful God. He declared, **“Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble? . . . The Lord gave and the Lord has**

***taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised***” (2:10; 1:21). Sure his analysis was, at best, partially right. Actually, the devil had “taken away” and sent the “trouble.” But still Job trusted in a Father who knows what is best for His children, and that He had to okay these trials somewhere along the way.

The storms of life always reveal the strength of our faith. Peter said, ***“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ...”*** (1 Pet. 1:6-7).

Even when we are obedient to the Lord, the skies of adversity may not always clear immediately. Circumstances may get worse before they improve. But praise God in all circumstances. His grace and providence will sustain you, and the storm will pass.

***“Have faith in God, the sun will shine, though dark your path may be today;  
His love has planned your way and mine, have faith in God, have faith always.”*** —Anonymous

If you are seeking to obey the Lord, expect opposition. Expect obstacles. Expect difficulties and harassment. But also expect God to see you through. Storm winds might howl, but it's always darkest before the dawn.

Have Kurt's fishing devos blessed you? Click on the "Contact" button and let him know!

© Copyright 2007 by Fish4Souls. All rights reserved.