

John 6 (Part 2) :16–21 • Inviting Jesus Into Our Storms

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We're in John chapter six, so I'll have you open your Bible there to John chapter six. We're going to just take a fairly small section of scripture today. Normally we go, I don't know, a little bit more, but I just felt like there was something here that we needed to pause and ponder as we get into this particular passage.

John chapter six, we're picking up the text in verse 16, and we're only going to read down through verse 21. So follow along with me as I read.

¹⁶ When evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, ¹⁷ (and that's the Sea of Galilee) got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. ¹⁸ The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. ¹⁹ When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened. ²⁰ But He said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." ²¹ Then they were glad to take Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

Stop there. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, as we get into this section of scripture this morning, we pray for Your Holy Spirit to open our hearts, to open our minds, to help us LORD to see what You are saying to us and the things that You want us to come away from this passage with. LORD, we believe that there is application in every aspect of the Word, and so we pray that You'd help us today to lay hold of that.

We invite You to speak to our hearts and minister grace and insight. We look to You LORD, to accomplish this and we humble ourselves in Jesus' precious Name, amen. Amen.

Well again, not a whole lot of verses that we're taking here today. Interestingly enough, this is a story in the New Testament that is also covered by Matthew and Mark. John's rendition of this is— lacks much of the detail that Matthew and Mark give. So we're going to be relying on the account that Matthew and Mark also gave of this passage to kind of fill in some of the information.

Now remember, this is all happening just after what we call The Feeding of the Five Thousand; the people who all gathered [and] were listening to Jesus and it was starting to get late in the day. And you'll remember last week we covered that. Jesus challenged His disciples to feed the people and they said, "There's no possible way." And so Jesus proceeded miraculously to multiply some fish and loaves to feed the multitude and even have 12 baskets of scraps they picked up afterwards left over.

And now the sun is going down. The people are still there. The crowd is still there. But Jesus goes to His disciples and He goes, "I want you guys to take off. I want you to hop in the boat. I want you to head across the lake over to Capernaum and just wait there. I'll meet you over there. So just, you know... you guys go." And they probably thought that was a little weird because, you know, the people were still there.

"Okay. All right. We're going to do this." So— and this is the information that Mark kind of adds to the story for us. He says that Jesus directed them to get into a boat and go across the lake to Capernaum. And I want you to hang onto that. I want you to hang onto that point, the point being that ***Jesus directed them*** to get in a boat and go across the lake and wait for him there.

That's going to figure into our application of this story quite significantly. So we're told that Jesus went back to the people, dismissed them, sent them off to either local villages or homes or whatever. And it says that He went on hillside, went up on the hillside in order to spend some time in prayer.

But during that time of prayer, the disciples were caught in what we understand to be a fairly dangerous windstorm that would often come upon the Sea of Galilee. And one of the reasons that this windstorm type thing was fairly common is that the Sea of Galilee has something in common with Ontario.

It was in a bowl. Have you ever noticed that's kind of the way we are? We're kind of in the same thing— with hills around, and we're kind of this, you know, depression in the ground. Well, the Sea of Galilee even more so. The Sea of Galilee itself is 600 feet below sea level and it's surrounded by hills and so forth.

And so as evening approaches and the wind or the air cools— right? That cooler air sweeps down the western slopes of the hills around the Sea of Galilee, and it stirs up the water. And in fact, you know, it can get really rough, really fast. And that is exactly what the disciples found themselves in the midst of as they're out there about in the middle of the lake.

Now keep in mind some of these disciples are experienced fishermen. They've probably been on a boat from their earliest remembrance of life. And you know, they know how to deal with these sorts of things. They're well aware of the kind of storms that come upon the lake and so forth. But this was a particularly rough storm and this is where we begin to get a little bit of insight from Mark. And let me put this on the screen and we're going to leave this passage up for a little bit because we're going to draw a couple of things from it. But Mark, chapter six, beginning of verse 47.

Mark 6:47-48a (ESV)

...when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and [Jesus] was alone on the land. And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them.

It says, “...when evening came, the boat was out on the sea and Jesus was alone on the land.” This is where He was praying in the hills. And it says that, “He saw that they were...” and this is the part I want you to see, “...they were making headway painfully.” Isn't that a descriptive phrase? And that's the first thing I want you to see, “They were making headway, painfully.”

I thought, oh, this is, I have to look this up in my Greek dictionary. So I did and I found this, just incredible amount of words that are used to translate this one Greek word; words that I actively avoid that have to do with extreme physical struggle and strain, which I hate.

