

Mark 4:35-41 “When the Lord is in Your Boat”^{**1}Series: “*Mark: The Servant in Action*”

Main Idea: We learn three truths about the Lord from the stormy experience described in Mark 4:35-41.

- I. The Lord allows storms (35-38).
 - A. Jesus initiated a teachable moment.
 1. He took His disciples into a storm.
 2. He slept.
 - B. The disciples questioned His care.
 1. Trials reveal what we really think about the Lord.
 2. Trials reveal how well we know the Lord.
- II. The Lord can remove storms (39).
 - A. Jesus spoke.
 - B. The wind ceased.
 - C. The sea became calm.
- III. The Lord uses storms (40-41).
 - A. He teaches us about ourselves (40).
 1. We see our fear.
 2. We see our need for faith.
 - B. He teaches us about Himself (41).
 1. He is the Lord of creation.
 2. He does care for us.

The Bottom Line: If the Lord is in your boat...

1. You can expect storms.
2. You can experience peace.

Do you like storms? In our journey through Mark’s gospel this morning, we have come to a storm, and not just any storm. It’s a storm at sea, and we’re about to learn from it.

Scripture Reading: Mark 4:35-41

This past Monday night we had quite a thunderstorm, as you may recall. Lots of lightning and thunder. Whenever that happens in our house, something else happens. We hear the sound of toe nails start clicking on the hard wood floor in our room. It’s Daisy, our Boxer-mix. She’s afraid of storms, and has come for comfort.

She heads for Sherry’s side of the bed, but Sherry isn’t there. She’s still up north, caring for Julie and the baby. So I call her, and she comes to my side of the bed. I pat her on the head and tell her everything’s okay. That works for about sixty seconds, and then she walks around to Sherry’s side of the bed, and lays down.

That’s where she always finds her comfort in storms, on *that* side of the bed. So that’s where she goes, even if Sherry isn’t there.

Where do you go when the storms come? Where do you seek for comfort and assurance when you’re afraid? The answer to that question may not be the answer you give on a Sunday morning. Storms reveal. They reveal what we truly think, about God, about ourselves, about life.

So on Sunday we hear these words. “I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Who said that? Jesus did, just prior to His return to heaven. *I am with you always.*

Does it make a difference to know that the Lord is with His people, that He never leaves us alone? Let’s not answer that question too quickly. Yes, it should make a difference, for sure. But *does it?* And if so, what kind of difference is it making in your life right now to know that the Lord is always with you?

I’ve entitled this message, “*When the Lord is in Your Boat.*” Before us is the familiar story of the time Jesus took a boat trip with His disciples and ran into a storm. But it’s

^{**}Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

¹ For a previous look at this passage, see the Mark series in 2004.

more than a story. It's packed with significance about the Lord, about how He works, and about the difference it should make knowing that He is with us in the storms of life.

And the storms will come! They enter our lives when our child comes home from ball practice, head hung, eyes moist. "I got cut from the team," she shares. How does the Lord's presence affect us when we find out that our precious child is not going to be all-state, because she's not even going to be on the team this year?

How about when the boss calls us into his office and says, "Clean out your desk. You're done here." Does it make a difference then knowing the Lord is with you?

Or when the phone rings. It's the doctor's office, and you hear the doctor himself on the other end. "I've got some bad news," he says. "The tests we ran came back positive." How about then?

Yes, this is an important passage. It's a familiar passage. You've heard it many times. But how vital. What difference should it make when we know that the Lord is in our boat? We'll find out this morning. We can learn three valuable truths about the Lord from the stormy experience the disciples went through in Mark 4:35-41.

I. The Lord allows storms (35-38).

Our story begins with these words in verse 35, "On that day, when evening had come, he said to them..." *On that day*. What a day it had been! Earlier this same day, Jesus had taught the crowds using parables. Mark records four of the parables in 4:1-32. Subsequently, on the same day Jesus had spent time alone with the disciples explaining the parables to them (34). It had been a phenomenal day of great teaching and learning for the disciples. Now it was time for a pop quiz and the Master Teacher gave it to His men *that same day*.

It's one thing to listen in the classroom. It's another to transfer what you've heard in the classroom into real life.

As we pick up the narrative at verse 35, we've actually moved into a new section in Mark's gospel. The parables are done, and now Mark begins to present Jesus as the Lord of nature. We'll see Jesus performing several nature miracles, such as calming storms (here and in 6:51), multiplying loaves (6:41 and 8:6), and withering a fig tree (11:20). Mark has already made it clear that Jesus possesses power over diseases and evil spirits in chapters 1-3. Now he begins to show Jesus' authority over creation itself.

