

062021 PASTOR DAVE'S SERMON: "DOES JESUS CARE?"

>> Pastor Dave: GRACE AND PEACE TO YOU FROM GOD OUR FATHER AND OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.

LET'S PRAY.

HEAVENLY FATHER, YOU HAVE CALLED US ON TO JOURNEYS OF WHICH WE CANNOT SEE THE END OF, ON PATHS THAT ARE NOT YET TRODDEN, AND THROUGH PERILS UNKNOWN.

GRANT US FAITH TO GO FORWARD WITH GOOD COURAGE, NOT KNOWING WHERE WE GO, BUT TRUSTING THAT YOUR HAND WILL GUIDE US AND YOUR LOVE WILL SUSTAIN US.

FOR INTO YOUR HANDS, O LORD, WE COMMEND ALL THAT WE ARE, OUR BODIES, OUR SOULS, AND ALL THINGS.

AMEN.

DO WE?

DO WE COMMEND OUR BODY AND SOUL AND ALL THINGS TO THE TRUST AND CARE OF GOD? WHEN WE DO, HOW LONG DO WE WAIT BEFORE WE TAKE IT BACK (laughing)?

I THINK YOU'LL NOTICE WHEN YOU DO BECAUSE THINGS WON'T BE GOING QUITE AS SMOOTHLY AS WHEN YOU'RE IN CHARGE THAN WHEN GOD IS IN CHARGE.

TODAY'S MESSAGE IS BASED ON THE STORMS.

ANYBODY EVER FACE A STORM IN YOUR LIFE?

STORMS FOR US IS A QUARTER INCH OF RAIN IN CALIFORNIA, BUT STORMS IN THE MIDWEST ARE QUITE DIFFERENT.

ON THE EAST COAST, THEY'RE QUITE DIFFERENT.

THE STORMS IN YOUR LIVES ARE QUITE DIFFERENT.

THEY MIGHT NOT HAVE RAIN AND THUNDER, BUT THEY HAVE AN ASSORTIVE NUMBER OF OTHER THINGS THAT ARE EVERY BIT AS DESTRUCTIVE AND HAZARDOUS TO YOUR CARE.

THESE ARE THE KIND OF STORMS THAT JESUS SEEKS TO CALM.

THESE ARE THE STORMS THAT JESUS HAS THE POWER TO DO JUST THAT.

AND THIS IS THE KIND OF STORM THAT OUR GOSPEL READING PORTRAYS FOR US TODAY.

MARK 4 BEGINS WITH A VERY SUCCESSFUL DAY THAT JESUS IS HAVING.

HE IS TEACHING THE CROWDS.

THE CROWDS HAVE PRESSED HIM UP AGAINST THE OCEAN, TO THE POINT WHERE THEY'RE ABOUT READY TO CRUSH HIM.

SO TO AVOID BEING CRUSHED, JESUS ASKED THE DISCIPLES TO PREPARE A BOAT FOR HIM TO GET INTO, SHOVE OFF FROM THE SHORE, AND THEN TEACH THE PEOPLE THAT ARE IN THE CROWD.

SO THIS GOES ON ALL DAY.

YOU THINK MY SERMONS ARE LONG -- WELL, YOU'RE RIGHT, THEY CAN BE, BUT NOT ALL DAY (laughing).

SO WHEN THE DAY WAS SPENT, SO WAS JESUS.

HE WAS TIRED.

HE WAS TUCKERED OUT.

HE GOT OUT IN THE BOAT JUST AS HE WAS.

HE WAS EXHAUSTED.

HE LAYS DOWN IN THE STERN, THE BACK OF THE BOAT, WHERE THEY DO THE STEERING, ON A PILLOW, AND TAKES A NAP.

BUT BEFORE HE DOES, HE TELLS THE DISCIPLES, LET'S GO ACROSS THE LAKE WHEN EVENING CAME.

HE IS SENDING THEM OUT ACROSS A SIX-MILE LAKE AT NIGHT.

AND THE DISCIPLES ARE PROBABLY THINKING, WHY WOULD WE WANT TO LEAVE HERE?

WE'RE SO SUCCESSFUL HERE, JESUS.

THE PEOPLE LOVE YOU HERE.

