

## LESSON 2

June 13, 2021

### Unit I. Jesus Teaches about Faith Calming the Storm

**DEVOTIONAL READING:** Psalm 107:23-32

**BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES:** Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25

**PRINT PASSAGE:** Matthew 8:23-27

### KEY VERSE

[Jesus] saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. (Matthew 8:26, KJV)

.....

[Jesus] 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. (Matthew 8:26, NIV)

### Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do these things:

- Consider the feelings of the disciples when a storm overtook their boat while Jesus was asleep.
- Identify the crises that cause adults to worry about themselves and their families.
- Respond to the promised presence of Jesus in bad times as well as good times.

### KEY TERMS

**Calm (verse 26)**—Greek: *galéné* (gal-ay'-nay): a calmness; stillness; a state of being undisturbed, serene, or peaceful.

**Followed (verse 23)**—Greek: *akoloutheó* (ak-ol-oo-theh'-o): accompanied; attended to.

**Obey (verse 27)**—Greek: *hupakouó* (hoop-ak-oo'-o): to listen or harken to a command; submit to.

**Rebuked (verse 26)**—Greek: *epitimaó* (ep-ee-tee-mah'-o): chided; admonished; warned.

**Save (verse 25)**—Greek: *sózó* (sode'-zo): to deliver, preserve, or rescue from danger.

**Storm (verse 24)**—Greek: *seismos* (sice-mos'): a commotion, shaking (as an earthquake); a violent disturbance, usually with strong winds; “tempest” (KJV).

### PREPARING THE LESSON

- Refer to the *Townsend Press SS Commentary Teacher's Edition* for an additional lesson plan—with word studies, insights on teaching adults, learner matrices, etc.
- Review last week's student assignments (“Your Life” and Your World!”).
- Thoroughly review your student book for your adult or young adult class.
- Please note that you have the option of using your subscription bundle supplements, i.e., Lesson Scenario, Student Activity Sheet, SSL-AAG.

## **WHY THIS LESSON MATTERS**

People often lose confidence amidst the storms of persecution, rejection, and poverty. Where can we find assurance when beset by the storms of life? Fearing they would not survive the windstorm, the disciples turned to Jesus to save them.

## **THE LESSON IN FOCUS**

At some point in life, most people have experienced the fear that there was no solution or exit to their problem. Everyone should have at least one trusted friend with whom they can share their troubles. A good friend will come to aid you in a meaningful way in a time of critical need—whether with a few extra dollars, a shoulder to cry on, a place to sleep, or an on-time word of encouragement. Although we often pretend to have everything under control, it is easy to become discouraged and overwhelmed by a troubling setback. During bad experiences, many are tempted to believe that no one cares about their problems. Acting on this presumption, some people will neglect to pray, isolate themselves, and sink deeper into despair. No matter how others respond, believers can always be assured that God sees and cares for them.

## **THE LESSON IN CONTEXT**

The disciples had spent countless hours with Jesus. They had seen Him cast out demons, heal the sick, feed the hungry, predict the future, discern people's thoughts, and explain deep spiritual truths to the large crowds that followed Him. Perhaps it was difficult for the disciples to fathom that Jesus was capable of anything more than what they had already witnessed. The more time they spent with Him, the more they would realize that Jesus' power was unlimited. Jesus even had authority to command the natural elements of the world. In this week's lesson, Jesus demonstrated another dimension of His divine authority by speaking a word to calm the wind and the sea. When the storm proved too difficult for the disciples to manage, they showed a measure of trust by running to Jesus for help. Nonetheless, Jesus still rebuked them for not trusting that the situation was under control even as He slept. Jesus' calm and ability to rest in the midst of the storm is a model for believers to trust God during difficult times. In ancient Hebrew thought, the sea symbolized the forces of chaos arrayed against God—forces that God brings into submission (see Genesis 1:2; Psalm 93:3; 104:6-9). The Synoptic Gospels reveal that this was more than just an ordinary storm. The raging storm the men faced was actually a life-threatening event. The disciples were seasoned fishermen who were familiar with harsh weather and the dangers of the sea, yet they were deathly afraid.

