

Wind and Waves: Typhoon 10

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[0:00] Hello everyone again. Man, we're back here. Just even worshipping just then, just taking me back to all those years that we had of COVID and figuring out how it was still important to see each other's faces.

So we're here. It's funny, I was just thinking, I dug out some things. Here are some of the things that I'd accumulated over COVID, trying to be an amateur podcast preacher.

So I've got some kind of microphone that I used, had to use this kind of stand to help me look taller. Apparently there was a right angle that you have to do to see, otherwise people could see.

Apparently, just for a bit of vanity's sake, some people said I was too dark, so I had to use this whole thing. This was hard to use, and so I remember all these things.

Anyway, not using any of them right now, by the way. So this is just pure natural beauty, unfiltered. Wow, Kelly, you don't have to laugh out loud on the chat. That's quite something. Thank you, Kelly.

[1:10] I always feel encouraged. But I have said this. I've said this. I'm just going to keep talking. I'm not even going to look at you guys now, so you guys will disappear. I won't even know. Anyway, I was thinking that I do miss some parts of COVID. There are some parts, not the actual germ itself, but the lives we got to live in some way, how it forced us to be simple.

It forced us to really streamline everything down. And it really asked us the question, what is the most important thing to you? I guess two things that really came up for me was one that it just gave us the rest that we needed.

There's a group of us that just came back from Young Life Camp this last week, and praise God, literally, we got everyone out of the campsite, the scheduled time, and then the T3 came. And just when we thought, well, still got to go to church, still got to do the thing, not got to, get to, want to. And then the Lord comes out with this and tells us, hey, let's have some rest. And so that's something that actually maybe we've forgotten. I've forgotten. A lesson that I learned during COVID was just being able to rest was important.

And the second thing was just to control what is really even control. You're not really in control. The moment something happens like this, you can't, I mean, with this, it was only two days ago, Johnny and I were talking and Cam going, oh, is this type you're going to hear?

[2:28] And we looked on the observatory and it's, oh, no, no, it looks like it's going to go another way. It might not even be a T3. And then before you know it, with T9, T10. It's funny, this today, I was going to be talking about science and faith.

But I'm going to leave that sermon for just a couple of weeks later now when we're back in person again. But isn't it amazing that we can't even forget, forget control.

We can't even predict the climate. We can't even, like science with all its advancements, we can't really even truly predict. We can't control where the wind blows. And if that doesn't humble you as you look outside now and you see the world, at least the city, coming to a halt.

There is so much that is not in our control at all. And I want to continue the theme of scattering. And really, with that same thought, we can't control.

We gather. That's what we can control. We get together to glorify God. We devote ourselves to each other, to the word, to teaching fellowship, breaking bread and prayers. We can do all those things.

[3:32] But the moment you scatter, it's really not up to us. We had an incredible time at Young Life Camp where so many young people said yes to Jesus for the very first time.

And Young Life has a very tried and tested formula. It has a recipe to kind of help create the environment that is most conducive for young people to be open to God.

And you can do everything that you can do in your power. And yet really, it's just the Holy Spirit and God that does it. And often even where you go, who you speak to is really out of our control. And maybe that's the theme of even just scattering is that so much of it is not in our control. Later in the year, we're going to be in Acts 8, where we see Philip just being guided by God, zapped away by God to different places to just share the gospel.

You see in Acts 16, God tells Paul, hey, go here, go there, go there. Don't go here. You see, even when it comes to scattering, when it comes to sharing the gospel, it's not really us going, okay, well, I'm going to do this. I'm going to sing this song.

[4:33] I'm going to do this and speak to this person. And these people are going to come to Christ. It's never like that. It's never like that. There is so little control that we have. Apparently, there's this quote that's been attributed to St. Augustine, but it says this, without God, we cannot.

Without us, he will not. Without God, we cannot. Without us, he will not. And this is the idea of, hey, it's not in our control, but all we can do is just be willing.