THEY'RE CLAMMERING FOR MORE OF YOUR TEACHING.

WHAT IS OVER ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LAKE?

THOSE ARE WHERE THE GENTILES LIVE.

THAT'S WHERE THE PAGANS LIVE.

THAT'S WHERE THE GUESSARINES LIVE.

AND, IN FACT, THE VERY THING THAT HAPPENS WHEN THEY GET TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LAKE, IN MARK 5, IS THAT THERE IS A MAN THAT COMES OUT OF THE TOMBS THAT IS NAKED AND HE IS POSSESSED.

AND WHEN JESUS ASKED HIM WHAT IS YOUR NAME, THE DEMONS SPEAK AND SAY WE ARE LEGION FOR WE ARE SO MANY.

JESUS DRIVES THEM OUT INTO A LARGE HERD OF SWINE, AND THEY RUSH INTO THE WATER AND ARE DROWNED.

THE TOWNS PEOPLE TELL THEM, GET OUT OF HERE;

WE DON'T WANT YOU IN OUR CITY.

SO JESUS LEAVES AGAIN.

WHY DO I BRING THAT UP?

BECAUSE THERE IS A THEME FOR ANOTHER MESSAGE.

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO GET INTO IT NOW.

BUT IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK, THIS REPRESENTS A MISSION TRIP.

REACHING OUT TO PEOPLE WHO AREN'T LIKE YOU.

HOW MANY OF YOU KNOW THAT WHENEVER WE TRY TO CARRY THE GOSPEL AND REACH OUT TO PEOPLE THAT AREN'T LIKE US, STORMS COME UP?

MARK IS TELLING US THAT WHEN JESUS SET OUT ON THIS MISSION TRIP, THERE IS GOING TO BE ROUGH WATERS.

WHEN WE TRY TO REACH OUT TO PEOPLE, THERE IS GOING TO BE ROUGH WATERS.

THERE ARE GOING TO BE PEOPLE THAT ARE GOING TO BE STANDING OPPOSED TO US.

THERE ARE GOING TO BE PEOPLE THAT -- WELL, WAIT A MINUTE, I SAID THIS WILL BE FOR ANOTHER SERMON.

SO LET'S STICK TO THE STORM.

THAT WILL BE FOR ANOTHER DAY.

YOU GET THE POINT OF MISSION.

MISSION IS WHAT JESUS TELLS US TO DO.

WHY DID THE DISCIPLES CROSS THE LAKE?

WELL, TO GET TO THE OTHER SIDE, RIGHT?

FIRST OF ALL, BECAUSE JESUS TOLD THEM TO DO IT.

JESUS TELLS US TO BE IN MISSION.

SO WHAT HAPPENS?

THEY GET OUT ON THE LAKE.

JESUS IS SNOOZING -- I'VE GOT TO TELL YOU, AFTER A SUNDAY OF PREACHING, IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE IT IS MUCH, BUT I GO HOME AND ONE OF MY FAVORITE THINGS TO DO IS LAY DOWN IN BED AND READ THE PAPER (laughing).

YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS (snoring)?

TAKING A NAP.

I CAN SO RELATE TO JESUS.

I JUST DO IT FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS.

HE DID IT FOR ALL DAY.

SO HE'S TIRED.

HE IS TAKING A NAP.

AND THEN THIS BIG STORM COMES UP.

NOW, THAT IS NOT UNCOMMON ON THE SEA OF GALILEE.

IT IS SIX MILES ACROSS.

AND IT IS ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF MT. HERMON, AND MT. HERMON IS -- HAS THIS PASS THAT COMES THROUGH, AND THESE WINDS WOULD COME OFF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA, CHANNEL DOWN THROUGH THESE PATHS OF MT. HERMON AND ON TO THE LAKE AND WHIP UP THESE TERRIBLE SQUALLS.

AND AMONG THE DISCIPLES WERE SEVERAL PROFESSIONAL FISHERMEN, AND THEY KNEW THE DANGERS THEY WERE FACING BECAUSE THEY'VE HAD SOME FISHERMEN THAT HAVE GONE OUT AND NEVER COME BACK.

THE STORMS HAD GOTTEN THEM.

SO THIS IS SERIOUS BUSINESS.

