

Luke 8:22-25

“Where is Your Faith?”

December 1, 2024

1. Intro

- a. So I have an assignment for you all to do later on tonight
 - i. For all of you that have access to YouTube, go there this evening and do a search for “storms on the Sea of Galilee”
 - 1. What you’ll find if you watch a few of the videos is, even though large storms on the Sea of Galilee are fairly rare, when they DO hit, they hit with quite a bit of force
 - a. There’s one video that shows a storm there in 1992 where the waves are approximately ten to fifteen feet tall, crashing against the shores with impressive power
 - i. Now, compared to the waves out on the ocean, that’s not really very big at all
 - ii. But we have to remember, the Sea of Galilee is NOT a sea, but it’s actually just a lake
 - 1. In fact, this lake is actually about fifteen square miles SMALLER than Grand Lake here in Oklahoma
 - b. The reason why massive storms don’t often happen on the Sea of Galilee is also the same reason why these storms can become very severe, very quickly
 - i. If you can visualize it in your mind...
 - 1. Over here to the West would be the Mediterranean sea
 - a. And then, running from the Sea of Galilee in the north, to the Dead Sea in the South, you find the Jordan Rift Valley
 - i. This valley was actually formed as the African and Arabian plates come together
 - b. And the result is that these two seas are actually BELOW sea level
 - i. The Dead Sea is the lowest lake in the world
 - ii. And the Sea of Galilee comes in second
 - ii. So these lakes are situated in a sort of geographical bowl, which keeps them protected against major storms, for the most part
 - 1. But under the right conditions, if the winds are strong enough and blowing in the right direction...
 - a. The fact that the Sea of Galilee is in a bowl can actually intensify these storms to an alarming degree, as the winds blow over the mountains, and down into the valley
 - i. ESPECIALLY for a bunch of guys in a small boat in 1st century Judea
 - c. This is where we find ourselves as we look at our passage for today

2. Luke 8:22-25

- a. ²²One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side of the lake.” So they set out, ²³and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. ²⁴And they went and woke him, saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging

waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵He said to them, “Where is your faith?” And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, “Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?”

- i. We get some help from Mark’s Gospel, as he fills in some details for us surrounding this event
 - 1. In Mark 4:35-41, he tells us that it was evening when they set out
 - 2. Mark also tells us that this was the same day that Jesus taught the Parable of the Sower AND the Parable of the Mustard Seed
 - a. Hang onto that fact...
 - i. These two Parables are crucial in understanding WHY Jesus wanted to go to the other side of the lake
 - 1. But we’ll get into all of that NEXT week!
- b. So, it’s evening... maybe it’s starting to get dark
 - i. Jesus is done teaching for the day
 - 1. Hopefully he said goodbye to his mom and brothers before he left
 - a. If you were here for last week’s sermon from Trey, Jesus certainly had no desire to offend his mom and his brothers
 - i. But he was pointing us to the truth that he had come to begin a SPIRITUAL family that far transcends just normal bloodlines
 - 1. And that is really good news for us, isn’t it?!
 - ii. Jesus tells the disciples that he wants to go across to the other side of the lake, so they manage to get a boat from somewhere, and then they set out
 - 1. It’s important for us to remember that a lot of these guys were basically professional fishermen
 - a. Peter and his brother Andrew... John and his brother James
 - i. These four had grown up in boats out on the lake
 - 1. Think back to Luke chapter 5, when Jesus called some of the first disciples to follow him
 - a. He climbed into the boat with Peter and the boys, and then he told them to *“Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a catch”*
 - b. Do you remember Peter’s response?
 - i. *“Master, we’ve toiled all night and we haven’t caught a thing!”*
 - ii. So these guys were used to being out on the waters well throughout the night... or at least four of them were
- 1. This serves as a good reminder to us of Jesus’ humanity, doesn’t it?
 - a. There was nothing deceitful in Jesus
 - i. So it’s not like he was pretending to be asleep, just waiting to see how everyone would react to the storm that was on its way
 - b. Jesus was fully God... but he was also fully man
 - i. And this man clearly was worn out!
 - c. So as they sailed, he fell asleep

