

Title: Peace In The Storm

Text: Matt. 8:23-27; 14:22-33

Would you open your bibles, please , to the Gospel of Matthew. I want to look at two passages of scripture on the subject: PEACE IN THE STORM. First of all Matthew chapter 8. Then Matthew chapter 14. You will want to keep your bibles, open, to these two passages. We will flip back and forth.

Matthew chapter 8 verse 23. (Read Vs 23-27) Matthew 14 (Read Vs 22-33)

Prayer

You know, it is amazing how many of us as Christians are living without peace. Maybe you are here today and you are troubled about something. I know there is something in your life, because there is something in every one's life. Some burden that is very heavy. Some care. Maybe there is something or someone you are worried about. Maybe there is something you are fearful of. So, everyone of us has a need of knowing what it means to have peace in the midst of storms.

Now, these two stories in the Gospel of Matthew reveal much about PEACE IN THE MIDST OF STORMS. Not peace without storms. But, peace in the midst of storms.

I have series of questions that I am asking this morning. And I want to answer them in the best way I can from the Word of God.

(1C) Question number one: WHAT IS PEACE? WHAT IS PEACE?

There are basically two kinds of peace taught in the Bible. Romans 5:1 says:
"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. "PEACE WITH GOD."

(1D) SO, THE FIRST KIND OF PEACE DEALS WITH YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

This, of course, is the basic need of all non-Christians. If you are not a Christian, if you have never received Jesus Christ as your personal savior, your basic need is to have peace with God. You see, according to the Bible, all Christians have peace with God. It is a present possession of every believer.

But, my friend, if you have never come to Christ there is a basic need of peace that exist between you and God. You see, there is a problem. The problem is sin. And sin has separated you from God. It is as though you were opposing God. It is as though a great war was going on in your life. But, the moment you come to Christ and receive Him as your Lord and Savior, you have peace with God.

(2D) But, there is a second kind of peace in the Bible. And that is the PEACE OF GOD. It is a quality of life that Jesus gives to the believer. It is found for example in Philippians chapter 4 verses 6 and 7, where Paul says: "Be anxious for nothing." That is: don't worry about anything. "But in everything; by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." It will be like building a fortress. The word "guard" means "to build a fortress around you. We sing:

"A mighty fortress is our God. A bulwark never failing."

It is a great shelter in the time of storm. Build a fortress. Dear friends, the peace of God will do that. It will build a fortress around your heart, your emotional nature, and around your mind. It will put you on a steady road in the midst of consistent torment, or all the pressures that come against you.

AND THAT IS THE KIND OF PEACE, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT! ABOUT THIS MESSY, PEACE IN A STORM. THE PEACE OF GOD IN THE STORMS OF LIFE.

(2C) Now, let's come to the second question. WHY? Why do we need peace?

Look at Matthew chapter 8 verse 24. It says, "And behold, there arose a great storm in the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves: but, He himself was asleep."

(1D) Why do we need peace? First of all, because of the greatness of the storm. Hay! Let me tell you, the storms of life are great. Jesus always taught that. Here, there was a literal, physical, storm on the sea. But, obviously, what Jesus teaches, here, as well as chapter 14, is applying to the storms of life. And our need of personal peace and trust in Him. So, it is because of the greatness of the storm that we need peace.

Now, I would like you to notice two words in Vs 24 of Matt. 8. First is the word "GREAT." It was a "great storm." The boat was literally covered with the waves. Do you feel that way at times? Do you feel like you are drowning? Like you are being covered by the pressures of life? Remember, these men were expert fishermen. They shouldn't have been afraid. They should have known what to do. But, this wasn't any ordinary storm. This was a GREAT STORM. And the boat was literally covered with water. And they were not able to handle the situation.

Just like many of us. We are not able to handle what we are facing. And consequently deep within our hearts there is a constant need of satisfaction. It is a restless spirit. On the outside everything maybe fine. We are doing our job. Being the kind of person in our homes that we ought to be. But, inside, there is a great storm.

There is little peace. There is little rest.

Look over at Matt. chapter 14 verse 24. This verse says that the boat had gone a great distance from the land. And there is little hope for help. And the boat is being battered by the waves. The word "battered" is often used of the pressures of life. And I thought, WOW! The very word that refers to pressures, pressing in on us and causing distress in our life, is, also, used here by the Spirit of God for these waves.

It, also, says that "the wind was contrary." The word "contrary" is the word for "hostile." It means "opposite." And many of the things that we face in life are hostile, contrary, opposite. The problems and pressures of life are battering us.