IN FACT, IF YOU LOOK AT YOUR BULLETIN, ON THE COVER OF IT, YOU SEE THIS PICTURE OF BEING IN THE STORM?

THIS IS ACTUALLY A PAINTING BY REMBRANDT.

AND I DIDN'T PAY THE TAXES YOU DO TO PRINT IT LEGALLY.

I JUST DID IT, BUT IT -- AND REMBRANDT -- IF YOU LOOK AT IT, YOU'LL SEE A GUY IN RED AT THE BACK OF THE SHIP.

YOU'LL SEE JESUS SITTING UP, CALM, TALKING, PEOPLE PRAYING, A GUY LEANING OVER THE SIDE HEAVING UP HIS BREAKFAST.

AND STANDING NEXT TO THAT GUY IN BLUE IS A GUY WHO IS HOLDING ON TO A ROPE, WITH HIS HAND OVER HIS FOREHEAD.

YOU KNOW WHO THAT IS?

THAT IS REMBRANDT.

HE PAINTED HIMSELF IN THE PICTURE.

IF YOU COUNT THE DISCIPLES, YOU'LL COUNT 12.

IF YOU GO ONLINE AND GET THIS BLOWN UP A LITTLE MORE, YOU'LL SEE A GUY -- THERE IS A LITTLE THING WHERE THEY GO UNDERNEATH THE DECKS.

THERE IS A GUY STANDING RIGHT IN THERE, TOO.

SO YOU COUNT THEM, THERE ARE 12, AND REMBRANDT, AND THEN THERE IS JESUS.

BECAUSE REMBRANDT WANTED TO SAY HE UNDERSTANDS THE STORMS IN LIFE BECAUSE THEY HAPPEN TO US ALL, WHETHER YOU'RE A FAMOUS DUTCH PAINTER OR YOU'RE A JANITOR.

EVERYBODY -- EVERYBODY HAS IT.
SO THE DISCIPLES ARE FACING THIS BIG STORM.
JESUS IS SLEEPING.
THEY COME TO JESUS AND THEY WAKE HIM UP.
I WOULD SUGGEST THAT ANY TIME YOU'RE EVER INTO A BIG STORM, THAT YOU DO THE SAME THING.
SOMETIMES IT MIGHT SEEM LIKE JESUS IS SLEEPING, BUT HE IS NOT.
THE FIRST THING WE SHOULD ALWAYS DO IS CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD.
CALL ON HIM.
THEY CALL ON HIM.
THEY WAKE HIM UP.
AND JESUS GETS UP, AND HE CALMS.
BE STILL, QUIET.
AND THE WIND AND THE WAVES STOP.
NOW, THERE ARE TWO THINGS THAT ARE REALLY ROUGH WHEN YOU'RE IN A SAILBOAT ON THE SEA.
ONE OF THEM IS A BIG STORM.
THE SECOND WORSE THING TO HAPPEN TO YOU IS FOR THERE TO BE ABSOLUTELY NO WINDS AND YOU'RE IN A SAILBOAT.
THAT IS WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THEM.
THEY'RE OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SEA OF GALILEE, AND THERE IS NO WIND AND THEY'RE IN A SAILBOAT.
SO WHAT DOES THAT MEAN THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE TO DO TO GET TO THE OTHER SIDE TO DO THIS MISSION TRIP, TO TALK TO THESE PEOPLE THAT THE JEWS HATE?

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MICHAEL, ROW YOUR BOAT ASHORE, HALLELUJAH ¶

>> Pastor Dave: SO THEY'RE ROWING.
THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS: WHEN JESUS CALLS US TO DO SOMETHING, THERE WILL BE SOME WORK INVOLVED.
HE MAY CALM THE STORMS, BUT THERE IS STILL GOING TO BE SOME WORK.
CAN I GET AN AMEN?
WE KNOW THERE IS GOING TO BE SOME WORK.
SO THEY'RE OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAKE -- BY THE WAY, I'VE TRIED THIS.
HAVE -- HAVE YOU GUYS EVERY TRIED WALKING ON WATER OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?
YOU NEVER HAVE?
I'M THE ONLY GUY THAT DOES THAT?
HAVE YOU TRIED THAT, MICHELLE?
>> I HAVE.
[LAUGHTER]
>> Pastor Dave: THAT'S GREAT.
I TRIED IN MY SWIMMING POOL, I TRIED IN THE SEA OF GALILEE, AND I JUST SUNK.
IT DOESN'T WORK.
I HAVE GONE OUT HERE IN THE COURT OF THE GENTILES, BEFORE WE HAD THE COVERING,
AND IT'S POURING DOWN RAIN.