"Why should I believe in Jesus?" you ask. Because there's no one like Him!

Verse 35 again, "On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, 'Let us go across to the other side.'" The Lord is talking about the other side of the Sea of Galilee. He and the disciples have been ministering in the region of Galilee on the northwest side of the lake near Capernaum, but now He gives the order to head to the eastern region of the Gerasenes (5:1).

You say, "Why did Jesus want to leave? It seems to me He had a good ministry going, with lots of people flocking to Him." Yes, but His goal wasn't to attract crowds. His ambition was to fulfill His Father's plan, which included teaching, healing, rescuing sinners, and ultimately dying for sinners on the cross.

But there's another reason He's leaving. There is a divine-appointment waiting for the Savior in the Gerasene region, a demon-possessed man who is in desperate need of the Lord's liberating work. But that's our next story.

Today, it's a boat trip. And don't miss this important point. Whose idea was this boat trip? The Lord's, right? He said, "Let's go to the other side." Did He know there was a storm brewing? Absolutely. But that's often the way He works. Sometimes He allows storms to enter our lives.

Verse 36 says, “And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him.” Mark is the only gospel writer to tell us there were other boats. Interestingly, he doesn’t tell us what happened to them when the storm hit. We can assume they turned back. Mark also says the disciples took Jesus “just as He was.” Apparently, this means they began the trip without going to shore. Again, Jesus had been teaching from that boat all day long and now wants to leave directly from that spot in the water to head east, so the disciples fulfill His wishes.

Typically, this six-mile boat ride would have taken about an hour and half or so. But as it turned out, this would be no typical boat ride.

Two things happened that evening long ago. First of all...

A. Jesus initiated a teachable moment. The Lord doesn’t waste experiences. Indeed, He specializes at creating opportunities designed to enable us to learn the truth about ourselves, painful as it often is, and about Him, wonderful as it always is. In forming this teachable moment...

1. *He took His disciples into a storm.* Verse 37 says, “And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling.” The NIV says, “A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped.”

It’s been well documented that due to its location the Sea of Galilee experiences sudden and violent storms. The lake is in a basin surrounded by mountains. Listen to Smith’s description of the Sea’s susceptibility to storms: “The atmosphere, for the most part, hangs still and heavy, but the cold currents, as they pass from the west, are sucked down in vortices of air, or by the narrow gorges that break upon the lake. Then arise those sudden storms for which the region is notorious.”²

Most of us know the rest of the story, but let’s walk through it as though we didn’t. Put yourself in the boat alongside the disciples. It’s dark, the evening sky blackened by the ominous clouds. You’re in the middle of a lake that’s 15 miles by 8 miles. Lightning is flashing, thunder is clapping, and the wind is roaring all around you. Ferocious waves are crashing into your vessel. Correction. The waves are crashing *over the sides of* your vessel. You have a crisis on your hands. Your boat is taking in way too much water, and starting to go down (the KJV says the boat “was now full”).

And these aren’t novices. Several of the men in the boat with you are experienced fishermen who’ve navigated these waters all their lives. If they say the situation is serious, you know it’s serious!

And what was Jesus doing? Here’s the first shocker. Mark says...

2. *He slept.* According to verse 38, “But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion.” Let that sink in. Jesus *slept*.

You say, “Did Jesus need sleep. I thought He was the Son of God.” He was and is, for sure, but He came into the world clothed as a man, a perfect man. In the words of Philippians 2:7, He “was made in the likeness of men.” According to Wessel, it’s the only place in the Gospels where Jesus is said to have slept. Of course, He did tire from a day’s hard work, as this verse makes clear.

There’s nothing wrong with sleep after a hard day’s work. By the way, what kind of work had Jesus been doing that exhausted Him so? He’d been working with people, specifically preaching the Word to them.

You say, “Is preaching hard work?” Jesus just spent a day in the hot Galilean sun, in a boat no less. But it wasn’t just the physical strain that took a toll.

² In Wessel, p. 655.

