

## **BLUEPRINTS: Adding Insulation: Weathering The Storms of Life<sup>i</sup>** **Mark 4:35-41**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Good morning, church family. Before we jump into this morning's message, I want to welcome those of you that are guests with us today. Thank you for entrusting us with your Sunday. It is our prayer that our church already feels like home to you.

And we would love to connect with you. You can text the keyword, TBCMP, which stands for Trinity Baptist Church Mt. Pleasant, to the number 94-000. You'll be sent a link back and you can follow the instructions from there.

Or you can stop by Guest Connect located in the lobby. Even if you text in, I want to invite you to stop by Guest Connect. We have a team that would like to meet you and give you a gift as a way of saying thank you for being here today. Again, we welcome you.

### **SERIES OVERVIEW:**

We are approaching the end of our teaching series we've called Blueprints: Building Families by God's design. We have today and then we will wrap things up next week. We are looking to the Bible as it is our blueprint, God's design plan, for building godly families. And the reason we are doing this study is because godly societies are the result of godly homes.

So far, we've looked at the foundation of God's design. Gathering the power tools of prayer, building security walls of a healthy marriage, developing discipline in our homes, raising families that counter the culture, and wiring for sound, increasing effective communication. Today, we are Adding Insulation: Weathering the Storms of Life.

### **OPENING ILLUSTRATION: Storms.**

It seems as though we are getting used to storms that create massive damage. Florida has been hit with 2 major hurricanes. Thursday night, September 26, Helene hit, and then just 13 days later, Milton made landfall. Both storms have caused deaths and created damage from which people are still recovering. We continue to pray for those folks, and the team of men from our church that will be headed out to help next Sunday.

But we are no stranger to powerful storms in our area either. Tornadoes, high winds, and deep freezes have affected us in damaging ways the past few years.

Remember February of 2021 when we had single digit temperatures? Roads were iced over and as a staff, we worked from home. But I remember the day that Pastor Jeff called me and all I could hear was running water in the background. A pipe at the church had burst and the church had 4 inches of water from the preschool area to here in the worship center.

A pipe in the ceiling above our offices had frozen and burst. Come to find out, the ceiling tiles in our offices prevented heat from getting into the space between the first and second floors. That's caused the pipe to freeze and burst.

Now, when it is going to get freezing, we prop open the ceiling tiles in the office to make sure the heat keeps those pipes from freezing. And we go around and drip all the faucets. We do that in our homes as well. In other words, we take extra measures to lessen the blow of storms. I try to park our vehicles under cover in the threat of hail. When it comes to building godly homes, we need to add insulation to lessen the impact of the storms of life.

### **ILLUSTRATION: Insulation.**

One of our church members, owns an insulation business.<sup>ii</sup> I gave him a call this week to talk about the benefits of insulation in our homes. When building a home, insulation is important. While nothing keeps things out fully, insulation provides a buffer that prevents the storm outside from being too much inside our homes. If not well insulated, the external storms of life add more stress to the home internally. What's hot gets hotter and what's cold get colder.

Well, today, I want to talk about adding insulation to our homes by looking at ways to weather the storms of life with our families. We are going to look at some facts about storms and then discover 3 ways to weather life's storms. So, I want to invite you to take your Bibles and turn with me to the Gospel of Mark, chapter 4. We are going to be in verses 35 through 41 this morning.

### **MESSAGE:**

Let's begin by looking first at...

#### **1) Facts about life's storms.**

Think about weather for a moment. Weather storms are the result of unstable air mass in the atmosphere caused by the collision of warm and cool air.<sup>iii</sup> And when the conditions are just right, massive, powerful, and destructive storms form. In the same way, when it comes to our families, the conditions are right to encounter powerful storms, challenges, difficulties, and hurdles.

When we get married and stand at the altar, we bring to that event different conditions. We bring our selfishness, past experiences (the good and the bad), expectations, uncertainties, and insecurities to our wedding.<sup>iv</sup> Add to that the challenges we face in life, and the conditions are right for a massive and destructive storm. And depending on the tools we use and our preparedness for that storm, it often determines the outcome.

