**IN GOD’S CLASSROOM**

**HIS LESSONS IN A STORM**

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Did you know that God is a Good Teacher? He is a Great teacher and we are His students! Believe it or not, this big world is His Classroom! This old evil world of troubles and trials that we live in is His big Classroom. When we came to Jesus and got saved, we became His disciples and immediately entered His Classroom to be taught and learn the ways of God.

Taking this into consideration then, what grade are you in? I have been in God’s school for 41 years. I have not graduated. He is still teaching me and there’s a lot more lessons to learn.

**MY TESTIMONY FROM GRADE SCHOOL**

In 1966 when I was in grade school, I failed the 5th grade because I didn’t like to read. I was assigned to read so many library books for that year and I didn’t do it because it wasn’t interesting. I had no desire for it. I didn’t take it serious. To me life was fun and games. The school board notified Mom and Dad. I was held back a year and my whole class went on to the next grade without me. You talk about embarrassing! I was left behind for a whole year to learn what I should have learned to start with. I had to be taught again! I had to pass the tests. It took me 13 years to get a diploma – a 19 year old man! That one whole year of failure taught me to buckle down and put my heart in it. If I ever was going to go places and make something in life, I had to study and apply myself! Believe me, I made up my mind I wasn’t going to quit – I wasn’t going to drop out! That lonely year of failure, sitting at my desk in the classroom and looking out the window and watching the others go on to bigger things without me did something to me. That year of shame and failure put a Go Ye and a determination in my Heart to succeed and make something!

**ENTERING GOD’S SCHOOL**

Let’s go into the Scriptures now. The Great Master and Teacher – Jesus, called unto Him 12 disciples, 12 ordinary unlearned men to follow Him and be taught. They were getting ready to enter God’s School of Learning! Little did they know, it

was going to take rough seas, storms and opposing winds, deep valleys and lonely dark nights. They would cross dry deserts and climb High mountains to follow their Master. They would soon find out that the only way they could learn God’s Divine Ways and have Him to instill within their hearts His Knowledge and power, they must apply themselves. God was getting ready through His Son to build a Faith in them that would not give up but be Victorious! You can read through the Gospels and see that it would take a few failures but they would learn that God’s Love Conquers all. For 3 1/2 years Jesus would show them God’s power in a way they couldn’t deny or doubt. The Lord would put them through experiences that would make them strong to endure hard trials and persecution that would soon come to them under a cruel Roman Government. The preaching of the Gospel would not be without a price. Opposition was coming and God was putting them through Spiritual boot camp.

**THE SPIRIT OF BABYLON RISING**

Can I say, every one of us are in God’s Classroom right now? If we don’t learn our lessons now and learn to endure in our trials, then we may fail in the days ahead as we see the shadow of Ancient Rome falling over America. The spirit of Babylon is rising as you read this. I can see a modern day Nebuchadnezzar in the White House that is promoting and passing laws to force upon the American people a new Liberal view that is doing away with the Old and telling everyone they must conform and go along. Just like the three Hebrew children, the Church is caught right in the middle. We are told by our Politicians to dance to their tune on Gay rights and abortion. Our religious rights are being stripped away. Our God is hated and His Laws despised. Persecution is on our doorstep as we see Jesus made fun of and rejected. I know this may not make sense, but make good in your trials, cherish them, they are for a purpose. God is teaching you, conditioning and strengthening you in them for a reason.

**LESSONS FROM THE SEA**

There were two different major storms on the Sea of Galilee recorded in the Gospels that the Disciples were caught in! Let’s gird on our sandals, don on our Seaman’s clothes and get on board a ship with the Disciples. We will learn that storms are meant to build faith and trust in God when things get rough. You see, the stormy sea the Disciples faced is a type and shadow of an angry troubled Sea we face today. The sea that God’s people face today is the sea of wicked humanity in a world out of control.

Daniel the prophet in the O.T. said – “I saw the end time. I saw in a vision 4 great beasts rising up out of the Sea (of humanity).” This is dealing with world powers and governments. About 600 years later, John the Revelator on the Isle of Patmos saw in a vision a Beast – the Antichrist rising up out of the Sea – it too was out of a raging sea of troubled humanity, this wicked devil filled ruler would rise up to control all earths people. Can I tell you, we are facing an angry sea in these last days? The waves and billows are raging high. The foamy sea is surging and unless we put our trust in God and have the Lord with us and near us we will surely sink and go down!

Let’s go now and enter God’s Classroom. I see the Great Master and teacher rising up and saying, come with me now children and let’s go on a field trip or should I say, a wild boat ride?

