

# **FINDING HOPE IN THE EYE OF YOUR STORM**

**Donn Jibben**

On October 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013 an early fall snowstorm devastated the Northern Great Plains region. Western SD, parts of eastern WY as well as the NW corner of NE was affected, some very severely.

The early blizzard which developed quickly caught both rancher and livestock off guard which resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of cattle, sheep and horses, while still grazing in their pastures.

New snow totals of 23 inches plus resulted in a new record snowfall for a one day period for the Rapid City area, breaking a record that had stood for 94 years. Some reports included amounts of 40-60 inches in the Northern Black Hills but with 60-70 mph wind gusts, accurate amounts were difficult to measure.

The storm drove cattle into ravines, along fence lines and into rivers and stock ponds where stress took their lives. The storm was one of a kind, one of a lifetime, one of a century and one that will never be forgotten. Sadly some ranchers lost their entire herds.

Where does one turn for HOPE in such a time as this? I will answer that question here in this teaching entitled: FINDING HOPE IN THE EYE OF YOUR STORM.”

**TEXT: Matt. 14:22-33 (read)**

**TITLE: Finding HOPE InThe Eye of Your Storm.**

In Context, Jesus performs an incredible miracle, the feeding of 5000 men, women and children with 5 loaves of bread and two fish. The 12 Disciples were with Jesus, present, at His side and I am very sure that there was a lot of excitement, emotion and conversation taking place here at this remote location, following this miracle.

In Vs. 22 it tells us that “Immediately” after this miracle of the feeding of 1,000s, Jesus “Makes” the Disciples “GET” into the boat.

Why? Is it possible that as very experienced fisherman they could tell easily from the clouds, weather, etc that a bad storm was brewing?

Our text does tell us plainly that indeed, Jesus did make them get into the boat and so it was that the Disciples sailed out into a coming storm, while Jesus himself went off to pray.

I personally believe that at times in our own lives, just like the Disciples, Jesus allows us to sail right a brewing storm so we will learn valuable lessons. What should we think? How do we respond? What do we do?

**This morning I have 7 Principles that you can apply to your life that will bring HOPE to your heart and life while you are in the eye of your STORM. They are these:**

**I. You can find yourself in the eye of the worst storm of your life and still be in the center of God’s will!**

What does the Biblical story of Job, Joseph and Paul have to say about this issue? Think about it?

God is a Sovereign God and I strongly believe that He allows all things, He ordains all things and does all things with PURPOSE! (Dan 4:34-35)

Friends the Sovereignty and Grace of God says you can be in the midst of the worst STORM of your life and be right in the middle of God’s perfect will.

The Disciples were obedient to the Lord, they got in the boat, sailed out and their obedience lead them right into a bad STORM. They had a lesson to learn. The Lord may not always keep us from STORMS but will walk with us thru them!

This could be the same in your life this morning, the Lord spoke to you, the Spirit prompted you, you obeyed and now you are in the STORM of

your life. Don't lose HOPE! Remember, you can be right in the worst STORM of your life and still be right in the middle God's perfect will!

## **II. In the Eye of your storm you must realize your great need of the Lord!**

The Disciples, experienced fisherman were afraid. I am sure they had been in bad weather and on rough waters before. The waves buffeted their boat, the very boat that Jesus made them get in, as the winds were against them. In and of themselves they were completely inadequate for the situation at hand.

The Lord wanted to break their trust in themselves and their ability to get them through the STORM. He wants us to both learn and to put our complete dependence upon HIM as MASTER and LORD of all!! Its usually not until we get hit with a big storm that we will know how we will react, respond and who we will look to and trust to see us through.

It's easy to sit in church, but what about a real test, a real STORM, then what? Obviously, most of us want OUT of our STORMS and even want to run from them. STORMS are painful, uncomfortable, emotional and challenging.

There is good news... You can find HOPE in midst of your STORM when you humbly fall on your knees and admit your inadequacies and completely trust in the Lord to see you through!! It to Him we must look!!

## **III. In the Eye of your storm, when the Lord calls, step out to Him in Obedience.**

Vs.26-29 The Lord responds to Peters request..."Lord if that's you bid me to come...take courage it is I...come.."

11 out of the 12 Disciples didn't understand. It is true.. "Obedience demands immediate response."

Peter saw the Lord. Peter heard the Lord's voice-"come"! I can just hear the other 11 Disciples...go Peter go, go to the Lord, go for it Peter all the while they sat in the boat.

The vast majority have no courage to step out of their comfort zones and trust the Lord when he speaks. Many in the church today have even heard the Lord speak to them but they still sit in the boat, in their comfort zone, being disobedient to the Lord.

Many believers cheer on the minority who have stepped out in faith to obey His voice and to do the Lord's work all the while as they sit clinging on to their boat!

I once heard an evangelist say... **"I d rather be a wet water walker than dry boat rider any day!"**

When the great I AM calls, He can most surely be trusted. Peter trusted in the Lord, he took immediate action and stepped out of his boat!

