

**THE BIG IDEA: Don't let your problems overshadow God's presence.**The Take-Off

This morning, we're going to spend some time talking about fathers and storms, and that's perfect, because for a lot of our culture, "stormy" would be an appropriate word to use when thinking about our relationships with our dads! Over the years, lots of social media sites have asked people to describe their dads in one word, and the typical answers are either VERY good or VERY not so good. Not a lot in between. Not many people are picking "meh" for their word. So while most people think warmly of moms, most people have polar opposite reactions about dads - one way or the other.

I know that's a huge generalization, but it makes sense, and my guess is that the one word that describes our relationships with our fathers probably changes through the years as we grow and mature, too.

If you're a teen or a pre-teen, you may use the word "mean" to describe your dad (I know I did), but when you're in your 20s, 30s, and on, you may use a word like "protector" or "wise" to describe the same dad.

Without going into a lot of the details, let's suffice it to say that my father and I had a horrible relationship - stormy may not be strong enough to describe it - and yet it was amazing how much wiser he got when I became an adult.

But I'm getting ahead of myself.

This morning, on Father's Day, your relationship with dad - for whatever reason - may be the biggest storm you're facing.

Or, you may be facing another type of storm - physical, spiritual, financial.

All of us have, are, and will face storms, and so it shouldn't be hard to relate to what the disciples encountered in Luke 8:22-25.

Before we read it, a quick snapshot of where we are: Jesus has just taught parables about hearing, receiving and doing the word, and now he's going to use 4 situations to show how our faith plays out in real life.

It's one thing to LEARN about faith, and quite another to LIVE with faith.

As Warren Wiersbe puts it, "Faith must be tested before it can be trusted."

Jesus uses these circumstances to help his disciples apply what they just learned, and it starts with Jesus and the disciples getting into a boat.

(Read Luke 8:22-25)

Verse 25 reveals that they failed this first test (like most of us would have).

Thankfully, we can learn second hand what they learned first hand, and there are at least 5 lessons for us here:

**1. Don't freak when Jesus sleeps**

- a. Let's be real: there was reason to freak, and the disciples did. They weren't worried, or a little stressed, or weighing the pros and cons of possible outcomes.
- b. They were freaking out.
- c. Storms were serious, and would come out of nowhere. The NIV uses the word "squall" appropriately.
- d. [ILL: A boatripe in Guatemala]
- e. I'm not saying we don't have reason to panic; but what I am saying is that Jesus was asleep and the disciples woke him up to tell him about the storm.
- f. Not a gentle "shake your shoulder and whisper in your ear" wake up, either. Yelling, screaming, shaking!
- g. Again, they missed the obvious: JESUS WAS ASLEEP!
- h. They thought he was asleep at the wheel, but he was asleep because he knew his Father was at the wheel
- i. Psalm 89:8-9
- j. Don't freak when Jesus sleeps!

**2. Don't let an occurrence make you doubt the outcome**

- a. What did Jesus say as they got into the boat? LET'S go to the OTHER SIDE!
- b. Remember what Wiersbe said? Faith must be tested before it can be trusted!
- c. They had heard about soil, seeds and lamps; now we'd see how they REALLY received the word of Jesus.
- d. When the storm hit, why didn't someone simply say, "Hold on, guys! Jesus SAID we were all going to the other side. He didn't say we'd go halfway and die."
- e. But no one did. They let an OCCURRENCE make them doubt the OUTCOME!

- f. What do we know about God's word? it accomplishes what he sends it to do (Isaiah 55:11)
- g. If Jesus said they were all crossing the lake, they were good as long as they were with Jesus, which leads to lesson #3...

### 3. It's more important that Jesus is in the boat that it is that you're in a storm

- a. If you ask people how it feels to lose a father (no matter how or why they did), you'll hear things like "feeling alone," "feeling abandoned," or (as I heard one grown man say) "uncovered."
- b. The real promise isn't that we won't face storms or hard times, but that we won't face them ALONE!
- c. Hebrews 13:5
- d. This point is so powerful that it's our Big idea: **don't let your problems overshadow God's presence.**
- e. It's so easy, isn't it? I remember complaining about my dad and having someone say that they would have given anything to have HAD a dad in their life.
- f. Having our Father's presence is powerful - even in this situation, it led to Jesus speaking to the storm and everything calming IMMEDIATELY
- g. The Father's presence does that IN US, and that's far more important than the storms around us
- h. You can see this played out in Psalm 73 - the writer struggles with the unfairness of life and hard times until something changes. What was it? Psalm 73:17 - understanding came in the presence of God.

### 4. Doubts can get in you even though you get in the boat

- a. I know that we're just a third of the way through Luke, but I find great comfort in the fact that men who had left everything to follow Jesus because they were all in on who Jesus was still uttered the 3 words recorded in verse 25: "Who is this?"
- b. Never, ever forget that getting in the boat is not the same thing as getting rid of doubt.
- c. In response to never ending disagreements and doubts, Paul answered in Philippians 3:16: "only let us live up to what we've attained."
- d. In others words, you got in the boat because you believed in Jesus as the Messiah, but that doesn't mean your belief can't be tested and ultimately be made stronger by storms!

### 5. Storms remind us that we aren't God

- a. Finally, storms remind us that we aren't God, and most of us need that reminder from time to time!
- b. Especially, dads, who sometimes can feel like we need to have all the answers for our families.
- c. But it is in the storms that we find ourselves filled with the awesome awareness of who God is.
- d. I love the end of Job, and that's really where I want to start bringing this message to a close
- e. Like many of us, Job was facing a storm, and while he wanted answers, he got more than that in Job 40:2
- f. God spoke to him - from the storm - and it started with, "Brace yourself like a man."
- g. Over the next few chapters, God made it abundantly clear to Job that Job wasn't God, and Job learned the greatest lesson any of us can learn from a storm.
- h. What he learned is found in Job 42:1-6, but in so many words it's this: we don't know it all, and that's ok as long as we know the One who does.

#### The Landing

Let's land this message like this: Dads, brace yourself like a man, because it takes a real dad to admit he isn't the final authority.

Jesus is, and as long as we're with him, we'll weather any storm we face.

Children (young and grown, living with or without your dads), if Father's Day is stormy for you, don't let your problems overshadow God's presence.

He's a good, good father, and he's with you.

That is more important than anything you're facing.

Let's pray.