AND I'VE GONE OUT THERE AND I SAID, CEASE AND BE STILL.
AND YOU KNOW WHAT I GOT?
I JUST GOT WET.
THAT'S RIGHT.
EVEN THOUGH I BELIEVE THAT I CAN DO THIS THROUGH THE POWER OF GOD, THAT GOD CAN
DO THIS THROUGH ME, IT DIDN'T WORK.
I'M NOT JESUS.
I DON'T CLAIM TO BE JESUS.
JESUS IS JESUS.
AND HE SAID, CEASE AND BE STILL; HE HAS THE POWER TO DO THESE THINGS.
SO THE DISCIPLES ARE TERRIFIED.
HOW CAN YOU SLEEP?
DON'T YOU CARE?
DOES IT EVER FEEL LIKE THAT TO YOU, THAT GOD IS SLEEPING AND HE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT
YOUR PROBLEMS, THAT HE HAS ABANDONED YOU?
YOU KNOW WHAT SCRIPTURE SAYS?
THE SCRIPTURE SAYS: "I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU.
I WILL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS EVEN UNTIL THE VERY END OF THE AGE."
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE?
YOUR FEELINGS, YOUR EMOTIONS?
OR WHAT THE UNFAILING WORD OF GOD TELLS US.
CHRIST WILL NEVER LEAVE.
HE WILL NEVER FORSAKE YOU.
SO IF IT SEEMS LIKE HE IS DISTANCED -- IT'S LIKE THE STORY ABOUT -- REMEMBER BACK IN THE
DAY WHEN THERE WERE BENCH SEATS, BEFORE ALL OF THE CONSOLES IN THE MIDDLE, AND
YOU USED TO BE ABLE TO SCOOSH UP NEXT TO YOUR SWEETHEART AND RIDE NEXT TO THEM
IN THE FRONT SEAT OF THE CAR?
THIS OLD GUY IS IN HIS OLD PICKUP TRUCK AND HE IS DRIVING ALONG, AND HIS WIFE IS
SITTING WAY OVER.
AND HE GOES, YOU KNOW, WE'VE BEEN MARRIED FOR 50 YEARS.
YOU USED TO SIT RIGHT NEXT TO ME WHEN WE DROVE.
AND THE OLD GUY LOOKED AT HER, AND HE GOES, WELL, IT WASN'T ME THAT MOVED.
THAT'S HOW IT IS WITH GOD.
IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'RE A LONG WAYS AWAY, IT'S NOT HIM THAT HAS MOVED.
IT'S US.
AND WE SOMETIMES DO IT THROUGH THE STORMS IN OUR LIVES, THAT MOVE US A LITTLE BIT,
A LITTLE BIT, AND BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, WE'RE A LONG WAYS AWAY.
SO THEY WAKE UP JESUS.
AND JESUS SAID, "WHY ARE YOU SO AFRAID?"
DUH, THERE IS A STORM.
THE WATER IS SWAMPING OUR BOAT.
OF COURSE WE'RE AFRAID.
YOU SEE, JESUS COULD ASK THAT QUESTION BECAUSE HE KNEW HE HAD THE POWER TO
OVERCOME THAT STORM.

AND HE THOUGHT THAT THE DISCIPLES HAD BEEN WITH HIM LONG ENOUGH THAT THEY KNEW THAT HE HAD THE POWER TO CALM THE STORMS.

BUT THEY DIDN'T.

AND THAT'S WHY THEY PANICKED.

DO YOU KNOW?

ARE YOU SURE THAT CHRIST HAS THE POWER TO CALM ALL OF THE STORMS THAT CAN BE IN YOUR LIFE?

NOW, LET ME MAKE IT CLEAR -- I NEED TO ADD SOMETHING HERE.