## **OPENING INQUIRY**

(Choose from the questions below.)

1. Share about the last storm (tumultuous upsetting situation) you encountered.
2. How did you handle the storm?
3. What, if anything, would you have done differently?

## **INSIGHTS**

One of the most profound lessons from the text is that those who follow Jesus are not exempt from life's troubles. Therefore, we must learn to accept storms as a part of our journey. Storms strengthen our faith and equip us to be more effective servants for God's work on earth. During life's darkest moments, even the most seasoned believers can be tempted to think that God is nonchalant toward their pain. The truth is that God may not block your storm or lift your burden

as soon as you call for help, but He never abandons us. We must trust God's timing, His unfailing love for us, and His sovereign power over our lives and our world.

## EXPLORATION

As Christians, we are encouraged and amazed by God's power to restore order and peace after a chaotic experience. God hears us when we pray, but because He is not obliged to obey us, He sometimes allows difficulties for reasons beyond our understanding—reasons that we may never comprehend. The more we search for God, the more we learn to trust Him in all of our ways. This process strengthens our faith, making us bolder and better suited to serve Him. As we serve, we can be assured that God cares about every issue that concerns us, and in His own way and timing will work all things together for our good and His purposes (see Romans 8:28).

## ADDITIONAL EXPOSITORY INSIGHTS FOR THE TEACHER

### Commentary on Matthew 8:23-25

#### KJV

23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples *followed* him.

24 And, behold, there arose a great *tempest* in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, *save* us: we perish.

#### NIV

23 Then he got into the boat and his disciples *followed* him.

24 Suddenly a furious *storm* came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping.

25 The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Lord, *save* us! We’re going to drown!”

The text affirms that Jesus entered a boat with His disciples without indicating which or how many of the disciples were present. The men embarked for what would ordinarily have been a two-hour boat trip from the village of Capernaum at the shore of the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee is an eight-mile lake surrounded by mountains. To this day, it is known for sudden, violent storms. This storm the disciples confronted was apparently more violent than the typical storms of the area. The word translated in the text as “great tempest” is also used for “earthquake,” and would only be used to describe the worst kind of storm. This is a clear indication of the violence and turbulence of the storm that terrified the experienced sailors and forced them into what appeared to be a fight for their very lives. The waves beat the boat so hard and heavy that the waves covered the boat with water, convincing the men that the boat would soon sink and they would drown. The text notes that while the disciples were struggling and panicking, Jesus was sleeping. Notice that the waves covered the ship, “but” Jesus was asleep. This emphasizes the sharp contrast between Jesus’ and the disciples’ reaction to the chaos at sea. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, was present with them, even amid the troubling storm that threatened to kill them. It is possible for any believer to find peace through Jesus when the storms of life are raging. Storms will come; that is an inevitable reality of life. Come what may, we must trust God in every moment.

## DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question:** Take time to share a storm that came upon you suddenly and how you handled it.
- **Young Adult Questions:** In the middle of life's storms, why is it sometimes difficult to trust and believe that "God's got this"? How can we find peace in our storms?

## Commentary on Matthew 8:26-27

### KJV

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and *rebuked* the winds and the sea; and there was a great *calm*.

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea *obey* him!

### NIV

26 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*.