**THE FIRST STORM**

In this first storm, Jesus is with His disciples. The second one He was not with them when the storm hit, but came later. **Matt. 8:23** – And when He (Jesus) was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him! **Mark** records – when evening was come (sometime around sunset or thereafter) He saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Galilee was 8.1 miles across. The maximum depth was 141 feet deep. No one could ever tame this giant lake. The geography and topography of the mountains around this lake caused the winds to sweep down suddenly and blow across the water, quickly lifting up angry waves. In a matter of moments you could be in peril. (Lord, are you sure you want us to go across this Sea tonight? Can’t we stay here on a peaceful shore?) The disciples were fishermen and they knew all about this lake. Jesus said, No boys, come on, we must cross to the other side.

I’d like to say to my readers here, God doesn’t always tell us everything! There is a very good reason He doesn’t. Remember when you were born again? The day or the night when you knelt down at the Altar and got saved, if God had told you everything you would go through and face in your Christian life while you were there on your knees, you would have got up and said – forget it, I just can’t do it! But you see, this is where Trust comes in. We must trust the Captain of our Salvation! His wise experienced hands perfectly fit the stern wheel and knows how to guide the Boat! You must know before you ever start your voyage, if Jesus is on board, you cannot go down. He will not let you sink. He knows exactly where the shoals and rocks are. He’s aware of every danger. He ought to – He made the Sea! Storms will definitely come, but He is the Master of the Wind! Hallelujah!! So, is there lessons to be learned in a Storm? Yes! God can use the elements to reveal His power. He has His way in the whirlwind, the clouds are the dust of His feet, He divided the Red Sea and made a Highway across for His chosen people. He shows us His mysteries in the deep.

**Psalms 107:**

23 They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;

24 These see the works of the LORD, and His wonders in the deep.

25 For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

26 They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.

27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end.

28 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses.

29 He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

30 Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He **bringeth** them unto their desired haven.

31 Oh that men would praise the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!

**BACK TO OUR STUDY**

The Book of Luke records in chapter 8 – After Jesus told them “Let us pass over to the other side,” **Luke** says - And they launched forth! Jesus knows all, He knows everything. He did not tell them they were headed for a storm. They were soon going to learn a lesson in God’s big classroom on the Sea!

**Luke** records, “But as they sailed, He (Jesus) fell asleep.” **Mark** said He went down into the hinder part, the bow of the boat and went to sleep on a pillow. It was after Jesus went to sleep that **Luke** says, there came down a Storm of Wind on the lake and they were filled with Jeopardy – (Great danger where loss, injury and death is immenent). **Mark** records the Waves Beat into the Ship so that it was now Full. **Matt.** Said it was a great Tempest and the Ship was Covered with the Waves.

**IT’S TIME TO AWAKE THE MASTER**

I want to say here after much study on this lesson, if a Gallon of water weighs 8 1/2 pounds and the Waves were beating into the Ship and covering it, then just how heavy and how great do you think this trial was to the disciples? How hard was it to endure? What would you have done? Would you been afraid and doubted?

All 3 writers – **Matthew, Mark and Luke** said the Disciples came to Jesus and woke Him up. They were in trouble and needed Help. Save us Lord! **Mark** records, they said to Him – Master, carest thou not that we Perish? The Bible said that Jesus arose and rebuked the Wind, the Storm ceased and there was a great calm! Jesus then looked at His Disciples and said – Why are you so fearful, O ye of little Faith? Where is your Faith? Did they not realize that He was with them and that He had given the command to sail?

Remember, up to this point, the Disciples had already seen Jesus heal the sick and diseased, made the lame to walk, opened blinded eyes and caused the dumb to speak. They saw Him raise a woman’s only son from the dead and set Legion free from tormenting devils and gave him back his right mind! And Jesus is on board with them and they doubt He sees them or cares?

Get a picture of this with me: When Jesus spoke that evening and gave the command to the Wind to cease and the raging waves became calm and peaceful, I can see the Disciples soaking wet as they looked out over the water as on a Sea of Glass and saw the Stars reflecting their light in it, They Marveled saying – What manner of man is this that even the Wind and Sea obey Him?

Always remember, when the Waves are over your head, they are under His feet! Are you in a present dilemma? Are you under duress and feel threatened? Does your situation look hopeless and is your boat on the Sea of Life being rocked? Are you at wits end and wonder if Jesus is aware? Remember, this old world is the Sea! Through Jesus we are lifted above it, we tread on top of it, are kept from sinking into it and being overwhelmed by it, and by Him we have the Victory over it!! Hallelujah!

**TWO DIFFERENT STORMS – BUT**

**WHY?**

There were two different Storms recorded in detail in the Gospels that the Disciples faced and were caught in! Have you ever wondered why the Holy Ghost inspired these Disciples to write about them? Why was these stories so important to be recorded in our Bible? This second Storm, **Matthew, Mark** and **John** tells about.

**THE SECOND STORM**

Now let’s look at the second storm on the Sea of Galilee the Disciples faced! **Matthew** records in complete detail in chapter 14 another Lesson on the Sea. I don’t know how long elapsed between the first storm and the second one, maybe a few months, a year or two or three! Their Faith should have grown and increased by now, at least you would think! If the Lord delivered in the first, would He not do it again?

