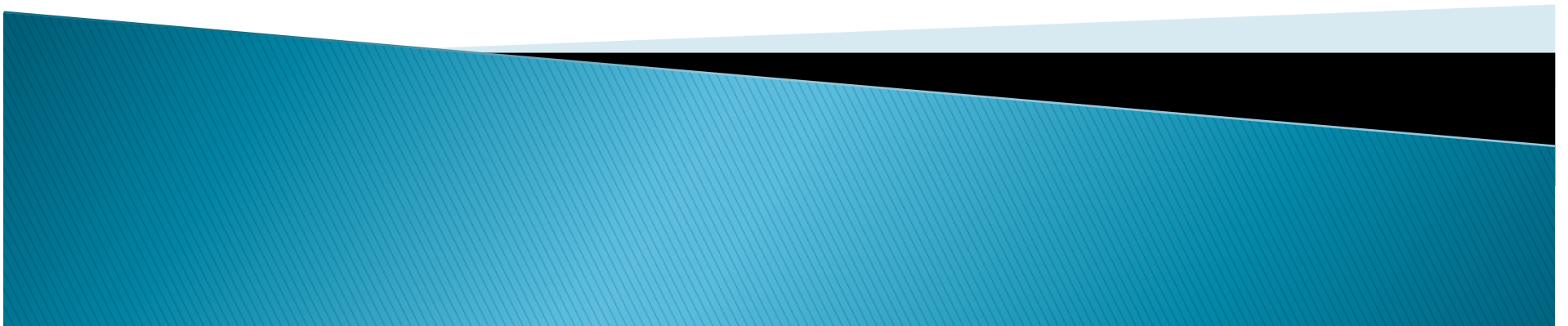


WEATHERING THE STORMS OF LIFE


Matthew 8:23–27

**Woodland Park Church of Christ
26 February 2023**




Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. ²⁴ And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. ²⁵ Then His disciples came to *Him* and awoke Him, saying, **“Lord, save us! We are perishing!”** ²⁶ But He said to them, “Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. ²⁷ So the men marveled, saying, **“Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?”** **Matthew 8:23-27 [NKJV]**

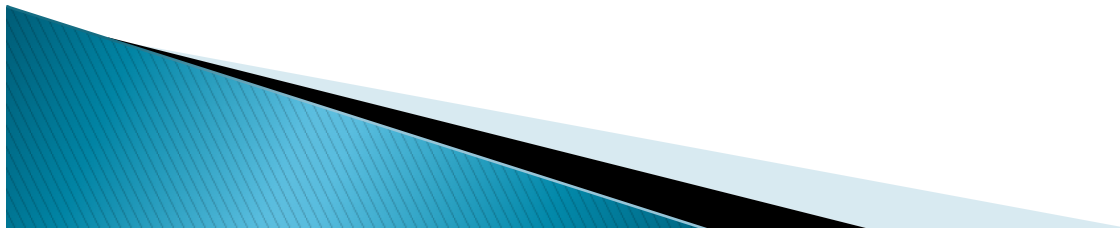
Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing? **Mark 4:38**




BACKDROP

- ▶ Disciples had witnessed Jesus perform many miracles.
 - ▶ Just in Matthew 8 to this point (immediately following the Sermon on the Mount)–
 - Healed a man of leprosy. (v. 1–4)
 - A Roman soldier’s son’s paralysis remedied via “remote control.” (v. 5–13)
 - Peter’s mother healed of fever with a simple touch of His hand. (v. 14–15)
 - “Many” who were demon–possessed relieved of evil spirits by a mere word and “all” who were sick received healing. (v.16)
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- ▶ Despite witnessing the numerous foregoing miracles and signs, the disciples were frightened and doubted their security, although the Master was in the boat with them.
- ▶ How can you possibly sleep and remain calm at a time like this, Teacher?
- ▶ How can you just lie there as if you don't have a concern in world?
- ▶ Don't you care that we are about to die?
- ▶ Notice the Lord proclaimed they had "little" faith not "no" faith.