THE DISCIPLES WOULD SOON FIND OUT, TOO, THAT JESUS DOESN'T ALWAYS MAKE THE WIND STOP.

SOMETIMES HE JUST GIVES THEM EXTRA STRENGTH TO ROW HARDER.

JESUS DOESN'T ALWAYS LEVEL THE MOUNTAINS.

SOMETIMES HE JUST TEACHES US HOW TO CLIMB.

HE DOESN'T ALWAYS FILL IN THE VALLEYS.

HE JUST GIVES US A ROADMAP TO GET THROUGH THEM.

YOU SEE, JESUS DOESN'T ALWAYS DO THE EXACT THING WE MIGHT HOPE HE WILL DO.

BUT CHECK IT OUT: HE WILL NEVER LEAVE US ALONE.

HE WILL ALWAYS BE PRESENT.

AND HE HAS THE POWER TO DO ALL OF THESE THINGS.

THEY WERE AFRAID AND THEY WERE ANXIOUS.

IN FACT, THAT'S WHAT THE GREEK WORD SAID, WHY ARE YOU SO ANXIOUS ABOUT THESE THINGS?

DOES ANYBODY FEEL ANXIETY?

THEY SAY THAT 80% OF ALL PEOPLE FEEL ANXIETY.

IT IS NOT AN UNCOMMON THING.

WE ALL FEEL THIS.

SO ANXIETY, I THINK, RESULTS WHEN WE HAVE MADE A JUDGMENT THAT THE RESOURCES THAT ARE WITHIN US ARE SOMEHOW NOT ENOUGH TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES THAT FACE US.

DOES THAT MAKE SENSE TO YOU?

THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ME ARE NOT SUBSTANTIAL ENOUGH TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGE THAT I'M PRESENTED, AND THEN I FEEL ANXIOUS.

NOW, WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU HAD AN ULTIMATE RESOURCE, LIKE CHRIST?

I WANT TO GIVE YOU A LITTLE WARNING ABOUT HOW THIS ENDS UP: YOU DO.

YOU DO HAVE EXACTLY THAT.

YOU DO HAVE WHAT YOU NEED TO EXPERIENCE DELIVERANCE FROM ALL STORMS.

SO JESUS ALSO SAID, DO YOU STILL HAVE NO FAITH?

THE DISCIPLES -- I DON'T KNOW -- PUT YOURSELF IN THEIR PLACE.

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF THE LORD SAID TO YOU, WHY DO YOU HAVE NO FAITH?

YOU'RE THINKING, I THOUGHT I DID, I DO HAVE FAITH, BUT I JUST NEVER HAVE EXPERIENCED THIS.

THAT'S HOW OUR FAITH GROWS.

OUR FAITH GROWS BY HAVING FAITH IN SOMETHING, GETTING THROUGH SOMETHING, LOOKING BACK AND SEEING GOD'S HAND IN THAT.

AND THEN TRUSTING HE IS THE ONE THAT DELIVERED US FROM IT.

IN FACT, PAUL -- I'VE USED THIS QUOTE MANY TIMES FROM ROMANS 5:3.

PAUL HAS BEEN THROUGH A LOT OF TRIBULATIONS.

AMEN?

HE HAS BEEN.

AND YOU KNOW WHAT HE SAYS?

HE SAYS, I REJOICE IN TRIBULATIONS.

BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN THROUGH THOSE TROUBLES BEFORE, AND HE HAS TAKEN NOTES ABOUT HOW GOD HAS GOTTEN HIM THROUGH IT.

AND THESE ARE HIS NOTES.

HE SHARES THEM WITH US.

HE SAYS: "I REJOICE IN TRIBULATION BECAUSE (A) TRIBULATION PRODUCES PERSEVERANCE (B) PERSEVERANCE PRODUCES CHARACTER AND (C) CHARACTER PRODUCES HOPE AND (D) HOPE DOES NOT DISAPPOINT US BECAUSE GOD HAS POURED HIS HOLY SPIRIT IN THOSE HE LOVES."