- c. But suddenly, without warning, a windstorm came down on the lake
 - i. That language makes sense now that we know the geography of the region... the windstorm came DOWN into the Jordan Rift Valley
 - 1. And as the windstorm kicked up in intensity
 - a. The waves began to rage
 - b. The boat began to fill with water
 - c. And the disciples realized that they were indeed in GREAT danger
 - ii. Well, we cannot miss the fact that, as all of this is happening, Jesus is still asleep!
 - 1. Friends, this was no small storm!
 - a. Even the seasoned fishermen in the boat were panicking to such a degree that they believed their very lives were about to be lost
 - b. And yet Jesus, according to Mark, was sound asleep on a cushion in the stern of the boat
 - i. So soundly was he asleep that the disciples actually had to go and wake him up!
 - 1. We've been talking in Sunday School in the previous weeks about the peace of God that surpasses all understanding
 - a. If you'd like a visual example of what this kind of peace looks like, here you go!
 - i. As the winds and waves rage around him, and the disciples are thinking they all are about to die, Jesus is out cold on a cushion!
- d. Well, they finally wake him up, and they cry out to him, "*Master, Master, we are perishing!*"
 - i. Now, you have to stop and wonder at this point, what are they expecting him to do?
 - 1. It's clear from their response to what was about to happen that they certainly WERE NOT expecting him to calm the very winds and the waves
 - a. So what did they think he was going to do?
 - i. Maybe they thought he would gather them all around him and give them a big pep talk, saying "Guys, I'm here with you in the storm... just hang on and we'll get through it!"
 - ii. Maybe they thought he would grab an oar and start paddling in the power of God
 - iii. Maybe they just wanted him to join them in their fear and in their misery
 - 2. WHATEVER they were expecting, it most assuredly was not this
 - a. Jesus sits up in the stern of the boat
 - i. And he did not pray...
 - ii. He did not talk to the disciples...
 - iii. But he rebuked the winds and the raging waves
 - 1. And they OBEYED!!
 - a. Just as in Luke 4:35, when Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit in the man in the synagogue of Capernaum, and the spirit fled from him
 - b. Just as in Luke 4:38, when Jesus rebuked the fever in Peter's mother-in-law, and the fever left her
 - c. Just as in Luke 4:41, as demon after demon was cast out of the multitudes, crying out, "You are the Son of God," and Jesus rebuked them all to be silent
 - 2. When Jesus gives a rebuke, there is no choice but to obey

- a. And IMMEDIATELY, everything was calm
 - 3. And Jesus looks around at his disciples, probably all soaking wet, probably all still terrified and utterly confused
 - a. And he says to them, “Where is your faith?”
 - 4. And the disciples, still not fully aware of who this Rabbi truly was, they were all filled with fear and wonder
 - a. And they marveled, saying to one another, “Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?”
 - i. This word that Luke uses for “marveled” is a concept that is FULL of astonishment
 - 1. In Strong’s Concordance, we read that,
 - a. “In the context of the New Testament, this Greek word, *thaumazó*, captures the reaction of individuals who witnessed the divine power and authority of Jesus, which stood in stark contrast to the natural order and human expectations.”
 - 2. Demons don’t flee when someone says “Leave”
 - 3. Fevers don’t go away when someone says, “Depart”
 - 4. Storms don’t immediately and completely fall apart when rebuked by a man
 - a. That would be completely against the natural order of how this world works, wouldn’t it?
 - i. UNLESS the one speaking was full of divine power and authority
 - ii. UNLESS the one speaking was the very Son of God himself
 - iii. UNLESS the one speaking was the One who commanded and raised the stormy wind in the first place
- e. Look again in your worship guide at the passage that Enrique read for us earlier, and see these words in a new light... Psalm 107:23-29 says,
 - i. *²³Some went down to the sea in ships, doing business on the great waters; ²⁴they saw the deeds of the Lord, his wondrous works in the deep. ²⁵For he commanded and raised the stormy wind, which lifted up the waves of the sea. ²⁶They mounted up to heaven; they went down to the depths; their courage melted away in their evil plight; ²⁷they reeled and staggered like drunken men and were at their wits’ end. ²⁸Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. ²⁹He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed.*
 - 1. He rebuked the wind and the raging waves
 - 2. ALL of it ceased
 - 3. And EVERYTHING became calm
 - a. Now it’s not very likely that, in the distress of this moment, the disciples immediately thought of these words in Psalm 107
 - i. But I wonder if, maybe a few years down the road, as they gathered together in someone’s home, singing Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to one another...
 - 1. Maybe they came to Psalm 107 in their hymnal
 - 2. And as they sang these words, it finally dawned on them...
 - a. This was US!!