J. D. Jones explains: “To warn men to flee from the wrath to come, that is not a thing a man can do with a glad and irresponsible heart. To watch for souls as those who shall give account, that is no pastime, that is not something a man can do with a laugh and a smile. Preaching, when it is worth the name, is a costly business. I know a great many folk think it is a very easy thing to preach, that the preacher has what is known as ‘a soft job.’ Possibly some who are themselves preachers find it such. But that is only because they have missed their vocation; for there is no work so burdensome, so toilsome, so exacting, so costly, as that of the true preacher. It puts a strain, not upon body and mind simply, but upon heart and spirit as well. It costs blood and sweat, and agony and tears; and of all preachers Jesus realized most vividly what preaching meant. His heart went out in a perfect passion of pity to the crowd to whom He spoke.”³

And so He slept. See the Savior sleeping, my friend. He is secure in His Father’s hands. He has worked hard all day doing His Father’s will. Now He sleeps hard, without a trace of anxiety or fear.

“But didn’t He feel the storm?” you ask. Sure, He felt it. But security doesn’t require the absence of storms. Security is confidence in God in the midst of them.

Years ago in Burma, missionary Adoniram Judson was lying in a foul jail with 32 lbs. of chains on his ankles, his feet bound to a bamboo pole. A fellow prisoner said, "Dr. Judson, what about the prospect of the conversion of the heathen?", with a sneer on his face. Judson’s instant reply was, "The prospects are just as bright as the promises of God."⁴

The storms of life are teachable moments. How did the disciples respond?

B. The disciples questioned His care. Verse 38 says, “And they woke him and said to him, ‘Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?’” In the NIV, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” Isn’t it amazing how the Lord can demonstrate His love for us in countless ways, but when He allows us to face a hard situation and we don’t understand why, we are quick to conclude, “He doesn’t care about me.” We actually question the love of the One who is Himself the definition of love.

I sense a hint of rebuke in the disciples’ words.⁵ “Lord, You told us to take this boat ride, and we obeyed You! What were You thinking? Why would You send us into a storm that could get us all killed?”

Could the Lord have prevented this storm? For sure. Did He know the boat was heading right into it? Without a doubt. Why then didn’t He do something about it? He was doing something. He was using this storm to teach these men He loved something vital, just like He does in our lives.

Trials (or storms), and especially big ones, are revealers. They make two things clear.

1. Trials reveal what we really think about the Lord. Until now the disciples thought Jesus was wonderful. They loved His miracles and His teaching. They’d forsaken all to follow Him. But now He’s doing something they don’t understand, and they call His care into question.

If you want to know what a person really thinks about the Lord, you won’t find the answer in his doctrinal paper, or in his sermon, or by what she says in a church testimony time. That’s where a person *says* what he or she thinks about the Lord. But if you want to know what a person really thinks about the Lord, watch how he or she responds when a storm begins to rage.

Trials reveal something else, not only what we think about the Lord, but also...

³ J. D. Jones, p. 123.

⁴ [The Presbyterian Advance](#).

⁵ Matthew and Luke eliminate this rebuke.

2. *Trials reveal how well we know the Lord.* Why were the men afraid? Didn't they know who was in the boat with them? Oh, they knew Jesus, but they had so much to learn. Just like we do.

They had lost sight of the simple fact that Jesus was in the boat, and that if they drowned, He drowned, too. And hadn't He said, "Let us go to the other side"? Beloved, when Jesus says you are going to the other side, you are *going to the other side!*

You see, the issue for these men (and for us) is, do we really believe the Lord is with us, and do we really believe He keeps His promises? It's easy to *say* we know and believe the Lord, but moments of crisis reveal the truth.

Unfortunately, some people think that God sends storms into their lives only when they've disobeyed Him. That's not always the case. Granted, Jonah faced a storm because he disobeyed the Lord. And that can happen today too. But in Mark 4, the disciples faced this storm simply because they did obey the Lord.⁶

The fact of the matter is, the Lord allows storms, and one of the reasons is to *teach us*.

The following letter was found in a baking-power can wired to the handle of an old pump that offered the only hope of drinking water on a very long and seldom-used trail across Nevada's Amargosa Desert: "This pump is all right as of June 1932. I put a new sucker washer into it and it ought to last five years. But the washer dries out and the pump has got to be primed. Under the white rock I buried a bottle of water, out of the sun and cork end up. There's enough water in it to prime the pump, but not if you drink some first. Pour about one-fourth and let her soak to wet the leather. Then pour in the rest medium fast and pump like crazy. You'll git water. The well has never run dry. Have faith. When you git watered up, fill the bottle and put it back like you found it for the next feller. (signed) Desert Pete. P.S. Don't go drinking the water first. Prime the pump with it and you'll git all you can hold."⁷

So the Lord allows storms. That's the first truth we learn about the Lord in Mark 4.