Did you know we are ever learning? There are many lessons on the Sea of Life. This is where we discover that God has power to calm and change hard circumstances! Thank God He will deliver in the time of Trial! These lessons Children, builds within us a Faith and a Trust to keep serving God and go on! Look Children where you are today. Think of how far you have come and all you have gone through. Some of you have served God for many years. You have had many experiences, went through some hard trials, had your times of suffering and things gone wrong, but through it all God made a way, supplied your needs, brought you through and here you are today!!! Thank God! Yes, you have many stories to tell of what the Lord has done.

You see, in studying these two storms, we see that God takes us in increments, each trial a little harder, a little more trying. He does this to make our Faith strong! Could we pray – “O Lord, would you increase my Faith, make me stronger and more determined and if you should choose for me a night of trial to pass through troubled wind and waters, then let me learn by it and show me your Glory and saving power! Let it build me O God for the days ahead, for the things I will yet face. Let me be able to take these experiences and lessons to heart and tell the world around me that I have proved my God that He still Saves and Delivers!!” Jesus was conditioning His disciples by these experiences. He knew when He left them and ascended back to Heaven, they would face floods of ungodly men, waves of persecution and winds of opposition in their ministry. They would be hailed before magistrates, whipped and imprisoned and eventually face a martyrs death. But they would always remember back how their Lord came to them in their darkest time, saying, it is I, be not afraid! He gave them peace and brought them safely to the other side!!!

**JUST HOLD ON, THE SEA WALKER IS ON HIS WAY!**

NOTICE: This second Storm, Jesus is not with them! Read! He sent them alone by themselves! **Matt. 14:22 – 33.** And straightway (without delay) He (Jesus) constrained His disciples (He pressed them earnestly, urged in a serious way, it’s important boys) to get into a Ship and go before Him to the other side. Jesus then goes up into a mountain to pray and was there alone. But something is happening to the disciples. They are out in the Deep far from land, caught in the middle of another storm. They have no power against it, can’t control it, they are tossed with the waves. **Mark** records that Jesus saw them toiling (battling and laboring to the point of exhaustion) in rowing for the winds were contrary. **John** records the Disciples had rowed out about 25 to 30 furlongs from land. That means they were about 3 miles out in the middle of an angry lake in deep water! But in the 4th watch of the night Jesus comes to them walking on the Sea! Between 3 and 6 am in the morning the Lord comes.

I don’t know how many hours passed from evening when they launched out till 3 or 6 in the morning, but these preachers, these workers of God had struggled for hours! Have you ever been there? We just can’t handle this boat, the opposition is too strong! I’m not getting anywhere. I just can’t go any farther! Have you ever been there? O Lord, I remember at your Word I launched forth and started out for Heaven, endeavoring to get to my blessed Home on the other shore. I have run into opposition! I am battling the elements and the forces of darkness…….I need your help to go on!!

The Bible says that Jesus walked to them on the Sea. If He walked the whole way down the mountain from where He prayed to the shore and then another 3 miles out into the middle of the Sea, then it is possible He walked maybe 4 miles. That’s a long time! No wonder it took till 3 or 6am to come to their rescue. Does it feel like God will never come to you? You think He has forgotten? You think maybe He has waited too long and He’s not coming at all! Listen, God knows what we need! He is building in us endurance, patience and a strong Faith. Remember, a strained Faith is a strengthened Faith! Jesus is saying to you, just hold on and keep going. I will be there in your darkest hour and bring sweet Victory!

I want to say to us again, we are being conditioned and strengthened. There are more Storms of different types coming. There will be hard trials of opposition. You will look back and say, Lord, I thank you for the Lessons I have learned in your Classroom on the Sea of Life!

So why did God put the story of these two Storms the Disciples experienced in the Bible and the Holy Ghost describing them in such fine detail? Jesus was saying, “My Children, Preachers and Workers in my Kingdom, I have conditioned you for the hard trials ahead you will face from the Government and the persecution you will endure in the future. You will look back on your experience in the opposing winds and the deep troubling waters and see how I gave you peace and brought you through. Yes, I ordained it and taught you a Lesson to let you know you can make it, I am with you and will not let you go down, but I’ll bring you across.

I see in this story, the Ship is the Church, the Disciples are God’s Children, the Sea is the World and the opposing Winds are Government powers in these last days! So in ending the lesson on this second Storm, Jesus approached their boat out in the middle of nowhere and said – “Be of Good Cheer, it is I, Be not afraid. And when He stepped on board their Vessel the Ship was brought safe to the land whither they went. The Disciples were amazed and wondered. They worshipped Him saying – of a truth THOU ART THE SON OF GOD! Hold on Children, and keep going, God is going to bring us through!! May God Bless you!