- i. Our hearts had sunk to their deepest despair on the boat that day
- ii. But Jesus, he who commands and raises the stormy winds, rebuked them all and everything became calm

ii. And as they sang verse 30, surely they smiled at the tremendous understatement of these words...

1. "Then they were glad that the waters were quiet, and he brought them to their desired haven"

a. You bet they were glad!

ii. Well, our passage for this morning closes with the amazement of the disciples

1. But there is much we can say as we look to the application of this passage to our lives today

3. But the first thing we must say about this passage is how we ARE NOT to apply it

a. If we're all being honest, isn't the application that we WISH we could have regarding this passage is that, since Christ is with us, and the very Spirit of God dwells WITHIN us...

i. Shouldn't we ALSO be able to command demons to flee with just a word?

ii. Shouldn't we ALSO be able to speak to fevers, or speak to cancer, or speak to ANY kind of sickness...

1. Shouldn't we also be able to rebuke all of these things in the name of Jesus, and people would be healed?

iii. Shouldn't we ALSO be able to rebuke the winds and rebuke the raging waves and rebuke all sorts of natural disasters, and they would all cease?

1. Didn't Jesus say in John 14:12-14,

a. *¹²Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. ¹³Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.*

i. Doesn't that sound an awful lot like we should be able to do all the same things Jesus did, if we simply ask in his name?

1. Doesn't it sound like we should be able to do even GREATER works than Jesus did?

iv. Just think about all the examples we have in the book of Acts, after Jesus had gone to his Father...

1. The Holy Spirit falls on the disciples in chapter 2, and three THOUSAND people were added to the church in a single day

2. In chapter 3, Peter and John encounter the lame beggar at the gate of the Temple

a. And Peter says to him, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!"

i. And the man instantly got up, and he entered the Temple, walking and leaping and praising God!

3. In chapter 5, we read that signs and wonders were regularly done by the hands of the Apostles, to the extent that the people would bring their sick out into the streets, just in the hope that Peter's shadow might fall upon them

a. And verse 16 says that all those who were sick and afflicted with unclean spirits were ALL healed

4. In Acts 8, Philip the Evangelist – who was NOT the same Philip named among the Apostles, but instead was one of the original deacons of the early church

