

LESSON FOUR

JESUS CALMS THE STORM

MATTHEW 8:23-27

1. **Read and re-read the passage.** Who are the people in this miracle of Jesus' story? Where does the miracle take place? What bearing does this have on the miracle Jesus performs? Take time to be quiet and still, to pray and ask the Lord to help you observe this passage. What do you see? What is happening?
2. **What else is going on?** Skim the preceding three chapters, Matthew 5, 6, and 7. What is this famous sermon of Jesus? What are some of the main points of Jesus' teaching?
3. **Read Matthew 7:28-29.** What amazes Jesus' listeners? Why is that?

Remember that Jesus' disciples are among those in the crowd. What are they learning about Jesus' authority?

4. **Read Matthew 8:1-17.** How does the amazement of the disciples grow as they watch Jesus heal many people of many things?

How does this demonstrate His Kingdom authority?

5. Look at the two potential followers of Jesus in **Matthew 8:18-22**. What keeps them from becoming followers of Jesus, even though they both were amazed by Him?

6. In our passage this week, **Matthew 8:23-27**, Jesus gets in the boat with “His disciples.” Considering what we have learned about these men so far, what do we know about their faith in Christ?

OWNING THE PASSAGE:

James Montgomery Boice describes being a true follower of Jesus as this: “Nothing can come before a deliberate, active, practical following for one who wants to be His disciple” (*The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. 1, The King and His Kingdom – An Expositional Commentary*). How do you know the difference between a faith in Christ that is amazed at His teaching and what He does for us or a genuine faith that means we are truly His disciple? Where are you on this path of following Jesus?

BIBLE DICTIONARY:

The Lake of Galilee sits approximately 600 feet below sea level. It is surrounded by high hills on its western, northern, and eastern sides. Canyons cut through these hills. The easterly wind storms that hit the land of Israel are quite severe, and even in the present day, can cause damage to property and agriculture, even the loss of life.

7. The disciples and Jesus are on the boat, Jesus is asleep, and one of these terrifying Lake of Galilee storms begins to flood the boat with water.
 - a. What right action do the disciples take in the middle of this extremely frightening storm?

 - b. What does their question of Jesus reveal about their faith?

- c. What does Jesus' response to them reveal about His biggest concern for them?

OWNING THE PASSAGE:

It may seem an easy yes to say, "I'm a follower of Jesus. I've left everything to follow Him." But why is it so hard to have peace and trust Jesus when the storms of life suddenly come our way? How has God helped you grow in this grace to trust Him more?

- 8. Note that Jesus rebukes the wind and the waves, and instantly the sea was calm.

- a. How do the disciples react?
- b. What does this tell us about Jesus' authority? (See Job 38:8-11, Colossians 1:16-17.)
- c. How do the disciples grow in their knowledge of who Jesus is and what He can do?

OWNING THE PASSAGE:

Jesus knows that it is often hard for us to trust Him, especially in times of crisis. In those times, He gives grace to help us in our need through godly friends, the Word, and prayer. How is God teaching you to trust Him more lately? Pray for an opportunity to share that story with another person and to tell him or her about the reality of Jesus' love and care.

EXPLORE MORE:

- A. In chapter 8, following the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew records multiple miracles which prove the authority and veracity of Jesus' teaching and necessitate a response from the observers. Each episode begs the question of whether Jesus will find genuine faith and how that faith will express itself. In the boat, the disciples' amazement is slowly turning to genuine faith. But what about the crowds which seem to always be around and are always *just* amazed. Generally speaking in the Gospels, the crowds serve as apathetic observers of the ministry. **According to Matthew 27:20-23**, what are the consequences of crowds being amazed but never becoming true disciples of Jesus?
- B. What word in that passage demonstrates how easily people are influenced, and how is that a warning for us as we examine what pressures are impacting our spiritual development?