

# The Road to The Cross (Part 4)

Sunday, March 22, 2020

So far, we have seen that The Road to The Cross...

1. Is Paved with Challenging Truth...
2. Purchased the FREEDOM of our FORGIVENESS...
3. The Road to The Cross is TRAVELLED WITH FAITH NOT FEAR

In our fourth message in this series, I would like for us to consider this thought...

4. The Road to The Cross will ENCOUNTER STORMS along the way

I want us to read an account of a storm the disciples faced from both Matthew and Mark

## **Matthew 8:23-27 (NIV)**

<sup>23</sup> Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. <sup>24</sup> Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. <sup>25</sup> The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!”

<sup>26</sup> He replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

<sup>27</sup> The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!”

## **Mark 4:35-41 (NIV)**

<sup>35</sup> That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.”

<sup>36</sup> Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. <sup>37</sup> A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup> Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”

<sup>39</sup> He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

<sup>40</sup> He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

<sup>41</sup> They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

## 1. Storms are inevitable

- a. *(They followed Him - Matthew 8:23)* Sometimes we feel like if we are doing what God wants us to do everything should be ok. But Jesus made it clear

### **John 16:33 (NIV)**

<sup>33</sup> “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

- b. This wasn't the only storm that they would face
- c. Storms come in many shapes and sizes and vary in length and intensity.
  - i. The difference between our storm with Daniel and our storm with Samantha
- d. They are not necessarily an indication that we are traveling the wrong road. Sometimes it is the exact opposite. Sometimes we face storms precisely because we are on the right road

### **Matthew 5:45 (NIV)**

<sup>45</sup> ...He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

- e. There were other boats with them. Think about the storms that men and women of God have faced. Think about the storms you have faced. They are nothing new and they will continue to happen. We need to understand that the storm we are going through right now involves many other boats

## 2. The Enemy has a purpose for the storm

- a. To instill fear *(Why are you so afraid – Mark 8:40)*
- b. To call into question God's love and care for us *(don't you care if we drown – Mark 8:38)*
- c. To cause us to get our eyes off Jesus (Remember another storm when Peter was walking on the water and he took his eyes off of Jesus)

### **Matthew 14:30 (NIV)**

<sup>30</sup> But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!”

- d. To prevent us from fulfilling the purposes of God (*There was ministry on the other side of that storm – a demon possessed man, a woman with an issue of blood for 12 years, Jairus dead daughter. Mark 5 tells us that all this happened immediately after the storm*)
- e. To isolate us, cause us to feel alone and get us to give up
- "My Dear Wormwood,*
- Plagues are a most effective weapon given to us by our father below. Normally, Christians are quite comfortable in receiving the dreaded sacraments and gathering in their prayers and other heinous Arts. But if you can stir up a hysteria by means of a plague so that they cut themselves off from our enemies gifts to them, the torment of isolation will drive them to despair and season them quite deliciously much to our delight.*
- Get them to forget about their usual practices of prayer, fasting and alms giving and encourage them to become gluttons, slanderers, and lose all regard for their neighbor thinking only about themselves and their immediate needs. Storing up treasures which we can send moth and rust to destroy further sweetening their torment.*
- If you can, help them to redefine their usual words like "church" and "fellowship" and "ministry" so that they feel comfortable cutting themselves off from our enemy's care and they can be tempted all the more.*
- Yes, Wormwood, a plague is a tried and true method of taking their eyes off our enemy and getting them to worship their own bodies. A most desirable position for we tempters. Never let a good crisis go to waste!*
- Your Affectionate Uncle,  
Screwtape"*

### **3. God has a purpose for the storm**

- a. **To Confront - this storm awakens us to our need of repentance (Job)**
- To stop us from continuing in the wrong direction
  - To cause us to feel the painful consequences of our sinful choices
  - To offer us an opportunity to cry out to God for forgiveness
- b. **To Deepen our faith and trust in The Lord (Like this storm)**
- To introduce us to the power of our God
  - To refocus our faith on Jesus strength and not our own
  - To remind us of the extent of his love
  - To teach us to trust him at all times and in all circumstances

c. **To Develop the perseverance we need to finish the journey (Acts 27)**

- To encourage us with the fact that God is in control
  - Sometimes storms are calmed instantly
  - Sometimes Jesus calms us and goes through the storm with us
- To strengthen our resolve not to give up
- To reinforce God's promise to never leave us or forsake us
- To demonstrate the glory of God to unbelievers

d. **To Demonstrate His Glory**

4. **My response to the storm is crucial to which purpose is fulfilled**

- a. I have fun imagining what we don't read in the scriptures about the disciple's response
- i. James and John, The Sons of Thunder, immediately begin yelling and cursing at the storm
  - ii. Thomas runs around crying and screaming "we're all gonna die, we're all gonna die."
  - iii. Peter grabs a bucket and says "come on boys, we can fight this thing, start bailing."
  - iv. And Judas says, "It's every man for himself, I'm outta here" jumps overboard and starts to swim to shore.
- b. Don't Jump Out of The Boat
- i. The disciples got one thing right – They went to Jesus
  - ii. So can we... We can...
    - Pray
    - Worship God (We'll talk more about this next week)
    - Maintain the fellowship of believers
      - C.S. Lewis Quote
    - Look for opportunities to help, encourage and minister to others in the midst of the storm
    - Prepare for the other side of the storm

**Proverbs 10:25**

When the storm has swept by, the wicked are gone, but the righteous stand firm forever.

C. S. Lewis's words—written 72 years ago—ring with some relevance for us. Just replace “atomic bomb” with “coronavirus.”

In one way we think a great deal too much of the atomic bomb. “How are we to live in an atomic age?” I am tempted to reply: “Why, as you would have lived in the sixteenth century when the plague visited London almost every year, or as you would have lived in a Viking age when raiders from Scandinavia might land and cut your throat any night; or indeed, as you are already living in an age of cancer, an age of syphilis, an age of paralysis, an age of air raids, an age of railway accidents, an age of motor accidents.”

In other words, do not let us begin by exaggerating the novelty of our situation. Believe me, dear sir or madam, you and all whom you love were already sentenced to death before the atomic bomb was invented: and quite a high percentage of us were going to die in unpleasant ways. We had, indeed, one very great advantage over our ancestors—anesthetics; but we have that still. It is perfectly ridiculous to go about whimpering and drawing long faces because the scientists have added one more chance of painful and premature death to a world which already bristled with such chances and in which death itself was not a chance at all, but a certainty.

This is the first point to be made: and the first action to be taken is to pull ourselves together. If we are all going to be destroyed by an atomic bomb, let that bomb when it comes find us doing sensible and human things—praying, working, teaching, reading, listening to music, bathing the children, playing tennis, chatting to our friends over a pint and a game of darts—not huddled together like frightened sheep and thinking about bombs. They may break our bodies (a microbe can do that) but they need not dominate our minds.

— “On Living in an Atomic Age” (1948) in *Present Concerns: Journalistic Essays*