- a. This Philip goes to Samaria, and as he proclaimed Christ to them, verse 7 says that, *“unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who had them, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. So there was much joy in that city.”*
 - 5. In Acts 9, Peter meets a man named Aeneas in the town of Lydda, who had been paralyzed for eight years
 - a. And he said to him, *“Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed.”*
 - i. And immediately he rose.
 - 1. And just a few days later, Peter travels down to Joppa where he raised the dead woman, Tabitha, back to life
 - 6. The fact is, we could keep going and going, couldn’t we?
 - a. We’re only in Acts 9, and we haven’t even gotten to all the great signs and wonders that PAUL performed
 - i. So many were these signs and wonders that Acts 19:11 says that, *“God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.”*
 - 7. Doesn’t this sound like these followers of Christ were indeed doing GREATER works than even Christ himself did while he walked this earth?
 - a. Isn’t this the promise that he gave to his disciples?
 - i. Of course, we might argue that this was a power reserved for the Apostles, a special and unique group that Paul was added to at a later date
 - 1. But what do we do about Philip the Evangelist then?
 - a. He doesn’t fall into this group
 - 8. Granted, we’re talking mainly about healings from diseases in all of these examples
 - a. But we also saw that there were many who were delivered from demons as well
 - i. And so, if Jesus was able to upset things in the spiritual realms of the demons, as well as in the natural realm of sicknesses and diseases...
 - 1. AND he could rebuke the natural order when it came to things like raging winds and waves
 - b. Should we not infer from the examples in the book of Acts that WE too should be able to do such signs and wonders...
 - i. If we would just have enough FAITH in the name of Jesus?
 - 1. Again, Christian, where is your faith?
4. This is one of the biggest questions that we are faced with here in the Church today, isn’t it?
 - a. As followers of Jesus, indwelt by the very Spirit of God, should we not be able to rebuke sickness and diseases in his name, and it will flee?
 - i. Should we not be able to rebuke demonic forces in the name of Jesus, and they will cower in fear?
 - ii. Should we not be able to even rebuke the winds and the waves, in the name of Jesus, and they will all cease and be still?
 - 1. This was the teaching of E.W. Kenyon in the early 1900’s
 - a. Kenyon, who is believed to be the father of the modern “positive confession” theology, had these words to say about the Christian’s faith...
 - i. “Jesus has given you the right to use his name. That name can break the power of disease, the power of the adversary. That name can stop

disease and failure from reigning over you. There is no disease that has ever come to man which this name cannot destroy.”

- b. He would go on to say, “There is no sickness problem. There is simply a problem of the believer’s coming to know his inheritance in Christ.”
 - i. E.W. Kenyon would say to you, Christian, “Where is your faith?”
2. Hitting closer to home, Kenneth Hagin, a devout follower of E.W Kenyon, and founder of Rhema Bible College here in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, had this to say about our faith...
 - a. “Believe it in your heart; say it with your mouth. That is the principle of faith. You can have what you say.”
 - i. Building on Kenyon’s “positive confession” theology, Hagin wrote,
 1. “Our confession will either imprison us or set us free. Our confession is the result of our believing, and our believing is the result of our right or wrong thinking.”
 - b. Hagin went even further than his mentor, Kenyon, as he began to introduce an idea called “dominion theology” into the church... he wrote,
 - i. “Yes, sin, sickness and disease, spiritual death, poverty and everything else that’s of the devil once ruled us. But now, bless God, we rule them – for this is the Day of Dominion.”
 1. Kenneth Hagin would say to you, Christian, “Where is your faith?”
3. And of course, one of Kenneth Hagin’s most well-known followers today is Kenneth Copeland
 - a. Just as Hagin took E.W. Kenyon’s “positive confession” theology and elevated it to a new “dominion theology”
 - i. So also Kenneth Copeland has taken that “dominion theology,” and he has elevated it to the dangerous realm of “little gods theology”
 - b. Copeland writes,
 - i. “On the cross, Jesus won the right for believers to be born again back into the god-class. Adam was created, not subordinate to God, but as a god; he lost it, but in Christ we are taken back to the god-class.”
 1. And he would go on to say,
 - a. “I say this with all respect so that it don’t upset you too bad, but I say it anyway; when I read in the Bible where God says, ‘I AM,’ I just smile and say, ‘Yes, I AM too!’”
 - ii. Well, when you are a god, you can do anything, right?
 1. And so Copeland has been documented many times from the stage, rebuking sickness
 - a. Maybe most famously a few years back when he claimed victory over the entire sickness of COVID, as he said “COVID! I blow you away!”
 2. He’s been documented many times from the stage rebuking demons
 3. And he’s been documented many times from the stage, rebuking the winds and raging waves of multiple natural disasters
 - a. Make the positive confession to calm the storms
 - b. Stand in dominion over everything on this earth – be it sickness or demons or hurricanes

