

In the Eye of the Storm

Matthew 14:22-33

Looking Back

The Christian life is like being in a tiny boat on the sea in the middle of a storm. This is what early Christian thinkers like Tertullian believed and articulated. Though God is with us, we're often in the midst of unpredictable and difficult circumstances that seem to crash in on us one after the other. If this is the case, then how do we thrive in the midst of that storm? What does faith in God look like when we find ourselves there?

Thinking It Through (agree/disagree/consider/contemplate)

"Brennan, you don't need any more insights into the faith. You have enough to last you 300 years. Your most urgent need is to trust what you already believe." – quote to Brennan Manning from spiritual director

"With Christ is the vessel, we can smile at the storm." John Newton

"So many things we achieve are achieved only through struggle and conflict, not in easy ways. I have so longed to find somewhere in life, some corner where joy is unmingled with pain, but I have never found it. Wherever I found joy, my own or other people's, it always seems to be mingled with pain. And I find that people I most respect are people who know the link between joy and pain. And I have found that if we will own pain and weep over it together, we also find Christ's overflowing comfort. The bad news is that there may be no corner of reality where joy is not related to pain. The good news is that there is no corner of reality where pain cannot be transformed into overflowing joy." – John Goldingay

"God's answer to the world's suffering has never taken the form people wanted it to. He has not given us a closely-reasoned apologia, but rather His answer was to enter into the arena of suffering Himself in the person of the Son whom He loved more than any of us has ever loved anyone." – Mike Mason

Working It Out

1. Read Matthew 14:22-24. What do you notice? How do you imagine the disciples are feeling at this point? How do you think you would be feeling?
2. Read v. 25-27. What do you observe about Jesus' arrival and the disciples' response?
3. What do you take from Jesus' words in v. 27? Do you think these words from Jesus were encouraging or disappointing for the disciples? Why?
4. In v. 28-30, what do you notice about Peter? Why did he begin to sink? What did he fail to do?

5. How does Jesus respond to Peter's doubt? Why is it important to understand Jesus' patience with and love for doubters like Peter?
 6. What is a "storm" that is in your life right now? What would it look like for you this week to trust that Jesus is the Lord of the storm?
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