I want to mention a couple of facts about the storms of life. First, ...

#### A) Storms are inevitable.

While I don't want to burst your bubble, you and your family are going to encounter storms. You are going to face hurdles and challenges. It is unrealistic to think that your marriage will always be like your honeymoon. That your family will forever be sheltered from challenges. The reality is that storms come. Life happens and it happens to us all. But God teaches us how we can build in a way that we are prepared to weather those storms.

The Bible makes this clear to us. In John 16:33, Jesus said, *"**33I 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.**"* And then in James 1:2 it says, *"**2Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds.**"* There are other passages pointing to the fact that it is not a matter of if storms come, it's a matter of when. Storms are inevitable.

My goal today is to give us tools to help us weather the storms that do come. Jesus said that even in the midst of tribulation we can have peace. And in our passage of study this morning, we are going to see that very clearly. But it is first important to acknowledge the fact that storms are inevitable.

In fact, I've heard pastors say over the years that you are either in the midst of a storm, just out of a storm or headed into a storm. Life is bound to throw us a curve ball. So, the question becomes, "How can we weather life's storms well?" It is my prayer to help answer that question today. Storms are inevitable.

Secondly, I want to talk briefly about the...

#### B) 2 types of storms.

When I think about the storms we face with our families, I think there are two main categories they fit into. There are internal storms and external storms. Internal storms are more so consequences that are the result of choices we make. For example, unfaithfulness creates the storm of mistrust. Materialism can develop into the storm of a financial crisis. Relational conflict results in stormy days between our spouse and kids. Internal storms.

Then there are external storms. External storms are unexpected. A crushed dream, miscarriage, losing a job, major illness, and death are all things that are out of our control. Does the Bible speak to how we can navigate the internal and the external storms of life? I believe the Bible does speak to that, and we will see it in our passage this morning.

We have talked about some facts about storms, now, let's turn to Mark chapter 4 as we look at how Jesus calmed the storm and how we can apply principles to times we walk through life's storms. So, I want to work through the passage together. Follow along in your copy of God's Word.

#### BACKGROUND:

Mark, chapter 4, beginning in verse 35. God's Word says, *"**35On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side."*** The setting here is the Sea of Galilee.<sup>v</sup> Jesus and the disciples have been ministering in the region and they were off to another location. Luke's account calls this a lake. The Sea of Galilee is 13 miles at its longest and 8 miles at its widest.<sup>vi</sup> So, it is a relatively small body of water.

Verse 36. *"**36And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him.*** So, there's at least a few boats travelling with Jesus, but He is in the boat that the disciples are in.<sup>vii</sup> And this boat is probably a fishing boat as a few of the disciples were fishermen.<sup>viii</sup>

Verse 37. *"**37And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling.*** Now, I want you to get the picture here. They are in a small boat and a storm arose. On the north side of the Sea of Galilee is Mount Hermon, about 9,200 feet in elevation. On the east side of the Sea are cliffs.<sup>ix</sup>

Now, I'm not a meteorologist. We actually have a meteorologist in our church, so Sheena, you might need to fact check me on this.<sup>x</sup> But I'm told that it is common in that region for strong cool winds to travel down mount Hermon and collide with the warmer air over the Sea of Galilee, and hitting the cliffs on the east would result in quick, powerful storms. Winds would swirl and churn the water creating a hurricane type storm.<sup>xi</sup>

In fact, the word translated "windstorm" is the word that literally means hurricane.<sup>xii</sup> This storm was a sudden hurricane. In Matthew's account of this same event, Matthew uses the word, "seismos."<sup>xiii</sup> That's where we get our word seismograph, the device that measures earthquakes.

I think we tend to read this story like this storm was a thunderstorm on the sea. But no. This was a seismos, a hurricane, that violently shook the water. And it was sudden, seemingly out of nowhere. And it was so violent that the boat was taking on water, it was sinking. This was a massive and deadly storm.