People do this all the time. How often do you run into people who pressure you? Who bother you? Who disturbs you and cause anxiety within your heart? People who don't like you. And you know that you don't like that person. And you know that every time you are around them, they drive you up the wall?

I will never forget a friend of mine when we first meet, I don't know what it was, but the two of us just didn't get along. He was just as bored with me as I was with him. And we couldn't stand to be together. I don't know what it was. But, the Lord used it.

One day I decided that this had to stop. And so we got together. Oh, what a wonderful thing to do. We got together and talked about it. I said, "I don't like you." And he said, "I don't like you either." I said, "Your personality just bothers me. And it is the little things that get to me." And he said, "I feel the same way about you." And we realized what was happening; and we concluded that it was wonderful to disagree in the Lord. And then we prayed together.

You know, dear friends, God made you the way you are. And he made me like I am.

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And he can put his peace in your heart and my heart. And even though we are different we can have peace. I can honestly say that from then on I have had peace when I am in the company of that gentlemen.

Dear friends, the problem with most of the things we suffer is because we haven't realized how great the storm is. Or, how wonderful is God's peace in the midst of the storm.

So, why do we need peace? Because of the greatness of the storm. (2D) But, secondly, we need peace because of our own fears. Look over in chapter 8 again. Chapter 8 verse 26 Jesus says: "Why are you timid or fearful, you men of little faith?" FEARFUL Now think about it. These men were expert fishermen. They knew what they were doing. Yet, the storm was too great. WHY ARE YOU FEARFUL?

Look over in chapter 14. Chapter 14 verse 25: "And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were frightened, saying, 'it is a ghost.' And they cried out for fear." The phrase "cried out" means "they screamed." They were scared to death. FEAR.

There are all kinds of fears, aren't there? Did you know that Jesus said that anxiety was fear? Did you know that the Lord taught that worry was fear? There is something that we are afraid of when we worry. ... FEAR!

So, because of our fear we have need of peace. I don't know what you are troubled about, today. I don't know what you are worrying about. I know what I am worrying about. I know my problems. And I know that God's answer is his peace. His wonderful peace. *Peace of God*

(3C) And this brings us to the third question. WHERE DO WE FIND PEACE? WHERE DO WE FIND ~~PEACE?~~ *The Peace of God.*

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Look at chapter 14 verse 27. It says, "But immediately Jesus spoke to them saying, Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." Where do we find peace?

(1D) Number one, in the personal presence of Jesus. There is a song that says: "I meet Jesus in the morning." The idea is having peace and rest during the day, in the midst of all the storms. We are to meet Jesus in the morning because there is peace in his presence.

Jesus said, "It is I; do not be afraid. Jesus said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." He said, "Lo, I am with you always even until the end of the age." "It is I, do not be afraid. I am here." *We find peace in the presence of Jesus*

(2D) But, secondly, we find peace in God's wonderful power. Look at Vs 32 of chapter 14.

"When they got into the boat, the wind stopped." It was a miracle. The wind stopped.

Look over at chapter 8 verse 26: "then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and it became perfectly calm." Notice the contrast. "Great storm." Now, a "perfect calm." Exact opposite.

Vs 27: "And the men marveled" These expert fishermen who had been through many storms on the sea of Galilee. And they said, "What kind of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

Dear friends, you will find peace in the power of Jesus. You know, Jesus has a lot of power. And He can give you all the peace that you need. He can rebuke and calm the troubled seas of your life.

Oh, let me tell you, there is peace in His personal presence. "I am with you always." "It is I; do not be afraid."

And there is peace in his wonderful power. He rebuked the winds and they stopped.

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There was a perfect calm. Do you need a perfect calm in your heart? Do you need to be at peace? No longer troubled and distressed? WHERE DO YOU FIND IT? In the personal presence and power of Jesus Christ.

(4C) One final question: HOW DO WE GET THIS PEACE? HOW? Do We Get The Peace of God

Now, if you have never come to accept Christ into your life, or you are not sure of your relationship with Christ, and you are saying, "Man, I want this peace. How do I get peace? Or, maybe you are a Christian today, and you say: "I want the peace of God that settles my heart and the storms and worries of life. HOW DO YOU GET THIS PEACE?

I believe there are just two steps indicated by our Lord, here. Just two steps, whether non-christian or Christian. Two steps. What are they?

(1D) Number one, as indicated in both chapter 8 and 14, you must recognize your need.