All we can do is be available. All we can do is be obedient, to be receptive to him and say, God, take us, use us. Let us do whatever it is that you need us to do.

Without God, we cannot. Without us, he will not. And so just, I think that's the spirit that I'm hoping that we can even just instill in each other today in this series, but from this point as well.

But I want us to turn to the Bible, the Bible that I talked about last week. I want to go to Mark chapter four. Mark chapter four, it's, you know, it's about the wind and the waves.

[5:42] I wonder where I got that inspiration from to come to this topic today. Mark chapter four, verse 35 to 41 is what I'm going to be going through today.

And it's going to be special. I'm going to do a short talk, but then I'm going to actually talk. I'm not going to be me that's going to talk. I'm going to interview and actually ask a few people to share some different things as well. Not on the spot as I usually do, but I have prepared them, gave them at least a couple of hours notice.

So they are ready. I just thought of this. We do this when we're together. I know that we're all very comfortable in our beds or on our sofas, but can I be ambitious and ask us to stand for the word of the Lord?

And honestly, I have no way of knowing whether you are, especially or not, if you've got your video off. But the Lord can see. The Lord will be able to see. But just make sure that your camera angle is kind to you when you are standing up.

I will read it just so we don't have to buff around with the microphone situation. The book of Mark, chapter four, verse 35.

[6:51] Jesus calms a storm. On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, let us go across to the other side. And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was.

And other boats were with him. And a great windstorm arose and the waves were breaking into the boat so that the boat was already filling. But he 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? And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, peace, be still. And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

He said to them, why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith? 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, we come to you now as your children, as brothers and sisters, as family, as friends.

Recognize that you are in control. You are sovereign.

[7:53] Even the wind and waves obey you. And we're going to take this short, familiar passage.

And we bring it to you, Lord, and ask, would you highlight something to us? Would you speak to us? Your word is living and active.

Speak to us today. Show us something. Be with us. Join us on this call. In your name we pray. Amen. Please take a seat.

Again, so super familiar passage. It's one that I just, I always love. Every time the winds come and it's just something, it's just, it speaks to me.

And again, and again, so I'm just going to quickly go through it verse by verse. I know attention span is particularly short on Zoom too. I'm not going to be too long. Verse 35. On that day when evening had come, he said to them, let us cross to the other side.

So anyway, don't you find that interesting? Jesus knew what was going to happen. And he said, let's go. He knew about the storm, but they didn't yet. And yet he said, let's go.

[9:03] There's going to be a storm there. And there's something I want to show you. I find that particularly interesting because so often we associate God and we associate us going to him and him telling us, can you remove the storms?

Can you prevent the storms? Can you take us to a place where there is no storm, where there is no trial and tribulation, where there is no challenge? Because you're God and you have my comfort as your priority.

Well, he does not seem to have their comfort as his priority. I find that. I mean, every time we go home, we pray for a smooth fire. We pray for good weather. We pray for no delays.

And of course, all those things love to have. But yeah, when it comes to God, I think he sometimes does those things. And yet sometimes he has something even bigger at play here. And he says, let us cross to the inside.

And I'm reminded of Psalm 23, where it says, the Lord is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing. He leads me beside still waters. So he leads me to all the smooth places. He lets me have these refreshing, restoring moments.

[10:04] He leads me on the right path, is verse three, for his namesake. And then it's just a hard pivot in Psalm 23 into verse four. He leads me on the right path.

And then verse four is, even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. It's like, wait, but we just said that he leads us on the right path. So does that mean the right path includes the valley of the shadow of death?

And the answer is yes. And that the answer is yes. There's no way about it. Jesus here says, let's cross to the other side, knowing very well there's something in the middle. But when you are in charge of the wind and the waves, when you are in charge of the Hong Kong observatory, you can essentially do whatever you want, knowing that you have a greater purpose here.