**Prov. 3:5-6** Trust the Lord with all your heart, lean not...in all your ways.." You cannot walk with Jesus in the Midst of your STORM unless you first walk out to HIM!! You cannot get to Jesus while sitting in your boat!

There is HOPE in the midst of our STORM when you step out in Faith & Obedience to HIM because He can be TRUSTED!!

#### **IV. In the Eye of your storm, once you have stepped out of your boat you must keep your eyes on the Lord.**

Vs 29-31. Peter both saw and heard the Lord in the midst of His storm and he exercised his faith and trust by his immediate actions. After Peter exercised his faith and trust in the Lord the STORM winds continued to blow!

However, after he did he took his eyes off of the Lord and focused once again upon the storm. His situation and STORM appeared worse. He became fearful, which can easily happen when we take our eyes off of the Lord. Peter began to sink as he saw the waves around him.

In the midst of your STORM you too will always need to stay focused on the Lord. After you have stepped out of your boat, don't look to the left or to the right, but stay focused upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Keep your eyes FIXED! No matter how bad the STORM may appear don't lose heart. God is in control.

If you fail, remember that you are only an arms length away from the Master and Lord of all STORMS. **Heb.12:2 Let us fix our eyes in Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.** This will always bring HOPE to you in the midst of your STORM

#### **V. There is no storm that last forever!!**

Vs. 32. When Jesus and Peter got back into the Boat the winds quit and the STORM was over. There is no storm that will last forever! One day all winds will cease and all storms will dissipate!!

I am reminded of Fanny Crosby who wrote so many wonderful hymns. She was blind. She is forever remembered by her statement, **“the first face I will see will be the face of Jesus!”**

Joni Erickson Tata-one day will RUN to JESUS!!

**Personal Testimony:** Answering the Lords Call – I sold everything I ever loved to do, my childhood dream that came true, a registered Hereford herd that become one of the tops herds in North America!!

After Bible College I went to serving in ministry as a Sr. Pastor in 5 churches, that were all in turmoil (1 church had 30 pastors in 60 yrs, 2 churches had immoral issues – another church, I was the 7<sup>th</sup> pastor in 7 yrs and it had split 3 times before I arrived - the last church I pastored, I followed a pastor that was there for just 6 months before he was literally run out of town. Is this for real Lord?

Also, I never new that my love and passion for the Lord and obedience to His voice and calling would result in moving my family often -living in 8 states, moving our personal belongings twice that, a run away pregnant daughter that later gets divorced, health issues, a mild stroke, back surgeries and fusions.

As a pastor of smaller churches, I have had to also work to support my family financially, laying irrigation pipe, milking in dairy parlors 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> shifts, driving school bus, cleaning bathrooms and working on grain farms, plus also shoveling manure in a bull stud facility on a 8 hr shift, all with bulged and herniated discs in my back. I've asked myself many times, "Lord will this continual storm ever end?"

My faith has been tested, my souls been tempted and my finances challenged.

**I have great news!!**

**I have hope that my storms will end soon and so can YOU!!**

No Storm lasts forever and that is GREAT NEWS!! As believers we all need the right perspective on STORMS. They wont last forever!! One day we will all see Jesus and we will all be in HIS GLORY & PRESENCE!! **Rev. 21:1-4**. This brings great HOPE to us as we face the STORMS of life!

**VI. In the Eye of your storm you must continue to worship the Lord!**

Do you see what is says in Vs. 33? When they were all in the boat and the winds DIED DOWN, they worshipped him, saying, truly you are the son of God.

Friends its easy to worship the Lord when there is NO STORMS! It's easy to say to the Lord then, truly you are the son of God! HOPE, PEACE and STRENGTH comes when we can worship the Lord in spirit and in truth in the Midst of our STORM!! **(2 Chron. 20:21-23)**. There is HOPE in the Midst of your STORM when you worship the Lord for who He truly is!!! He is ALWAYS THE SON OF GOD!!

**VII. To Survive your STORM you must have a solid Foundation!**

STORMS "will" come our way. There is now way in stopping them. If our foundation is on the sand, the result is not good, but if our

foundation is built on Jesus Christ the solid Rock we have NOTHING to Fear!! **READ Matt 7:24-29.**

**In Conclusion: There is always HOPE in the EYE of your STORMS!**

It can be said not better than we must admit our inadequacies and look to the Master over all STORMS, the Lord Jesus Christ! Our TRUST and Faith must be in HIM!

You may be here and you are facing the STORM of your life. The storm is raging, the wind, waves and rain are real and you may feel like you are about to sink and drown in the midst of it. You are not sure you will make it.

THERE IS HOPE! WITH JESUS THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE!

Hear the Master calling! Come to me!! Step out to HIM IN FAITH! Keep your eyes focused upon HIM and Trust Him with all your heart! He will never ever, ever let you down, for the battle belongs to the Lord. He is faithful and He will rescue and save you!!

**The truth for you is this – it is CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF ALL GLORY!!**

**Let's pray.**  
**Donn Jibben**