And that's exactly what this word kind of talks about. Now, Matthew actually adds to the story by telling us that this storm raged for a long period of time to the point where it was, he said, (Matthew 14:25) “the fourth watch of the night.” Now that would put it somewhere between 3:00 and 6:00 AM. So remember Jesus dismissed them right about the time the sun was going down and they've been battling this storm all night in these high winds, high waves, which by the way was a very, very dangerous sort of a thing. But there's one other thing from this passage in Mark that I want you to see.

As you look at it again, it says, “... when evening came, the boat was out on the sea and Jesus was alone on the land.” And I want you to notice the next thing that it says, “...and He saw that they were making headway painfully.” And I particularly want you to focus on two of those words, and that is, “He saw.”

“He saw,” and what we learn from this particular statement is that Jesus never let those men out of His sight. Remember, He sent them in that boat, out on that

lake, and they were struggling and they were having a hard time and it was dangerous. “*And He saw,*” and He knew that this was going on. And that's another thing I want you to remember as we get a little bit further into this passage.

Now look with me in your Bible at (John 6) verse 19 as we continue. It says, “... *when they had rowed about three or four miles.*” Now this is about halfway across the lake. This wouldn't have taken, on a regular day, nearly as long to get across the Sea of Galilee, but they have, they are out about three or four miles out into the water, somewhere in the middle. And we know again, from Matthew's account, that this was between three and 6AM. And so they've been struggling for hours, making very little progress.

And it says here at the end of verse 19 that, “*they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat and they were frightened.*” I can about imagine. Have you ever? I've never seen anyone walking on the water. Well, you know, some cartoons and special effects I suppose. But I mean, to actually see that, to be there; to see....

And they didn't recognize Jesus, of course, right away. They saw *someone* walking on the water, toward them. And I would've freaked out of my brain. I know, I just would've lost it probably right there. Mark tells us that they thought they were seeing an apparition of some kind, you know it's like, “Ah, it's a ghost!”

But we're told in verse 20 that Jesus said to them, “*It is I; do not be afraid.*” It's easy for Him to say. And “*Then they were glad,*” it says, “*to take Him into the boat.*” And then we get this incredible statement from John, which we don't get from Matthew or Mark at the end of verse 20 that says, “*As soon as Jesus got into the boat, immediately the boat was at the land,*” on the other side of the lake.” And that's of course, where they were going.

And that would've even more so, probably freaked me out. Can you imagine you're struggling for hours against this storm and Jesus gets in the boat and (Pastor snaps his fingers and looks around) boom, you're just— you're there; you're at the shore. It's like, “Did I pass out? Or become unconscious here for a little while, while you guys made the rest of the way?” Oh, how weird.

Anyway, so here we've got this story and most of us are very familiar with this story. Some of you who were raised in church, or at least with Bible stories, you've probably heard this or, and know this story. You've heard it maybe since

you were a child. But here's the question we want to ask this morning: *What can we learn from it?*

What's the takeaway for you and me related to this story? Well as we review this, one of the first things that I want to remind you about, and we see this frankly, plainly in the text; we see that there are times in a Believer's life when, at the LORD's direction, we can enter into some pretty scary circumstances.

And that might tweak your theology a little bit, but I want you to understand that is in fact the case. There are times, at God's direction— in other words, you're just simply walking in obedience to the LORD, and you can enter into some very dangerous and scary circumstances.

Just because you're doing what the LORD told you to do, doesn't mean there isn't going to be danger involved, or it isn't going to be frightening. Remember Jesus told them, “Guys, get in the boat; start heading to Capernaum.”

“All right, we're going to do this. We're going to be obedient; we're going to do it. It doesn't make a whole lot of sense because the people are still here, but you know, He told us to go; we're going to go.” And they get out about halfway across the lake and the wind starts whipping up and the waves are beating against them and they're hardly making any progress at all. It's a dangerous, frightening situation.

And they're there because Jesus told them to be there. That's a very important thing to understand. And remember that's what we learn from that passage in Mark chapter six. In fact, let me highlight it here on the screen for you again.

Mark 6:45 (ESV)

Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd.

“*He made his disciples get in the boat,*” He made them get in the boat. Okay? So the implication is, *it's all part of His plan.* Wow.