Something that I repent on straight away, not just help me not idolize smooth travel, help me not idolize comfort, help me not idolize avoiding pain and challenge and storms, recognizing that they will be part of it.

And you said you promised that they would be part of it. And then it's funny because they go, they go on the boat, they take him. And then a great windstorm arose and the waves are breaking.

Verse 38, it says, but he was in the stern asleep on a cushion, on a memory foam cushion.

[11:19] He took his memory foam cushion with him in his backpack. He told them, let's go into the storm. He says, you guys stay out here. There's going to be something fun happening. I'm going to take a nap. Where's my cushion? Give me my cushion. And then he just goes and lies down and almost makes a point.

And hey, this doesn't phase it. And of course, they're panicking. Remembering, these guys are pros on the lake. They know what to do in storms. And yet here, they're panicking.

So it was a great windstorm. I mean, this is a great storm. But I can imagine if it's a great windstorm described by these people, it will have been pretty epic. So they're in a panic and they go to, well, wait, you've got us out here and now you're asleep and you're not helping.

We know you're a carpenter, so you don't have the fisherman skills. And yet, but you should be doing something. Anyway, you boys out here, do you not care? And it makes me think, wow, do we have that sometimes?

You know, when suffering comes or when challenges come, you know, I say suffering, we're in Hong Kong. We're in a very comfortable city. And when we say suffering, it's often not really the suffering that the people in the Bible or people in the rest of the world are going through.

[12:25] Our suffering is, why is our Wi-Fi not working? Why is the job that I really want not coming to me? Why is the spouse that I'm hoping for not coming to me? That's the God where I am.

So often we just need perspective once again. And you can see them just saying, don't you care that we're perishing? Don't you care that we're dying? And of course, the answer is he does care. He does care, but he doesn't care just about whether we're dying here on this earth. He cares about our eternity. His main priority is not just our comfort here on earth. His main priority is preparing us for a lifetime with him.

And that's a different, he's got something bigger in mind. So the answer to that question is he does care. And it reminds me again, Psalm 23, he leads you on the right path.

That path involves the valley of the shadow of death. And he'll take you there, but you don't have to fear because his rod and his staff will be with you. And even in the presence of your enemies, even in the presence of the storm, he prepares a table before you.

[13:27] What he's saying is, hey, I know you're scared about those things over there. Come and sit down with me. In my presence, you're going to be just fine. Now, that's it. That's what he's trying to teach them.

That's what he's trying to show. That actually, even with all those things happening, he's the one who has the final say. And it makes me think, do I truly believe that? And often, I think I'm most anxious when I take on the role of God myself.

When I think I have to control this and I have to do this. And that's when I'm most anxious because if I don't do it, then things are going to fall apart. Well, that's not true. That's me again taking the role of God. And you see here, he wakes up.

He says, he actually, he doesn't even bother answering the question of do you care. And he says, peace, be still. Peace, be still. And I can just imagine this would have been a great movie scene, I'm guessing.

And it completely stopped. It makes me think of Psalm 46. Sometimes we have these Bible verses that we've grown up with. Psalm 46, verse 10.

[14:31] And some of our worship team a couple of months ago were sharing about their favorite worship songs of all time. And the song still came up a lot by Hillsong. Reuben Morgan, I think, is the writer of the song.

When the oceans rise and plunders roar, be still and know that I am God. And I always think about that passage and go, okay, I need to be still and know that I am God.

He is God. I need to go find myself by a nice lake, go on a solo retreat, spend some time in just peace and quiet. But that's not what that passage is saying. If you look at Psalm 46, it is not a retreat in Bethany in Chongchow.

It is not just peace and quiet. He says, be still and know that I am God. The wording there is freeze. Stop. Stop fighting. The passages just before are the nations are at war.

They're fighting against each other. There's things happening. There's chaos happening around. The circumstances that are out of their control, they feel as though they're having to fight for themselves, fend for themselves. And he's saying, stop, freeze, pause, be still.

