

I hate the rain

- Don't tell anyone... but I loved the drought (I know... I'm evil)
 - I just hate the rain—It disrupts my gig (I live in Carp...I expect sunshine—everyday, all winter long)
 - Rain just interrupts that expectation and whatever it is I want to do
- I want smooth sailing and blue skies everyday—no storms
 - But that isn't how the world works—is it?
 - If we didn't have storms we would dry up—nothing would grow—we would truly suffer then
- So, we know, we have to suffer storms—**we need the wind and the rain to flourish**
 - Look around at the **green** right now (it won't last long)
 - Soon, even I will be wishing there were another storm coming
- I don't like the storms and rain, **but I love their affect**
 - That is how the world works—the storms actually bring life (its odd)
- So, maybe storms are actually **the kindness of God** (we even pray for them)

What if that is true in life in general?

- What if life's **storms** are **the very evidence** of God's loving and caring presence and action in our lives?
- What if we learn and experience **the best things in the hardest places**?

I think we **kind of** get that and **sort of** believe that

- But boy do I hate the rain and boy do I spend a lot of time avoiding hard places
- But God loves us enough to make sure we get some storms now and again

He **made** the disciples **get in the boat** (verse 22)

- **Anagkazo** = to force by authoritative command
- And surprise, surprise a storm comes (coincidence?)
- No, **Jesus decided the boys needed a little storm** (again)

We are given a really important detail about this in **Mark 6:51-52, NASB**

- **... they had not gained any insight = failed to understand** (the significance of) (I.e. Jesus is our bread)
- That is astounding!
 - Oddly, in that wonderful place of miraculous provision from Jesus and in serving others with Jesus, they had failed to see what Jesus wanted them to see at that point in their lives with Him

Jesus knew that they needed a hard place to learn a good thing

- Some things we only learn the hard way (**Hebrews 12:6**)

So **they get in the boat** and...

He saw that they were in serious trouble, rowing hard and struggling against the wind and waves. (Mark 6:48a, NLT)

- And yet He did not come to them until the 4th watch of the night! Jesus is mean! No, He isn't mean... but **sometimes life feel that way...**
- Remember when Lazarus was sick (before he died)? And Martha and Mary sent Jesus a letter asking Him to come heal Lazarus? Look at how Jesus reacted: **John 11:5-6, NASB**
 - That doesn't even make sense? Or does it?
 - **What if we learn the best things in the hardest places?**
 - Jesus' delay would allow Lazarus to die
 - Which would allow Jesus to raise Him from the dead
 - Which would allow him to teach Martha and Mary the deepest truth possible: **John 11:25-26, NASB**
- In the last storm they **asked the question**, "**who are you?**"
 - **Matthew 8:23-27, NIV**

- In this storm they **made the declaration**, “**you are the Son of God!**”
 - They learned in the hardest place (alone in the boat, in the middle of the night, in the clutches of the great storm) what they had not learned any other place
 - **This is the first time they ever worship Jesus**

What if we learn the best things in the hardest places?

- **What if Jesus loves us enough to let us struggle in the storm for a while?** (1 Peter 5:10, NIV)

This is Peter writing... he was in the boat that day...

- He asked the question in the first storm: **Don't you care?**
- He asked the question in the second storm: **Can I walk out on the water to you?**
- He, through experience, he developed a **Storm Theology**

What if God, in His great love for you, wants to do something really good in your life?

- And that good (**restoring you, making you strong, firm, and steadfast**) is accomplished through **life's storms?**
- **Storms** that He is in complete **control** of—is **presiding** over—and is **present** with you in?
- **Hebrews 7:25**, NASB (on the mountain)
 - He is sovereign. During those **nine hours** He held both the storm and the disciples in His hand

If we knew that Jesus was in complete **control** of—**presiding** over—and **present** with us... (**able to save forever**)

- Would it change the way we saw storms?
- Would it change the question from “**Where are you?**” to “**what (good) are you doing?**”
- **Isaiah 30:18-21**, NLT

The disciples would see storms differently; because having gone through one, they now saw Jesus differently

In fact Peter has this astounding moment of clarity in seeing Jesus

- He suddenly suspected that with Jesus in there, Peter could rise above the storm
- And he did!!!
- Until.... “**When he saw the wind became afraid and began to sink**” (verse 30)
 - But Jesus saved Him (**Isaiah 41:10 and 13**, NKJV)

You of little faith, why did you doubt? (verse 31)

- What made Peter's faith little?
- “... if you have faith **the size of a mustard seed**, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ **and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.**” (Matthew 17:20)
- So, it isn't necessarily **a size thing** in the way we think of scale—it is **an aim thing**
 - I.e. The target of where and how we direct our faith
 - Our faith is to be aimed (in a big way) **at Jesus!**
- It was the fact that **he took His eyes off Jesus**... He was not making Jesus the grand object of His faith
 - When we look at the enormity of our circumstances we lose sight of the grand object of faith
 - The littleness was not that he had to muster more (After all, he did say, **call me out on the water**)
 - It was that he looked away
 - **Isaiah 26:3**, NKJV; **Colossians 3:1-3**, NASB; **Hebrews 12:1-2a**, NLT
 - It is not that we have to be **stronger**, it is that we need to look at Jesus **longer**
 - The question, “**Why did you doubt?**” is answered in the fact that Peter looked away

In what ways do we look away in hard places and so miss good things?

What does it mean to aim your faith at Jesus in the midst of storms?