- ▶ **To make this relevant and applicable --**
 - Are there areas in which you feel totally hopeless and helpless (beyond God's power)?
 - A migraine or scrape, bruise or minor fracture, is one thing, but what about the major reconstructive surgeries?
 - The loss of a parent as opposed to the loss of a child.
 - Minor quizzes vs. comprehensive final examinations.
 - Odds are decisively not in your favor (1 / 2 vs. 1 / 100,000).
 - Having to endure hardship every now and then vs. having to bear two or three heavy crosses seemingly every day.
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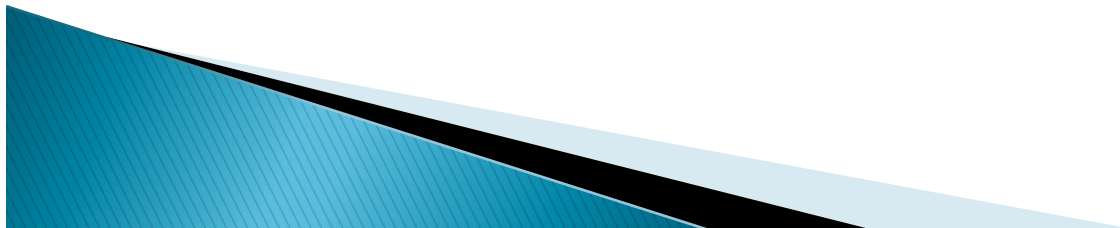
I. We Are not Alone or Singled Out for Hardship

- ▶ Granted, we may not have the same crosses to bear; but adversity, pain, grief, sorrow, and misfortune come to us all.
- ▶ We all must pass through and endure something!

Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. Job 14:1 [NKJV]

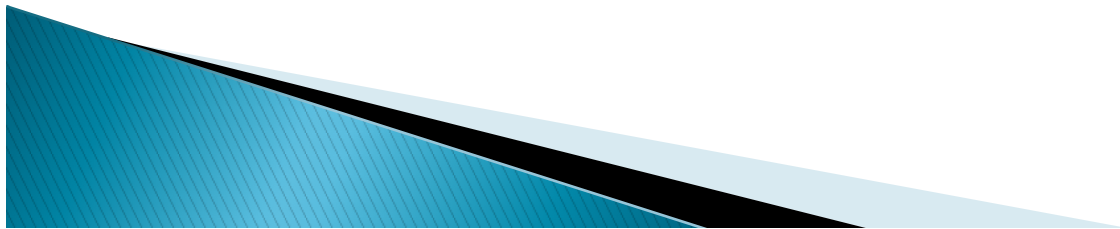
BUT

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1 [NKJV]



Seeing then that we have a *great High Priest* who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. ¹⁵ For *we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses*, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore *come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*


Hebrews 4:14–16 [NKJV]



II. We Never Have to Face Adversity Alone

Consider the oft-referenced saga of the three Hebrew boys – Shadrach, Meshach & Abed-Nego.

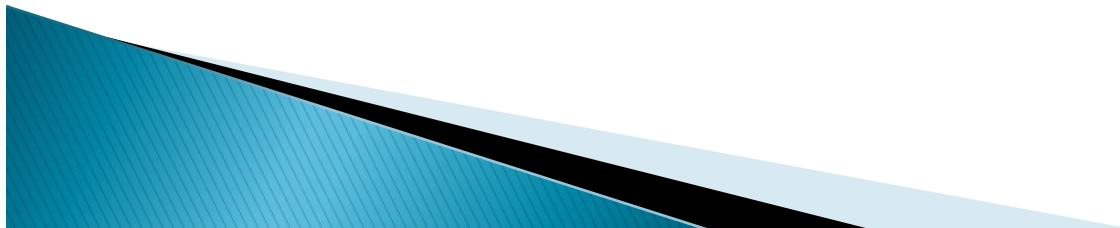
And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. ²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste *and* spoke, saying to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?” They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.” “Look!” he answered, “I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.” **Daniel 3:22-25**



*Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”*⁶ So we may boldly say:

*“The LORD is my helper;
I will not fear.*

What can man do to me?” **Hebrews 13:5-6**

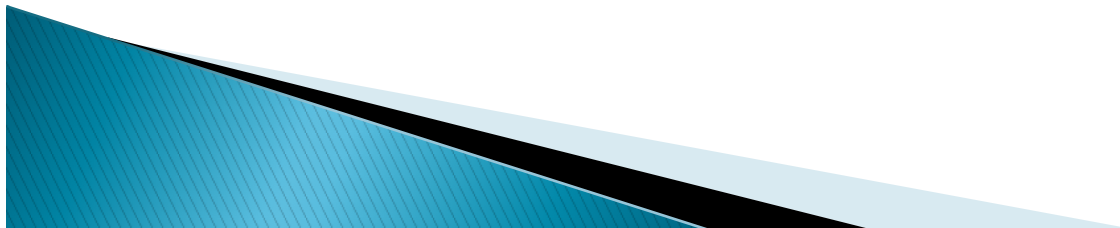


III. We Have the Power!

We are children of the God who created heaven and earth and thrust matter into existence by simply stating *“Let there be . . .”* **See Genesis 1**

We serve a God who controls the universe and who raised our Savior from the grave.

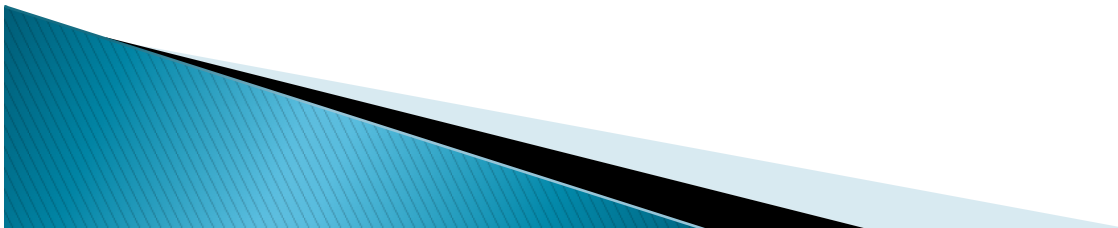
So we do not have to quake and shake or quiver or shiver when confronted by the giants of this age.



There is victory in Jesus.

The sting of death *is* sin, and the strength of sin *is* the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks *be* to God, who ***gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*** **1 Corinthians 15:56-57**

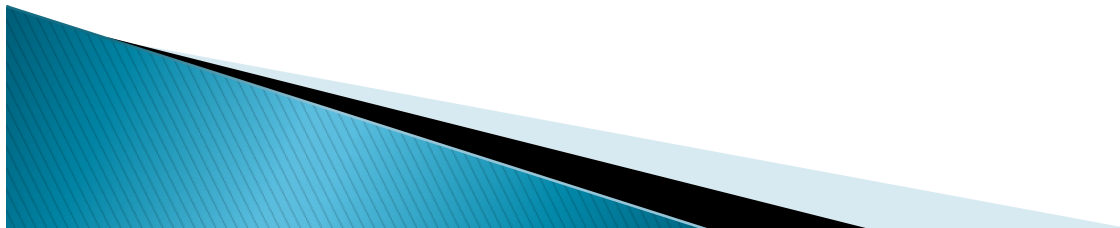
I can do all things [which He has called me to do] through Him who, strengthens *and* empowers me [to fulfill His purpose—I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency; ***I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him*** who infuses me with inner strength and confident peace.] **Philippians 4:13 [AMP]**



Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

“For Your sake we are killed all day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. **Romans 8:35-37 [NKJV]**