SO YOU SEE, THIS IS HOW OUR FAITH IS SHAPED: BY GOING THROUGH THE STORMS, BY TRUSTING IN CHRIST, FINDING THE DELIVERANCE THAT WE WILL GET THROUGH HIM FROM OUR PROBLEMS, UNDERSTANDING THAT WHATEVER THE DILEMMA MIGHT BE THAT THREATENS US, THAT WE DO HAVE ENOUGH RESOURCES IF WE HAVE CHRIST JESUS.

NOW, THERE ARE A FEW THINGS I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU BEFORE I SAY AMEN ABOUT THIS.

AND THEY'RE FROM DAVE.

THEY'RE NOT FROM THE BIBLE.

THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT I'VE DONE THAT HAVE HELPED ME OVERCOME SOME ANXIETY, AND I WANT TO SHARE THOSE THINGS WITH YOU BECAUSE THEY'RE THINGS I'VE LEARNED IN GETTING A MASTER'S DEGREE IN COUNSELING.

THE FIRST THING IN DEALING WITH FEARS IS TO FACE MY FEARS.

FEAR: FACE EVERYTHING AND RECOVER.

IT IS AN ACHRONYM.

THE FIRST THING I HAVE TO DO IS FACE IT.

I'VE GOT TO ACCEPT IT.

I'VE GOT TO SAY THIS IS WHAT IS GOING ON.

THE NEXT THING IS TO WRITE THEM DOWN ON PAPER.

THIS IS AN AMAZING THING.

FOR MEN, WE JOURNAL.

WOMEN DO DIARIES.

MEN JOURNAL.

GUYS, IT IS NOT A FEMININE THING TO DO.

GET A PIECE OF PAPER OUT AND WRITE DOWN YOUR FEARS.

BECAUSE WHEN THEY GET ON PAPER, SOMETHING AMAZING HAPPENS TO YOU.

IT IS A FACT NOW.

FACE YOUR FEARS; WRITE THEM ON PAPER.

I WANT TO SHARE THIS STUDY THAT WAS DONE BY STRESS MANAGEMENT EXPERTS THAT SAYS THAT ONLY 2% OF OUR WORRYING TIME IS SPENT ON THINGS THAT MIGHT ACTUALLY BE HELPED BY WORRYING.

THE FIGURES BELOW ILLUSTRATE THAT THE OTHER 98% OF THIS IS HOW THIS TIME IS SPENT:
40% ON THINGS THAT NEVER HAPPEN.

YOU'VE HEARD THE OLD EXPRESSION: MOST OF THE BRIDGES WE CROSS BEFORE WE GET TO
THEM ARE OVER RIVERS THAT DON'T EXIST?

35% OF THINGS THAT CAN'T BE CHANGED.

IT IS OUT OF YOUR CONTROL.

15% ON THINGS THAT TURN OUT BETTER THAN WE EXPECTED.

8% ON USELESS, PETTY WORRIES, LIKE I WON'T HAVE ENOUGH CHANGE TO PUT IN THE
PARKING METER OR WHATEVER.

SO WE WRITE DOWN OUR FEARS, AND THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE, WHEN I STARTED
WORRYING ABOUT MY FEARS, THAT I DECIDED TO DO.

I HAD A SPONSOR IN A.A. THAT TOLD ME WE'RE GOING TO GET FIVE GUYS TOGETHER AND
WE'RE GOING TO WORRY FOR ONE MINUTE, 60 SECONDS, AS HARD AS WE CAN, AND SEE IF
THAT HELPS.

IT DOESN'T HELP, FOLKS.

TRY THE EXPERIMENT YOURSELF.

SO I DECIDED TO WRITE IT ON A PIECE OF PAPER, PUT IT IN MY UPPER LEFT-HAND DRAW IN MY
CHURCH OFFICE, AND I WOULD WORRY ABOUT IT ON WEDNESDAY.

IT IS CALLED "WORRY WEDNESDAY."

IF IT IS A MONDAY, I WRITE DOWN MY WORRY, I PUT IT IN THE DRAW AND FORGET ABOUT IT.
IT IS THERE.

THEN ON WEDNESDAY I OPEN THEM UP, BREAK OUT MY WORRIES, AND GUESS WHAT?
MOST OF THEM ARE GONE.

MOST OF THEM DIDN'T EVEN HAPPEN.

AND THE ONES THAT DID HAPPEN, I CAN'T STILL CONTROL.