27 The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves *obey* him!"

The Greek word used for "fearful" is *deiloi*, which indicates a cowardly type of fear. A fear that is indicative of having "little faith." Even with the storm brewing, Jesus expected the disciples to trust Him. He was the one who sent them out into the sea and was travelling with them; this should have assured them that they could trust Him, despite the real trouble they encountered. Jesus rebuked the disciples because He expected a greater measure of faith from them. He rebuked their fear and unbelief. Jesus rebuked the men because mature faith accepts that a positive outcome is yet possible even when it does not seem apparent. Knowing that God is in control eliminates such emotions as overwhelming fear and despair. The uniqueness of this storm is that the winds and the water were raging fiercely. This was a sign of great disturbance to the disciples' peace of mind. They had just witnessed Jesus' bringing great joy to many—but now that a storm had arisen, they reverted to a fearful state of mind, although Jesus was with them. Jesus' presence with them should have given the disciples peaceful confidence. Jesus was not panicked; He was sleeping in a restful state. When Jesus woke up, He demonstrated an incredible power over the very thing that had caused the disciples such overwhelming fear. This display of Jesus' power clarified and confirmed His identity to those present. Their test was to trust Him despite the storm. While storms draw us closer to God, the faithful must learn to remain near to Christ in faith when the storms come, trusting that He has it all in control. Jesus does not just quiet the storm but He "rebukes" the storm. The fact that Jesus has to rebuke the storm, many believe, is a sign of a demonic attack. Something more than a natural occurrence is underway, requiring Jesus to be stern with the forces that are raging against Him and those in the boat.

## DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question:** Practically speaking, what must we do to experience peace amid life's most devastating situations—such as job loss, the death of a loved one, a terminal medical diagnosis, or bad news concerning a family member?
- **Young Adult Questions:** (1) If fear and worry are signs of a weak faith, do you think, then, that the storms of life are a test of our faith? Explain. (2) Even today people are asking, "What kind of man is this?" Take turns and have each person share five answers to that question.

## LIFE APPLICATION

*Refer to Adult Book (See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)*

—This week, identify the most recent storm in your life. If you are not currently in a storm, then reflect on the last storm. How did you handle it? What could you have done better? In this current storm, remain calm and rational. Turn to God's Word, seek His presence, and trust His love for You. Never doubt that God can see you through anything.

*(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)*

—This week, consider someone you know is going through a storm. Prayerfully consider ways that you might support the person. This might require covering with prayer, sharing your testimony, or delivering some resources.

*Refer to Young Adult Book (See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)*

—Fear has a way of gripping us to the point where our vision is distorted, and we end up turning an issue into a disaster. During times when you are afraid, remember what Jesus can do. As He did for the disciples, He will do for you

—Jesus will calm the storm and speak perfect peace to your situation.

*(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)*

—Storms in life are inevitable. Storms can appear in the form of economic crises, unexpected job losses, pandemics, medical emergencies, family conflict, etc. Identify the crises that have caused you to worry about yourself or your family. Then, quietly pray for faith to remember Jesus is with you in and through the crises.

## NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

The lesson topic for Sunday, June 20, 2021, is "A Healing Touch." The Devotional Reading is Proverbs 3:1-8, the Background Scriptures are Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:21-43; Luke 8:40-56, and the Printed Text is Matthew 9:18-26.

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Lord, we come to confess our fears. Let the grace and love of Jesus Christ cover and comfort us in troubling times. Guide us, strengthen our faith, and reduce our fear as we learn to trust You completely. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

### **HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

#### **Healed by Faith (June 14-20, 2021)**

MONDAY, June 14	"Fringe, Aid to Remember God's Commandments"	(Numbers 15:37-41)
TUESDAY, June 15	"Disciples and Family Witness Girl's Healing"	(Luke 8:40-42a, 49-56)
WEDNESDAY, June 16	"A Woman Testifies to Jesus' Healing Touch"	(Luke 8:42b-48)
THURSDAY, June 17	"Jesus Opens the Eyes of Blind Man"	(Matthew 9:27-31)
FRIDAY, June 18	"Jesus Restores Speech to a Mute Man"	(Matthew 9:32-34)
SATURDAY, June 19	"Join the Lord's Harvest Today"	(Matthew 9:35-10:1)
SUNDAY, June 20	"Faith in God Heals Many Ills"	(Matthew 9:18-26)