II. The Lord can remove storms (39).

Verse 39 says, "And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' [NIV 'Quiet! Be still!'] And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm."

Note the first words, *And he awoke*. I hope you are encouraged by the fact that Jesus heard the cry of men who lacked faith and questioned His care. But He didn't say, "Go away, I'm sleeping." No, He awoke. He responded to their need.

Which means there is hope for us! Jesus doesn't help the deserving, for there are none. He helps the desperate who cry out to Him.

And did you catch how responsive Jesus was to the disciples' touch? G. Campbell Morgan offers this insight, "The rush of the storm, and the sweep of the wind did not wake Him; but the touch of the trembling hand, and the cry of men in trouble, did. The moment they touched Him and said, 'Teacher, carest Thou not that we perish?' He was awake... We have seen something of this glory in a mother, whom all the noise of traffic will not waken, but who will be aroused by the sigh of a baby."⁸

And so, He awoke. At this point Mark tells us in a very matter of fact way that three events occurred next, in this order.

A. Jesus spoke. Note to whom He spoke, and what He said. The NIV says, "He rebuked the wind and said to the waves, 'Quiet! Be still!'" It's worth noting that these

⁶ Wiersbe, p. 124.

⁷ Keith Miller and Bruce Larson, [The Edge of Adventure](#).

⁸ G. Campbell Morgan, p. 102.

are the same words Jesus uttered when He addressed the demon-possessed man in Mark 1:25, “Quiet! Be still!” literally, “Be muzzled!” What happened?

B. The wind ceased. The roaring wind stopped. The cause of the disciples’ fear was gone. Instantly gone. Furthermore...

C. The sea became calm. Usually, even after strong winds cease, the waves they produced continue to churn. But not this time. It’s a double miracle. Jesus told the wind *and* the waves to stop. And they did.

Do you see the unique character of the person of Jesus Christ in all this? One moment He is an exhausted man, sleeping on a cushion while a storm batters His boat. The next moment He is wide awake, exhibiting the kind of power that can still a storm with a simple command. No wonder the disciples promptly asked, as we’ll see momentarily, “Who is this?”

So, the Lord allows storms, yes. But the Lord also remove storms and sometimes He does. He takes away the cancer. He puts the broken marriage back together. He causes the fighting at work to cease. He can do that, and sometimes He does. But that’s not.

III. The Lord uses storms (40-41).

This is so important to see. The Lord uses storms to teach us about two subjects.

A. He teaches us about ourselves (40). In verse 40, “He said to them, ‘Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?’”⁹ It’s the first of several times Jesus rebuked the disciples for their lack of understanding and faith (cf. 7:18; 8:17-18, 21, 32-33; 9:19). Do you like to be rebuked? Hebrews 12 indicates that the Lord’s discipline is powerful evidence of His love. When Jesus rebukes, it’s always for our good, not our harm.

You wake me up, I might rebuke you too. But it’s because you’ve disturbed my sleep. Not Jesus. This isn’t a selfish rebuke. It’s a demonstration of His care for His followers. In fact, the two questions Jesus asked the disciples are for our good too. They indicate that storms help us see two realities we all need to see.

1. *We see our fear.* “Why are you so afraid?” He asked them first.

You say, “It seems logical to be afraid of a storm that has the power to kill you.” It may be logical, but it’s not necessary if the creator of the storm is right next to you in the boat! The Lord uses storms to show us what’s in our hearts that shouldn’t be there, in this case, fear.

2. *We see our need for faith.* “Do you still have no faith?” In the KJV, “How is it that ye have no faith?” The disciples had heard Jesus teach and seen Him perform miracles, but they lacked something vital. They lacked *faith*.

How would you respond if Jesus asked *you* that question. Some of us might respond and say something like, “Wait a minute, Jesus. I’m sorry for waking you up, but you’ve misunderstood me. I have faith. Remember, I asked you to save me ten years ago, and I told You I believed in You. And I still do. I’m just struggling a little right now.”

But that’s not Jesus’ assessment. Jesus calls the disciples’ response in that boat, *no faith*. Friends, we either believe the Lord, or we don’t.

Cole says that no command is more often reiterated in the Bible than the simple, “Do not fear.”¹⁰ Fear and faith are mutual exclusives in the Bible.

According to Mark, faith isn’t simply agreeing with some facts about Jesus. It’s trusting Him. Faith is trusting in the person and promises of Jesus. It’s believing what He says, and then putting our weight into what He says.

