

Calm in the Storm

by Maria Cowden

How many of us lead lives that are all “smooth sailing”? Recently, as I faced a storm in my own life, I was drawn to the account in Mark 4 of Jesus and his disciples on the Sea of Galilee. I hope the lessons I see therein can give you greater faith as you face life’s storms.

We can empathize with their fearful and frantic call to the Master to save His disciples. If you’ve been on the ocean, it’s not hard to imagine the fear that must have gripped those men as they faced that storm.

Likewise, life sends storms against which alone we are defenseless. We might face overwhelming financial reverses, the loss of loved ones whose lives are yet so needful in our own, life decisions that seem to have no good option, loss of health, loss of loved ones, loss of reputation. God’s women face difficulties daily that are so similar to that storm on the Galilean sea.

First, let’s look at what Jesus expected of His disciples. A storm rose; the waves were beating on the boat, and even coming in the boat filling it up. Those men were in a serious situation. They frantically woke their Master. Jesus first rebuked the sea, then He rebuked the disciples. He asked, “Why are you so fearful? **How is it you have no faith?**”

Jesus actually expected His disciples to have no fear of the storm. Let that idea sink into your head and heart. He wanted to know why they were so afraid.

I believe Jesus likewise expects us to have no fear of life’s storms. When storms break out in your life, do you fear you might drown? You may be thinking, “You haven’t dealt with what I am. Anyone would fear when faced with . . .”

Based upon Christ's authority as the Son of God, we need to consider the question as it relates to our own storms and fears. How can Christian women face life's storms without fear and conquer in godly ways?

First, go back and remind yourself of those great Old Testament truths learned in children’s Bible classes. Remember Noah and his family were delivered from a world-wide flood by trusting God’s promise for deliverance? Remember Sarah at 90 years old bore a son to Abraham because God promised her she would? Remember God promised that if Ninevah repented He would withhold His punishment? Remember He promised Hannah a son? Remember God promised elderly Zacharias and Elizabeth a son?

God made some three hundred promises - we call them prophesies - telling about the coming Messiah, and He kept them all in Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection.

Do we believe what we teach our children? God keeps His promises - not just that He won’t flood the whole world with water again. God keeps **all** of His promises (2 Pet 1:4) . Jesus said that unless we are converted and become like little children we cannot be His disciples (Matt 18:3). Trust is one of those ways we must be converted and become like a child.

Believing God keeps His promises is vital to weathering life’s storms; God always promises faithful children His care. He promised Joshua he would “never leave . . . or forsake” him as He led the children of Israel to possess the promised land (Josh 1:9). When the Hebrew writer quoted from this passage he continued to say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me? (Heb 13:6). The prophet Nahum said in chapter one, verse 7, “The <p>Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who trust in Him.”

Paul says no temptation, and fear is a temptation to doubt God, is uncommon to mankind. He goes on to say, “. . . God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (1 Cor 10:13). So, no storm will get the best of God’s child, unless she gives into it; God will provide a refuge.

Paul discusses this very idea in Romans chapter eight. Verse 35 encourages the Christian by these words, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” The only way we can be separated from God’s love is to separate ourselves. So, if we trust and obey God, we cannot be taken from Him.

Let’s pull it together. If God keeps all of His promises, and He promises never to leave us or forsake us, and He promises not to allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear, and that nothing that happens to us can cause us to lose our faith, then no matter what God’s daughter faces in this life, she can have a calm assurance that God will keep her.

As we face life’s storms, we sometimes like Peter display our faith in Jesus’ power until we focused on the boisterous waves and become afraid. As fear gripped Peter, his faith in Jesus’ power was diminished. Jesus asked Peter as He raised him out of the waves, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” (Matt 14:31).

So, when my daughter is going into a total spinal fusion surgery that is expected to be 10 hours long with low lung functions and low body weight, do I trust or do I fear? When the surgeon has given me every grim warning, making sure that I know all the possibilities of complications for this surgery, do I trust or do I fear?

Submitting my request to God with thanksgiving (Phil 4:6), I knew that He would deliver our family through whatever storm we faced. God’s deliverance has been amazing, and my daughter is recovering well from this surgery.

In the refuge of the Lord there is great peace. Jesus said, “In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Remember Paul’s admonition in Philippians 4:6-7, “Be anxious for **nothing**, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the **peace** of God which surpasses all understanding, will **guard** your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”