You must recognize your need.

Chapter 8 verse 25 says: "His disciples came to Him and awoke him." Dear friends, they knew who to come to. And they said: "Lord, save us; we are perishing."

It is amazing, but you just can't help people until they see their need. "Lord, save us for we are perishing!" Dear friends, have you come to that point? Have you seen your need? As long as you think you can work it out, you will never have peace.

Now, look over at chapter 14. There you have a stronger example in the case of Peter. I like Peter. It seems that he is always sticking his foot in his mouth. But, he is always doing something that indicates that he has got some character to him. And here he is in a boat. There is a storm on the sea and the disciples see Jesus walking toward them on the water. They all say it is a ghost. But, Jesus says, "no, it is I, do not be afraid." And good old Peter jumps out off the boat and starts to walk towards Jesus on

the water. I like that. I really do.

Oh, Man! I wish folks would come to Christ that way. No hesitation. Peter just jumps out off the boat and he is walking on the water. And then it happens. He notices that he is walking on he water. And he notices the winds. And he is afraid. He begins to sink. Please notice Vs 30: "But seeing the wind." Do you understand? If he had been looking at Jesus, he wouldn't have seen the wind. And that is the point.

Do you know why most of us see the winds of life, the pressures and the problems? Do you know why, dear friends? BECAUSE WE ARE NOT LOOKING AT JESUS. THAT IS WHY. When Peter took his eyes off of Jesus and onto the winds and the strom, WHAT HAPPENED? HE BEGAN TO SINK. BUT, PRAISE GOD, WHAT DID HE DO? HE RECOGNIZED HIS NEED AND HE CRIED OUT: LORD, SAVE ME.

My dear friends, if you have never come to know Jesus Christ by personal faith, God wants to give you His life. He wants to give you eternal life and forgive every one of your sins: PAST--PRESENT---AND FUTURE. The Bible says that there is no condemnation or judgment to those who are in Christ Jesus. He wants you to be like Peter and cry out: LORD, SAVE ME! And if you realize your need this morrowing, God will save you.

So, How do you get peace? Recognize your need. (2D) But, secondly, you must trust Christ once you have called upon him. You must trust Christ.

In Matthew chapter 8 Jesus says: "Why are you afraid, you men of little faith." You have little faith. You are not trusting me, *in other words*

He said the same thing about Peter in Chapter 14. "O, you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

The whole application of these two stories is about FAITH AND TRUST IN CHRIST in

order' to get victory or peace in the midst of the storms of life. TRUST HIM.

When Peter took his eyes off of Jesus he wasn't trusting anymore and he began to sink. He began to doubt when he saw the storm around him. And many of us as Christians, oh, we know Jesus, yet, we don't have God's peace because we doubt and we worry instead of trusting Him. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you." Now, dear friends, was he lying or was he telling the truth? Why do we trust the Lord for our eternal salvation, yet, we have a hard time trusting him to calm the storms of life?

FAITH SEES IT ... TRUST IT .. AND BELIEVE IT. And we can have simple faith in receiving Christ into our lives. But, then as Christians we never learn the lesson that as you have received Christ by faith, so we are to walk in Him by faith. It is just as simple, now, to trust Him for His peace as it was to trust Him for salvation. TRUST HIM. RELIE ON HIM. CLING TO HIM. REST UPON HIM. BELIEVE HIM NOW.

And if you have never received Christ into your life, now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation. You may never have another chance to receive Christ. You do not know about tomorrow. All you have is right now. And when you cry out to the Lord, the Bible says that God hears and God will save you.

Christ And my Christian friends, God will bring that peace. God will calm the troubled heart when we recognize our need and trust Him. Amen? Let's hear an "AMEN."

LET US CLOSE IN PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, we thank you today, for your wonderful love for us. We thank you that there is peace in the midst of storms. No matter how great the storm there is peace Teach us, Lord, that your peace is here and ready to operate in each of our lives. Help us to learn the lesson that Peter learned. If we take our eyes off of Jesus we to are

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going to sink. Lord, teach us to trust you. As a Christian to trust you as much as when we came to Christ. Then Father we pray for every person in our midst today that has never learned or never understood or never accepted the wonderful message of the Gospel that Jesus loves us. That He died and paid for all of our sins. That the only hope of eternal life is through receiving you as personal savior. And Father, we pray ~~that~~^{that} today might be the day of decision for many. That all of us might learn what it means to have peace in the midst of storms. We ask this in Jesus name and for His sake...Amen.