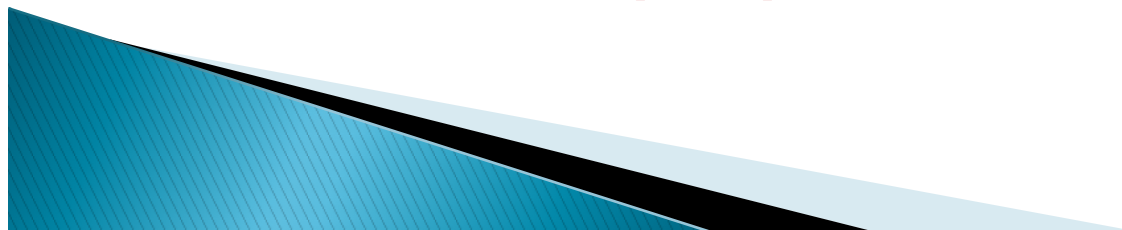


IV. Regardless of what Happens, “Remain in the Ship”

- ▶ Continue to “Hold to God’s Unchanging Hand!”
- ▶ The impulse reaction when things don’t go our way and we experience a little turbulence is to abandon ship.
- ▶ You may want to throw in the towel and give up.
- ▶ “This is just not working for me.”
- ▶ Others professing little allegiance to the Lord seem to be doing just fine – “never molested though in the wrong.”



On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic Sea, when about midnight the sailors sensed they were approaching land. ²⁸ They took soundings and found that the water was a hundred and twenty feet deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet deep. ²⁹ Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight. ³⁰ In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow. ³¹ Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, ***“Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved.”*** Acts 27:27-31 [NKJV]

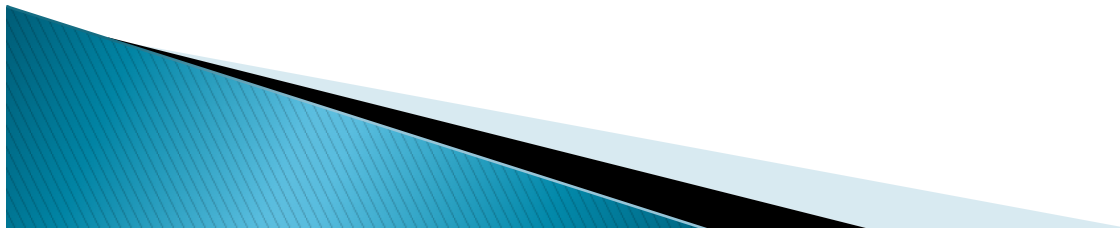


- ▶ The enemy wants us to become disillusioned, thinking there is no hope or reward.
- ▶ Doubt and fear are principal weapons in the opposition's arsenal, and he tries to fill his quiver with them.
- ▶ Do not give the enemy what he wants – **CONTROL OF OUR MINDS.**
- ▶ Once he/they have seized control of our heart (mind), we become like puppets on a string, and he/they can manipulate us into doing whatever they command or will.
 - Go ahead and jump ship & leave the situation; you won't be any worse off.



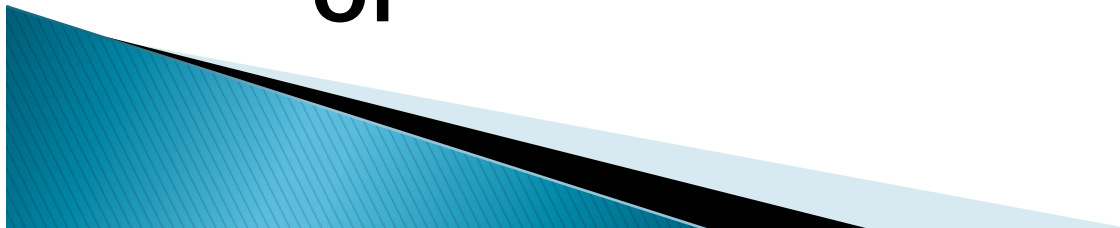
Face issues and problems with “equanimity” - **mental** calmness, composure, and evenness of temper, especially in a difficult situation.

Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. Proverbs 4:23 [NLT]



Lord's Invitation Extended to All

- ▶ **Be added to the Lord's body**
Hear the gospel (Acts 15:7);
Believe the gospel (Acts 8:37, 15:7);
Repent of sins (Acts 2:38);
Confess Christ (Acts 8:37);
Be baptized for the remission of sin (Acts 2:38);
or



Lord's Invitation (cont'd)

- ▶ Be reconciled unto the Lord (1 John 1:8–9); or
- ▶ Desire prayer (James 5:16).