[15:35] I am God. I will be exalted among the nations. I have control. I am the only one who can dictate what will happen. It's basically saying, relinquish your desire to be God.

You cannot be God. You are not God. I am. Let go. You don't really have control. And it will take a severe weather warning. It will take a severe health issue to remind you, to remind us that we are not God.

Isn't that crazy? I'll talk a little bit about this in a couple of weeks when it comes to science and medicine and all the progress we've made there. And so often we know so much about this world now. We know so much about human bodies now.

We are wise in our own eyes and we don't feel as though we need God anymore. We'll choose science over faith. Until science fails us, until we realize we're still going to die, until we realize there's an illness that we can't fight.

And suddenly we're like, okay, maybe there is something more. Maybe there is a God who actually is in control. God's just saying, why are you still so afraid?

[16:36] Have you no faith? Have you still no faith? And it's funny. They were afraid when the storm was around. Verse 41. And they were filled with great fear when he stopped the storm.

It reminds me of that quote, I can't remember who it was, D.L. Moody maybe, where it says, if you don't fear God, you'll fear everything else. If you fear God, you won't fear anything else.

You see their fear of God overcome it. Basically usurps their fear of the circumstances around them. Because they say, wow, this God can utter a few words, three words here, and completely stop the wind and the waves.

He is God and we are not. When was the last time you stopped, froze, dropped your weapons? Whether it's at work, whether it's at home, whether it's in a relationship, whether it's in your friendship, whether it's in your career.

And you just say, God, I'm only here because you put me in. I'm only here because you let me in. I trust you. I'm only you.

[17:47] You are the boss. You are the CEO. You are the only one who is in control. Why am I still afraid? Have I still no faith?

You look back on your life and you say, wow. The goodness of God is just everywhere. The fingerprints are everywhere. And somehow in this moment, we're still afraid. Even though he's been good for it every single time.

So he asks us, why are you still afraid? Romans 8 says, how will he who gave his son to you not graciously give you everything else that you need? This person gave his son for us.

This God. Why are we so afraid that he's going to come through for us about this job or this place that we need to stay or whatever it is? God is truly in control.

And so that's my little sharing here. And I always finish sharing about this passage. And some of you have heard me say this because I think it's just the most beautiful part. And it's speaking to those who are believers. So if you're here and you are a follower of Christ and you have said, Jesus, I follow you.

[18:53] I trust you with everything, even though I'm still going to wrestle with you about all these other things and all these other idols that I'm holding on to. And all these other cushions and water floats that I have, plantation devices that I'm going to rely on.

I do trust you. I want to really convict you because it convicts me every time. I want to just go back into the beginning of that passage. Tucked him secretly, almost, verse 36 at the end.

So he says, hey, let's cross to the other side, knowing full well that he's trolling them, knowing full well that he's setting them up. He's throwing himself an alley-oop for one of the greatest miracles that they're going to see as fishermen.

And so they leave. And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in their boat, just as he was. And it's just one sentence. Actually, I didn't come up with myself. It's just one of the live staff from a couple of years ago shared this with me.

And I was like, this is just what a profound truth that's here. And it says this. And other boats were with him too. So he says, let's go out into the lake.

[19:52] And so they say, okay, let's go. And so they all get into one boat together and they go. Now there's a whole group of people who are just desperate for him, who want to know more about him, who want to be healed by him, who aren't allowed on the boat.

And so they're like, hey, he's going. Let's follow him. Let's try and figure out a way to get to where he's going. So they jump on their own boats. Boats that don't have him. And they all get onto the lake.

And they all have this storm. Now, the disciples who were with him on their boat, they were terrified. But can we spare a thought just for a moment for those who are in all the other boats who didn't even have him?

Sometimes we as Christians who say we follow Christ, who believe and trust in him, we panic when there's a little storm. And sometimes it's not even a storm. It's just a little wobble on the waves. It's just turbulence.