AND THAT BRINGS US TO THE NEXT THING: I WRITE DOWN WHAT IS THE WORST THING THAT
COULD POSSIBLY HAPPEN?

WHAT IS THE WORST THING?

IF THIS TURNS OUT TO THE WORST POSSIBLE OUTCOME, WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME?

THE NEXT THING TO DO IS TO UNDERSTAND MY FEARS.

REMEMBER PEOPLE, MANY YEARS AGO, USED TO BE TERRIFIED OF SOLAR ECLIPSES.

THEY USED TO THINK THAT THE SUN WAS GOING TO DROP OUT OF THE SKY.

THAT'S HILARIOUS TO US TODAY, RIGHT?

BECAUSE WHAT IS AN ECLIPSE?

WHEN THE MOON GETS BETWEEN THE EARTH AND THE SUN, AND IT ECLIPSES.

WE UNDERSTAND THAT.

NOW, HOW MANY OF YOU ARE AFRAID OF THAT?

NO, BECAUSE YOU UNDERSTAND IT.

UNDERSTAND OUR FEARS.

UNDERSTAND WHERE THEY COME FROM.

THE LAST THING IS: FIX WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL AND GIVE TO GOD WHAT YOU CAN'T.

I'LL GO THROUGH MY LIST AGAIN.

WHAT CAN I WORK ON?

I'LL CIRCLE THAT.

THEN IF I'M WORRIED ABOUT THAT, I'LL PUT IT IN MY WORRY ON WEDNESDAY DRAWER AND THEN LEAVE IT ALONE.

IF IT IS SOMETHING I CAN'T CONTROL, I CROSS IT OFF MY LIST AND SAY GIVE TO GOD.

BECAUSE HE'S GOT IT, AMEN?

HOW MANY OF YOU KNOW THAT GOD HAS GOT IT?

GOD HAS ALWAYS GOT OUR BACK.

IN THE MIDST OF THE STORMS IN OUR LIVES, IT MAY SEEM THAT JESUS IS SLEEPING.

STEP ONE IS TO CALL ON HIM FOR HELP.

IN OUR STORM, WE HEAR THE WORDS OF THE 23rd PSALM: "YE THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH, I WILL FEAR" -- WHAT?

I WILL FEAR EVERY LITTLE THING THAT IS IN THE DARK AND SQUEAKS AND CRAWLS ON SIX LEGS?

NO.

"I WILL FEAR NO EVIL."

WHY?

WHY?

"I WILL FEAR NO EVIL BECAUSE THOU ART WITH ME."

GOD IS WITH ME.

HIS ROD AND HIS STAFF, THEY COMFORT ME.

WHEN WE WONDER WHY STORMS OCCUR AT ALL, WE'RE REMINDED OF ROMANS 8, WHERE IT SAYS: "ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE LORD, WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE."

IT DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN THAT ALL THINGS ARE GOING TO BE GOOD, BUT TOGETHER GOD WILL USE IT FOR AN ULTIMATE PURPOSE THAT GIVES HIM HONOR.

WHEN WE FEAR THAT OUR SITUATION WOULD SEPARATE US FROM HIS HELP, WE REMEMBER THE EIGHTH CHAPTER OF ROMANS, ALSO, WHERE IT SAYS: "WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST?

SHALL TROUBLE OR HARDSHIP OR PERSECUTION OR FAMINE OR NAKEDNESS OR DANGER OR SWORD?"

NO.

"IN ALL THESE THINGS WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM, WHO LOVED US.

FOR I AM CONVINCED THAT NEITHER DEATH NOR LIFE, NEITHER ANGELS NOR DEMONS NOR PRESENT NOR FUTURE NOR ANY POWERS, NEITHER HEIGHT NOR DEPTH NOR ANYTHING ELSE IN ALL CREATION WILL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD."

SO WHAT STORMS ARE YOU FACING IN YOUR LIFE TODAY?

THE FIRST STEP: CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD.

TRUST THAT HE WILL DELIVER YOU AND THEN LISTEN TO THE WORD THAT HE SPEAKS.

AND MAY THE PEACE OF GOD THAT SURPASSES ALL HUMAN UNDERSTANDING GUARD YOUR HEARTS AND MINDS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.

AMEN.