Verse 38. *<sup>38</sup>But he [meaning Jesus] was in the stern, **asleep on the cushion.** And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"* The question here communicating that they all thought death was certain. That's the word for perishing.<sup>xiv</sup> They're dying, and Jesus is sleeping, on a cushion! And their question is very accusatory. "Jesus! Don't you see that we are going through a storm?! Do you not care that we are overwhelmed? We're dying here! Where are you? Ever ask questions like those about Jesus' response to the storms in your life? Jesus! Are you there? Do you hear my prayers? Do you see what's going on? Do you even care?"

Verse 39. *<sup>39</sup>And [Jesus] awoke and rebuked the wind [the hurricane] and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!"* [Literally translated, "Silence!<sup>xv</sup> Hush! Calm down,<sup>xvi</sup> right now."] *And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.* Jesus spoke to the deadly storm, and it ceased.

Verse 40. *<sup>40</sup>He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"* *<sup>41</sup>And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"*

## 2) 3 Ways to Weather Life's Storms.

I see in the passage we just read, 3 principles that we can apply to weathering the storms of life together as a family. Whether it is an internal storm we are

facing or an external storm that catches us by surprise, the principles are the same. The first principle in weathering life's storms is to...

### A) Go to the right Person.

In Mark 4, the disciples had Jesus in the boat with them. But here's what I find very interesting about the situation the disciples were in. It seems to me they waited to wake Jesus for a little while. Remember, several of the disciples were experienced fisherman who had no doubt encountered storms on the Sea of Galilee. But they only wake Jesus after they realize that the size of the storm has overmatched their experience. The second part of verse 37 says, *"the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling."* They waited until after the boat had begun to fill up.

Much like these disciples, we tend to approach the storms we face with our own ability, experience, and ingenuity before we ever go to Jesus. It's like Jesus is our last resort instead of our first option. Whether it is an internal storm created by our own choices or an external storm that catches us by surprise, we often try to work our way out of it before we turn to The Lord.

It's awesome to me that the disciples have to wake Jesus up. I mean sure, He's exhausted from ministry events, He's crashed in the stern of the boat. But what Jesus' sleep shows me is that He's never bothered by storms. When the boat was being tossed to and fro, saturated by crashing waves, creaking from high winds, Jesus is fast asleep.

Now, how many of you can sleep through a tornado? Unbothered by the alert sirens and the limbs tapping the windows. No one! I can't But Jesus can. Why?

**Jesus is always bigger than the biggest storm we face.** He's not panicked. Afterall, He can calm storms in His sleep! I kinda get the picture that Jesus rubs His eyes and then says, "Shut up. Clam down," and the storm dissipates. I love this picture. In the span of just minutes, the disciples see both the complete humanity of Jesus (he was asleep) and His deity, the command He has over nature. And the things that cause us to lose sleep, tossing and turning filled with anxiety and uncertainty, and overwhelmed by what seems to be impossible odds, is simply just a storm to Jesus.

I know that in many ways I'm just the pot calling the kettle black. Because I often try to manhandle the storms in my life. But all it does is cause me to lose

sleep, increase my blood pressure, and cause my anxiety to run unchecked. But we need to know in those times who's in our boat! Sometimes we get so distracted by the storm that we forget that Jesus is with us. That's kinda the picture I get from these disciples. Oh yeah, Jesus is with us. Go wake Him up.

Listen, if you are in Christ, Jesus is in your boat! That doesn't mean you won't encounter storms. But it means that you have and know the right person to turn to in your storm. And sure, there are things you are going to have to change because of the storm you're in. You're going to have to batten down the hatches, maybe adjust some ropes, and patch torn sails. But we do those things, not to fix the storm, but because Jesus is at the helm, and we are simply trusting and following His leadership in our lives. You and I are not the right person to manage the storms we face. But Jesus is.

How do you weather life's storms? Go to the right person. Secondly, ...

### B) **Have the right Perspective.** Have the right perspective.

Two verses from our study that I think speak to this point, verses 35 and 40. Jesus said in verse 35, *"Let us go across to the other side."* The phrase translated, "Let us go across," is one word in the original language. It's a word that means to go through.<sup>xvii</sup> The disciples forgot that Jesus was a Man of His Word. "Let us go across [through] to the other side." In other words, "We're going to get to the other side. We just have to go through a storm first." Do you see the perspective shift?