⁹ The NIV says, “Do you still have no faith?”

¹⁰ Cole, p. 155.

This faith begins at what we call conversion. We're on our way to an eternal hell, but then we hear the promise of Jesus, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden. And I will give you rest." And so we take Him at His word. We put our trust in Him, and come to Him, and He gives us eternal rest for our souls.

But conversion is just the beginning. He has given us other promises, like, "I will never leave you nor forsake you (Heb 13:5)." This is another invitation to trust Him, not for salvation this time, but for help in the challenges (the storms) of this life.

And here's we struggle, as did the disciples in the boat. We become *unbelieving believers*. Sounds like a contradiction, doesn't it? It's not. It's reality for every child of God. We are believers. If we weren't, we wouldn't be God's children. But when the storm hits, we become *unbelieving* believers. We act like He isn't there, or doesn't care.

An unbelieving believer is someone who listens to his feelings rather the Savior's promises. And when that happens, "O my soul" is the needed response. As in Psalm 42:5, "Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation."

It's like the person in the following story. A traveler in the early days of the west came to the Mississippi, but discovered there was no bridge. Fortunately, it was winter and the great river was sheeted over with ice. But the traveler was afraid to trust himself to it, not knowing how thick it was. Finally with infinite caution, he crept on his hands and knees and managed to get halfway over. And then he heard, yes he heard singing from behind. Cautiously he turned, and there, out of the dusk, came another traveler, driving a four-horse load of coal over the ice, singing as he went!¹¹

That's an appropriate picture of the unbelieving believer, and it may be describing some of us today. If it is, we would do well to listen carefully to Jesus' question, "How is it that you have no faith?"

Oswald Chambers put it this way, "Faith for my deliverance is not faith in God. Faith means, whether I am visibly delivered or not, I will stick to my belief that God is love. There are some things only learned in a fiery furnace."¹²

The Lord uses storms to teach us about ourselves. But that's not all. There's a second subject in the curriculum.

B. He teaches us about Himself (41). Verse 41 says, "And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'"

The NIV says, "They were terrified."¹³ Literally, "They feared with a great fear." And this fear wasn't produced by the storm, but by the calm. Whereas they had been alarmed by what was happening *outside* the boat, now they're petrified by the One standing before them *inside* the boat.

Isn't that interesting? The disciples still feared, no longer the storm but now the Lord. Cole explains, "A friendly, familiar, human Jesus they wanted, but not a supernatural Son of God."¹⁴

Notice again their question. They said to one another, "Who is this?" These men thought they knew Jesus before, but now they're sure they don't know Him nearly as well as they thought they did.

¹¹ Unknown.

¹² Oswald Chambers in *Run Today's Race*.

¹³ We find the same expression on the lips of the sailors in Jonah 1:10 after they heard Jonah say he was running from the Lord. Jonah 1:10 "This terrified them and they asked, "What have you done?" (They knew he was running away from the LORD, because he had already told them so.)"

¹⁴ Cole, p. 155.

Can you relate? To be saved, you must come to know Jesus. And so many in this room do know Him, praise God! But that doesn't mean we know Him fully, for it will take eternity just to begin to know the fullness of the Eternal One.

The disciples gained two insights into the Lord that day.

1. *He is the Lord of creation.* Listen again to their fearful cry. "Even the wind and the waves obey him!" The wind and waves obey Him? Yes! Can we do less? Dare we do less?

This is the question of all questions. *Who is this?* Who do you believe Jesus to be? A good teacher? A miracle worker? A moral example? Is that who He is to you? Or is He indeed the Sovereign Lord and King of the entire universe, including your own life?

We must settle this issue or His death won't make sense. If He was merely a good teacher, then His death was an accident, nothing more. If He came to be a moral example, His death is little more than motivation for you to think of others. But if He is the Sovereign Lord over creation, that means that nothing takes Him by surprise. It means He was in control while hanging on that Roman cross as He was while sleeping in this boat. It means He died because He chose to do so, for a very specific purpose.

And He fulfilled that purpose. He died to fulfill His Father's plan to rescue sinners from eternal destruction by taking their place. He gave His life as a ransom payment for all who would repent and believe in Him.

That's why you can now have the gift of eternal life, my friend. But you must receive the gift of eternal life *from Him*. There is no other way. He is the Lord of creation.

There's a second insight regarding the Savior that the disciples gained in that boat.

