

Session 2: Anchored

In Storms and Trials

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I. Introduction

Matt. 8: 23-27 *“And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing. And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith:” Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. And the men marveled, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?”*”

- Every person’s trial represented here today is as unique as you are.
- We may not be able to relate to one another’s trial exactly but there is one who can. And he is in the boat with you.

II. Suffering is normal for the Christian

I Peter 4:12 *“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.”*

- Trials tend to expose our expectations, cravings and our perspective of who God is.

- Do your perceptions of God change when life is difficult?

Psalm 46:1 *“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”*

III. **Our Storm**

IV. **Biblical Truths**

James 1:2 *“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”*

- Happiness is found in circumstances. Joy is found in God alone.

“God would make us happy, but He can only make us happy by making us holy.” (**Octavius Winslow**)

- Trials reveal what we really hope in. Will they show our trust is in Jesus or in our circumstances changing?

“Our Father works a most kind good through our most grievous losses. Always sustaining and teaching us that we might know and love him more simply. Your faith becomes deep and real.” (**David Powlison**, *Don't Waste Your Cancer*)

- You will waste your suffering if you do not seek your comfort from God

II Cor. 1:3-4 *“Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction...”*

- You will waste it if you grieve as those who have no hope.

Romans 5:3 *“... We rejoice in our suffering, knowing that suffering produces endurance and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame...”*

- You will waste your suffering if you treat sin as casually as before.

“But the Lord tries His own wondrous work of grace in the soul. He tries everything that is divine, and good, and holy in the regenerate. He tries their principles, He tries their motives, He tries their graces. He tries their knowledge, He tries their experience, He tries His own work.” “He will test the reality, the sincerity, the strength of our love to Him...” (**Octavius Winslow**)

“You will know more of Jesus in one sanctified trial than in wading through a library of volumes or in listening to a lifetime of sermons.” **Octavius Winslow**

- Our trouble comes when we get our eyes off of God and onto our circumstances and want them to change more than wanting God’s will or purposes.

- We become discouraged because our expectations aren't met. It becomes apparent that we are placing ourselves in the center and making it all about us.
- We allow fear to grip our hearts. We go down paths in our minds that are not helpful.

1Cor. 10:13b *“God is faithful and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape that you may be able to endure it.”*

- Remember: Your trial will not go one minute longer than God allows! Not one minute!
- Our response to our circumstances reveals who we are and where our hope is found.

Hebrews 12:1-2 *“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

- A race requires much endurance to run. To be able to run with endurance we must throw off every weight and sin that can prohibit or impede our progress.
- We need to remind ourselves of who we really are before we start to wage this battle with our trials.

- Since I am in Christ, I truly have a hope a joy and a strength that is found in a place beyond the reach of these enemies in my heart. So, as I sin I can know Christ has already conquered my sin. It does not have to control me.

1John 1:9 - "If I confess my sin, he is faithful and just to forgive my sin and cleanse me from all unrighteousness."

- The effect of my sinful response to my trial cannot overwhelm the effect of the Cross.
- Applying the gospel means living in the truth that we no longer have to be controlled by our sin, but can turn from it to Christ.

John 16:33 says, "...in me you have peace. In the world, you will have tribulation. But take heart, I have overcome the world."

- We can endure because Jesus endured the cross and its shame for us

II Corinthians 4:7-10 "But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies."

V. Conclusion

II Corinthians 4:16-18 - "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal."

- Trials change us in many ways when we are steadfast letting it have its full affect.
 - They bring us to a more intimate knowledge of the Savior.
 - They help us trust and our faith grows.
 - They draw us to the throne of grace and prayer becomes more precious.
 - God confirms His truths to us in His word. It is alive.
 - We learn to have sympathy and extend mercy to others in trial.

George Muller, a pastor in England in the 1800's encourages us to live in a way that proves:

- God is real,
- God is Trustworthy,
- God answers prayers.

“Be still then; trial will bring a precious Jesus to you; and the presence, the love, the sympathy, and the grace of Jesus will lighten, soothe, and sweeten your trial. We shall soon be at home, where “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. The last truth of God will be seen, the last lesson of holiness will be learned, the last taint of sin will be effaced, and there will be no more need of sorrow’s discipline, nor the hallowing influence of precious trial: the last ember of the furnace will be extinguished, the last wave of trouble will die upon the shore, and we shall be forever with Jesus.” (**Octavius Winslow**)