- c. And affirm the fact that you are a god, and it is ALL subordinate to you and your words
 - c. Kenneth Copeland would say to you, Christian, where is your faith?
 - iii. We have to ask these questions, don't we church family?
 - 1. Especially when you just look at the fact that Copeland's YouTube channel alone has nearly half a million subscribers, and his videos have been watched over 113 MILLION times
 - a. If this is the type of faith that we are being called to have, and hundreds of thousands of Christians are standing in agreement with teachers like Copeland each and every week...
 - i. Is this what we are to believe as well?
5. I would argue wholeheartedly that this IS NOT how we are called to apply this passage of the Scriptures
 - a. For it is not our faith in our confession that Jesus desires
 - i. It is not our faith in our position of dominion over the earth that he is looking for
 - 1. Nor is it AT ALL our faith in ourselves as "little gods" that Jesus is asking about
 - ii. ALL of these statements are firmly rooted in one thing: ME
 - 1. And let me affirm for you, brothers and sisters, YOU will make an absolutely terrible god
 - b. Christians, the faith that Christ is looking for is a faith that is firmly rooted in the fact that HE is in the boat with us, and therefore WHATEVER the outcome that happens will be GOOD for us
 - i. And therefore we can REST in the midst of the storm
 - 1. Not because WE have the power to rebuke the storms, but because he that has the power to do so is with us
 - ii. We see an incredible picture of this kind of faith in Daniel 3, when King Nebuchadnezzar sets up a huge golden statue of himself, and commands everyone to worship the statue whenever they hear the horns and harps playing
 - 1. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, three young Hebrew men who had been brought to Babylon as captives from Israel, refuse to bow
 - a. And so, in a rage, this pagan king brings these men before him and tells them that if they do not bow, then they would be thrown into the fiery furnace
 - 2. And just listen to their response in verses 16-18...
 - a. *¹⁶"O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. ¹⁸But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."*
 - 3. My friends, THIS is the kind of faith that Christ is looking for...
 - a. EVEN IF God does not rescue me from the flames of persecution, I will not turn away from him
 - b. EVEN IF God does not rescue me from the pain and agony of cancer, I will not turn to despair
 - c. EVEN IF God does not rescue me from financial hardship, I will not wring my hands in fear
4. CAN God deliver me from any and all of those things?
 - a. Absolutely.
 - i. But the faith that Jesus desires is a faith that says, even if He does not, I still trust that God is with me, and God is GOOD!

1. For even as these three young men stood in the flames, Nebuchadnezzar looked into the furnace and saw a fourth man, one like a son of the gods
 - iii. This is the example we see from the Apostle Paul as well in 2 Corinthians 12
 1. This is the same Paul that raised Eutychus from the dead
 2. This is the same Paul that shook off a venomous snake as it bit him on the island of Malta
 3. This is the same Paul that healed so many people that apparently even his handkerchiefs became infused with healing power
 - a. And yet, here in 2 Corinthians 12, Paul is given a thorn in his flesh – a messenger of Satan to keep him from becoming conceited
 - i. We don't know what this thorn was...
 1. Some have speculated that Paul was partially blind, and so this blindness must have been the thorn
 2. Others have speculated that maybe this thorn was all the persecutions and sufferings that Paul encountered in every city he went into
 - ii. Whatever this thorn was, it was bad enough to where Paul pleaded with God three times to take it away from him
 1. If anyone would have had the faith to claim his victory over the thorn and be healed by faith, then surely it would have been the Apostle Paul
 - b. But what was the Lord's response to Paul's pleading?
 - i. His response was "No."
 1. "My GRACE is sufficient for you, for MY power is made perfect in YOUR weakness."
 - ii. And I love the fact that Paul didn't continue to complain about the thorn... he didn't fall into despair... he didn't lose faith
 1. But instead, Paul said in verses 9-10,
 - a. *⁹Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*
 2. Christ was with him in his sufferings, and in that, Paul found contentment
- c. Christian, are you CONTENT in your weaknesses, knowing that in your weaknesses, Christ power is made PERFECT?
 - i. Are you CONTENT in being insulted and persecuted, knowing that in those hardships and persecutions you can REJOICE in being counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus?
 1. Are you CONTENT in WHATEVER calamity may befall you, knowing that Christ is WITH YOU in the fires and the storms and the winds and the raging waves?
 - a. And therefore, WHATEVER happens is for your good
- d. Brothers and sisters, THIS is the kind of faith that Christ is looking for when he turns to us and says, "Where is YOUR faith?"
 - i. Jesus did indeed rescue his disciples from the storm on that day, but we need to acknowledge that that is because he still had a mission to accomplish
 1. And that mission still involved everyone on that boat