And we get all panicky and we get terrified and we are afraid. And we completely neglect to think that there are people out there who don't even have that same hope that we have. We don't even have that relationship with Jesus that we have.

[20:55] Can we spare a thought and remind ourselves there are people out there who don't even know that there is a savior, that they feel as though they are drowning, that they feel as though this will be the last day they live. And they don't know that they're not. And they don't know that there is a savior out there for them.

So as Christians, whilst we're still just absorbed and engrossed in our own situations in our own lives, can we spare a thought and go, actually, there are other boats out here on the lake with us who do not have the Christ, who do not have the Lord, who do not have the one who the wind and waves obey.

Can we stop there and go, wow, we need to tell them about this guy. We need to somehow get a megaphone and shout across this lake and say, don't worry, you will not die today because on our boat there is a savior whom the wind and the waves obey.

Trust us. Trust him. We don't trust us in terms of we're not going to be able to do it, but he will.

Would you believe us? We are all witnesses of this, which is what Peter said when he's facing the Sanhedrin and the council.

We are witnesses of this. Trust him. Can we spare a thought to those people? Can us as the church just get out of our own heads, get out of our own circumstances and go, there is a storm.

[22:08] Yes, this world is dark. Yes, but we are called more than just to hold on to him ourselves. We're called to grab on to other people as well. To bring that good news that, hey, on this lake with us in this storm, there is one who will stop everything, who has dealt with everything, who threw himself into the storm for us and showed us that it can be defeated.

That's the hope that we have. Are we willing to do that? It's been an hour. We're going to keep it short and simple and actually wrap up here. I want to just ask a few people to pray.

There was a life group that was supposed to be in charge of setting up the room for us and welcoming us. They have been let off the hook today, my Saved by Typhoon.

But I'm going to ask them to help say some prayers. Yeah, dear God, I just want to thank you for a time at home.

Thank you that we get to come together as a community. Yeah, just in this storm, God. Thank you for keeping us safe and keeping us warm.

[23:17] Just thank you for everyone who's served at the Young Life Camp this weekend or in the past week. God, that you'll continue to bless them. You'll protect them against any spiritual attacks or just any doubts that they may be having from the camp.

Just want to pray for any seeds that you've planted, that you continue to sprout them and continue to help them grow. Pray for the young people, that they continue to build their community as well amongst their friends and that they continue to spread your word.

God, in your name we pray. Amen. Dear God, thank you for the opportunity to just reach out to new people. Thank you for the opportunity to be here.

Lay eyes on before. Just have the courage to reach out to them and tell them about the gospel. And just give us eyes to see. Give us the words to speak.

Give us the hands and to just to lay hands and pray for them. And yeah, just give them peace, Lord. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Yeah, Father, I want to thank you.

[24:50] I want to praise you for today. I want to thank you for giving me a wife that told me not to serve during TA. God, and keep me safe during this time.

God, we just want to thank you. I pray that your Holy Spirit would just invade this virtual space, that you would invade each of our homes and convict us in the same way that you've convicted the hearts of the young life leaders and the people who head that whole movement.

Father, I pray that, you know, we are scared to move out of our comfort zone to reach those who are not reached.

But Lord, at the same time, I pray that you will replace that fear with the fear of you. And just as James said, the fear of God drives out everything else. And so, Father, we want to thank you.

I pray that you would just focus our minds, focus our minds onto a single point as to where we could focus our energy, our strength, our life force, God, and how we can reach those who reach more people, God.

[25:54] And I know that, Lord, that you have a mission for every single person on this call. I know that you have a special calling for each person in this call. And I pray that you would reveal that calling to them right now, Father.

I pray that the Holy Spirit would just speak to us, that the Holy Spirit would just convict us and just speak in that still small voice, even after this call, God, to show us where to scatter. In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you. Thank you, gentlemen. Good to see everyone. Can I ask you this?