2. *He does care for us.* "Don't you care if we drown?" they had asked. Now they have their answer. He cares! It's been well said, "We are far safer in the middle of a storm with Jesus than anywhere else without Him."

My friend, G. Campbell Morgan is right. "No storm can wreck the programme of God... Though all hell be let loose, and though it have power over elements, and events, and the hearts of men, and the passions of the world, to stir them into storm, and wreck the apparently frail bark where Christ lies asleep, it is all useless. If He be there, all is well!"¹⁵

There is no need to panic if we know the Lord. We can be sure that Christ is with us in the midst of the storm. Oh, He may seem to us to be sleeping. We may seek to wake Him from His apparent slumber with the cry, "Don't You care?" But of course, He cares. If He would go to the Cross to rescue us from the greatest storm of all, the eternal storm of God's wrath poured out on sinners in hell, is it possible He would forsake us in the lesser storms of this life? Never, a thousand times never!

G. Campbell Morgan offers this application: "All such panic is unnecessary, and unworthy. The Lord is at the heart of the storm, and we may rest in Him, and smile at the storm...Does Christ seem asleep? Ah! But He *is* there. If we would see the greatest things we had better not waken Him. It will be great if he will hush the storm! But there are greater things. What are they? Watching Him through the storm. That is what He wanted these men to do. In proportion as we believe this, we ought to have no panic."¹⁶

It's a simple story, but it makes the point. One night a house caught fire and a young boy was forced to flee to the roof. The father stood on the ground below with outstretched arms, calling to his son, "Jump! I'll catch you." He knew the boy had to jump to save his life. All the boy could see, however, was flame, smoke, and blackness. As can be imagined, he was afraid to leave the roof. His father kept yelling: "Jump! I will catch

¹⁵ Morgan, p. 108.

¹⁶ G. Cambell Morgan, p. 109.

you." But the boy protested, "Daddy, I can't see you." The father replied, "But I can see you and that's all that matters."¹⁷

Edward Hooper wrote, "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me:"

*Jesus, Savior, pilot me
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rocks and treach'rous shoal;
Chart and compass come from Thee—
Jesus, Savior, pilot me!*

The Bottom Line: If the Lord is in your boat...there are two guarantees...

1. *You can expect storms.* He allows them. He can remove them. He loves to use them for our good and His glory.

On March 15, 2004, five evangelical missionaries were traveling by car to conduct relief efforts in Mosul, Iraq. Without warning, the vehicle was assaulted by automatic weapon fire and rocket-propelled grenades. The car was torn apart as the gunmen unleashed the barrage; three of the missionaries were killed at the scene.

Then an amazing thing happened. Missionary David McDonnall, despite being mortally wounded, pulled his wife Niki from the wreckage. She had been shot at least twenty times, but was still alive. Desperate to save her life, David got Niki out of the car and to a hospital where she was immediately rushed into surgery. When Niki awakened about a week later, she learned that her husband had not survived. His last effort in his own life was in saving hers.

Still walking with a cane as she heals from her injuries, Niki shares her heart's desire to remain with the Iraqi people and with recruiting believers to commit to global missions. She passionately declares that many Christians need to get out of their comfort zones and get proactive about their faith.

"I can't help but believe that if we truly know Christ, if we truly pursue Christ and we delight in Him," she said, "I'm pretty sure missionaries wouldn't have to stand here and tell you that we need to go; it would burn in our hearts. If we truly saw Christ for who He is, and allowed it to make us into His likeness and to reflect Him, wouldn't this world be filled with people who mirror Jesus? And the Lord of the Harvest would have a field full of workers that were passionate about making His glory known among the nations."

Niki, who is living with her parents while she recovers, adds, "I pray that we would recklessly abandon our lives of ease and that we would pursue Christ and that what we think about our Christ would so penetrate our hearts and lives that the world would see and God would be glorified."¹⁸

If the Lord is in your boat, you can expect storms. That's a guarantee. But so is this.

2. *You can experience peace.* Sometimes He quiets the storm. Sometimes He quiets our hearts while the storm continues. But always He gives peace, His peace.

Closing Song: #493 "It Is Well with My Soul" (all four verses)

¹⁷ I believe it was George Mueller who said, "God delights to increase the faith of His children...I say, and say it deliberately--trials, difficulties and sometimes defeat, are the very food of faith...We should take them out of His hands as evidences of His love and care for us in developing more and more that faith which He is seeking to strengthen in us."

¹⁸ As told by Pastor Bill Barber, Plymouth, MI (orig. obtained from Jerry Falwell?)