If we are honest, what causes us the most anxiety about the things we face is uncertainty as to whether or not we are going to make it through to the other side. The disciples' perspective was that they weren't going to make it. We're going to perish, they said. Which is why Jesus asked in verse 40, *"Why are you so afraid?"*

It's not that the disciples shouldn't have been afraid. They were in a small boat in the middle of a dangerous storm. Where they went wrong was their focus on the size of the storm, not on Jesus who is Lord over the storm. They needed to shift their perspective. Their assumption was that they were going to die. But Jesus' perspective was set on what was on the other side.

Now, I don't know what you might be facing. But I do know that you're going to make it through. I don't know what storm you and your family are dealing with, but I know that you're going to make it through. We must keep that perspective.

Now, I feel like it is necessary at this point to say that knowing you're going to make it through the storm you are facing doesn't mean that Jesus is going to step in and make your storm go away. Like, what if Jesus didn't calm the storm in Mark 4? Would they have still made it through? The answer, I believe, is yes. Because Jesus had more of His mission to accomplish. Jesus had a plan for their lives.

But here's the deal, what we often think the other side should look like doesn't necessarily mean that's what it will be like. Right? Like, sometimes the other side of a battle with cancer is complete healing in glory. Sometimes the other side still results in the loss of a loved one. But in either case, we know that in Christ we will be reunited again someday. Not what we wanted, but we're still going to make it through to the other side. Psalm 23:4, *"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me."* That's the right perspective.

No matter the severity of the storm you're facing, through the power of Jesus, you're going to make it through. Whether your storm is internal or external, you're going to be okay. You can recover from divorce. You can rebuild trust in your marriage. You can find joy again. There is always hope when Jesus is in the boat.

How do you weather life's storms? Go to the right person and have the right perspective. Thirdly, finally, ...

### C) **Trust the right Product.**

When we walk through the storms of life, it produces something in us. **God uses storms as tools to help us know and trust Him more.** We become willing participants in God's work when we trust what He is doing in and through us. A couple of things to point out here.

First, in verse 40 Jesus says, *"<sup>40</sup>He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? **Have you still no faith?"** <sup>41</sup>And they were **filled with great fear** and said to one another, **"Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"**"*

Jesus asked, “Have you still no faith?” See, leading up to this storm, the disciples witnessed Jesus do amazing and impossible things. They saw Jesus heal a man with a withered hand, heal a paralytic lowered through the roof, healing a leper and many others. They saw Jesus cast out a demon. And borrowing from the Gospel of John, they saw how He turned the water into wine. All up to this point.

Now, the calming of the sea was Jesus’ first miracle over nature. But the point is that the history the disciples had with Jesus, up to this point, should have caused them to trust Him more in this situation. But it didn’t. Why? I think the difference is observation versus experience. Let me explain what I mean.

All the miracles the disciples had witnessed up to this point affected other people. The disciples just observed but they had never experienced a miracle themselves. I think they knew Jesus could come through for them, but believing and putting faith into practice are two different things.

We are similar to the disciples here. Maybe you have heard testimony of how God has shown up in a powerful way for others. But then when we face a storm, we wonder if God will show up for us like He showed up for them. And it is not until we experience the faithfulness of God, in the middle of a storm, that we begin to comprehend His work and ability to see us through future storms life throws our way. It’s the difference between observation and experience. I can believe it in my head because I’ve heard of God’s faithfulness and I’ve read about it in His Word, but it doesn’t resonate in my heart until I’ve experienced, first-hand, the faithfulness of God in the midst of difficulties. Storms can be tools to help us move from head knowledge to heart knowledge.

See, it was on the other side of the storm that the disciples came to know more about Jesus and His work in their lives. They were fearful and anxious when the dangerous storm surrounded them, but they were even more afraid after Jesus calmed the storm. Verse 41. ***41And they were filled with great fear.*** The literal translation of that is, “And they feared with great fear.” The idea being that of ultimate reverence and respect.