- a. And therefore, he who had the power to command the winds and the water rebuked them, and they were still
 - 2. But what about the calamities that faced them later on in their ministries?
 - a. Was Jesus no longer with James, the brother of John, when Herod had him run through with the sword?
 - b. Was Jesus no longer with Peter when Emperor Nero had him crucified upside down?
 - c. Was Jesus no longer with Bartholomew, when he was beaten to death for his faith as he shared the Gospel in India?
 - ii. We could go on and on for days and days, couldn't we?
 - 1. Was Jesus no longer with the countless number of Christians who died in the arena for proclaiming the name of Christ before the days of Constantine?
 - 2. Was Jesus no longer with the countless number of Christians who have died from sickness and disease throughout the centuries?
 - 3. Was Jesus no longer with the Christians who have died in wars and earthquakes and famines and hurricanes, all across the world?
 - a. Should we look at all who have gone through such calamities and say, "Ah... where was their faith?"
 - i. God forbid that we should EVER come to such a conclusion!!
- e. My friends, Jesus himself said in John 16:33, *"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have PEACE. In the world you WILL have tribulation. But take heart, I have overcome the world!"*
 - i. Does this mean he has overcome cancer or COVID or any other kind of sickness or disease and therefore you should ONLY expect healing from these things?
 - 1. NO. It means that should you have cancer or COVID or any other kind of sickness or disease, CHRIST IS WITH YOU
 - a. And he will work WHATEVER the outcome of that disease is – for your GOOD, and for the glory of HIS name
 - i. Christ has overcome the world, so you may have PEACE in the midst of your tribulation
 - ii. Does this mean he has overcome financial hardship, and therefore you should ONLY expect financial prosperity and favor and overflowing bank accounts?
 - 1. NO. It means that should you encounter hard times financially, whether through the loss of a job, or a national recession, or even through another Great Depression, CHRIST IS WITH YOU
 - a. And he will work WHATEVER the outcome of your financial trials – for your GOOD, and for the glory of HIS name
 - i. Christ has overcome the world, so you may have PEACE in the midst of your tribulation
- iii. Brothers and sisters in Christ, THIS is the faith that we have been called to have
 - 1. Not the faith that can name and claim whatever we want in this lifetime
 - a. But the faith that believes with everything that is in us that CHRIST IS WITH US in the storm
 - b. And he has promised that, "for those who love God, ALL things work together for good, for those who are called according to HIS purpose."
 - i. God's purpose may very well be that He will deliver you from whatever storm you are facing right now
 - 1. And the outcome of His deliverance will be for your good
 - ii. But His purpose may instead be to NOT deliver you from the storm

1. And, according to the Scriptures, the outcome will STILL be for your good
- c. Do not place your faith in your deliverance, Christians
 - i. Place your faith in the promise that Jesus has said, “Behold, I am with you ALWAYS, to the end of the age!”
 - ii. In that one, simple promise, we can find the peace to endure ANY storm that we find ourselves in, even unto our death