The storm changed them. And they were awestruck at who Jesus is. ***“Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”*** Not only do I believe their faith grew as a result of this experience, but I think their knowledge of God also grew. Not only do demons obey Jesus. Not only does sickness obey

Jesus. But even the wind and sea obey Jesus. He is LORD of all lords and KING of all kings. They came to know more of who Jesus is. Facing challenges in our lives has the unique ability to grow us in ways we never would otherwise.

Now, some people look at storms as a loving God causing pain and heartache in their lives. Why would God allow this in my life? But beloved, the fact is that we live in a broken world and broken things happen in a broken world. And I’d much rather go through brokenness with Jesus than without Him. But even in the storms of life, our family can trust that God is working in us to produce something great in us.

How do you weather life’s storms? Go to the right person, have the right perspective and trust the right product.

### **CONCLUSION:**

I think the question that this message presents to us all is, “Is Jesus in your boat? Do you only have knowledge about Jesus or have you experienced a life-changing relationship with Jesus?”

If you’re here today and you have not been born again unto a relationship with Jesus, we want to visit with you about that today. Our elders will be here at the front, following the service, and we want share with you how you can have a personal relationship with Jesus.

Maybe your response this morning is different. Maybe you’re going through a massive storm. Maybe it’s internal, maybe it’s external. But you are in the middle of a challenge. You’re anxious and you need someone to pray with. Our elders want to pray with you and over you today.

I’m going to pray, we are going to stand and sing, but I want us to listen to the still small voice in our heart. God is speaking to you today. Be obedient to His prompting you.

Let’s pray. [PRAY]

## ENDNOTES:

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<sup>i</sup> Works consulted in preparation for this message: John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Matthew 8-15*, Moody Publishers: Chicago, 1987; Jerry Pipes, *Building a Successful Family: Basic Building Blocks For A Healthy Home*, Jerry F. Pipes: USA, 2002; David Garland, "The NIV Application Commentary: Mark," Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1996; William Barclay, "The Gospel of Mark," Westminster Press: Philadelphia, 1975; Thabiti Anyabwile, "Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Luke," Holman: Nashville, 2018; David O. Dykes, "How to Storm-Proof Your Life," sermon preached at Green Acres Baptist Church, June 14, 2009, accessed online: <https://gabc-archive.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/s061409.pdf>; Skip Heitzig, "Smart Home: Patching Holes," sermon preached at Calvary Alburquerque, December 2, 2018, accessed online: <https://connectwithskip.com/teachings/#/series/30/sermon/274>; Ray Fowler, "Who is This Jesus?," sermon published by Ray Fowler Ministries, accessed online: <https://www.rayfowler.org/sermons/mark/who-is-this-jesus/>; Erwin Lutzer, "Playing for Keeps," sermon preached at The Moody Church, August 11, 2013, accessed online: <https://www.moodymedia.org/sermons/fighting-your-family/playing-keeps/>; John MacArthur, "Calming the Storm," sermon published by Grace to You, December 27, 2009, accessed online: <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/41-21/calming-the-storm>.

<sup>ii</sup> Conversation with Luke Nyhoff, Mt. Pleasant Insulation.

<sup>iii</sup> NASA, <https://gpm.nasa.gov/resources/faq/what-causes-thunderstorms>.

<sup>iv</sup> Adapted from Erwin Lutzer.

<sup>v</sup> Guzik, *Enduring Word Commentary*.

<sup>vi</sup> Barclay, page 115.

<sup>vii</sup> Garland, page 191.

<sup>viii</sup> MacArthur, page 33.

<sup>ix</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xi</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xii</sup> Strong's Concordance, 2978, lailaps.

<sup>xiii</sup> MacArthur, page 33.

<sup>xiv</sup> Strong's Concordance, 622, apollumi.

<sup>xv</sup> Strong's Concordance, 4623, siópaó.

<sup>xvi</sup> Strong's Concordance, 5392, phimoó.

<sup>xvii</sup> Strong's Concordance, 1330, dierchomai.