Okay. But I want you to remember something, People, when we talk about stuff like this. When we talk about Jesus doing things, saying things; we're talk—we're seeing God doing and saying things. So here's the question if somebody were to ask you, “Would God ever ask you to do something or to go somewhere or to be something that would result in danger to you personally? Would God ever do that?”

And the answer to that question is, “Yes, He would.” It doesn't mean He is not going to take care of you, but you may very well find yourself in very dangerous circumstances, even as you're walking in obedience to the Word of the LORD.

Listen, read through the book of Acts. The apostle Paul, his ministry was fraught with danger and difficulty practically the entire time. He cooled his heels in prison for a large part of his ministry. He received all kinds of beatings. He was shipwrecked on more than one occasion. He was often without food, without proper clothing.

Was Paul placed in situations of danger and difficulty as a result of his obedience to the LORD and his willingness to walk out the calling of the LORD? Yes. Yes; he was. So, there you go. All right, so now we're seeing things. We're seeing things God will allow and even direct us in the path of storms from time to time.

One of the reasons I'm sharing this with you this morning, because I know that some of you are going through storms. So what I want to talk about a little bit this morning is how we respond in the midst of those storms. Because we've already seen how the LORD responds, and we'll talk more about that. But I want to focus a little bit on how *we respond*, because I think that's really where the application comes in for you and me.

How do we respond to the LORD's *direction* when we are walking in obedience to him and storms come our way? Well, since we know that Jesus directed the disciples into this boat, told them to go across the lake, we know that this was an act of obedience on their part. And yet here it was, full of problems and issues.

And I hear from Christians all the time who are doing their level best to walk out what they believe God is telling them to do. And it could be anything from my marriage needs help, you know, and the LORD has really laid it upon my heart to improve my marriage. And suddenly a storm blows up and there's a big blow up and it's like, “I'm just doing this because the LORD told me to, you know.”

Or somebody else is just really trying to walk in obedience to raising their children in a Godly home and a storm blows into the situation, “Now what am I going to do? And I was just trying to be obedient.”

What's— and some people begin to question. They begin to question whether they're really doing what the LORD wanted them to do. And they'll say, “Well, Pastor Paul, I really felt like this was something God wanted me to do. But look at every look at the way it's going right now. It's horrible. There's nothing but just debris all over the place.” And so they begin to say, “I don't— maybe God didn't want me to do this.”

And I say, “Well, why do you say that?”

“Well look.”

No, no, no, no, no. That- see, that's becoming a circumstantial Christian, and we can't do that. We cannot base our understanding of whether or not something is right or wrong, or whether we're doing what the LORD wants us to do based on the circumstances around us. We can't do that.

If Paul would've based his ministry on circumstances he'd have quit the first day. Thankfully he pressed through and he knew that even though, ‘I'm walking the way, I am told to walk; in obedience to the LORD. This thing's going to come with challenges and there's going to be plenty of them.’ So don't question. Don't be a circumstantial Christian. These— “It doesn't look good here, Pastor Paul.”

“I know, I know, I know. The question is, did God tell you? Did He tell you to walk that way? To do that?”

“Yeah, I believe He did.” Then stay the course regardless of the circumstances. Stay the course and just know that the LORD is guiding you.

Well, how do we typically respond? Mark says, let me show it again, Mark 6:48.

Mark 6:48 (ESV)

... they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them.

This is— it says, “... *they were making headway painfully.*” This is how we respond to the storms of life. When we find ourselves in the midst of them, we try to make headway painfully, but it's painful. In the NIV, if you read this same text, it says, “... *they were straining at the oars.*” And that word ‘straining’ is actually where we get from that word ‘painfully’ in the Greek.

That's what we do. We decide that if it's getting hard, we need to work harder. We just need to work harder. "This isn't working; it's not coming together. God directed me to do this, but it's just not coming together, so I just need to double down and work harder and make this thing— you know, grit my teeth and just make this thing happen."

And I don't know if that sounds like anything you can relate to, but I can. I've done that many times. Our motto seems to be when the going gets tough, the Believers just try harder. And some of you are in a storm right now and you're there because you feel that the LORD directed you in a particular way. And now it's not going very well and you're wondering what to do.

But what you're doing is you're, "*straining at the oars*;" you're making progress painfully, and the problem is that we are doing it in our own strength. And that's what happens. We get into trouble. We begin to face difficulty in the midst of our obedience to the LORD and we think, "I've got to do better. I've got to work harder. I have to get this thing done."

And so essentially what we do is we begin to operate in the 'power of self.' And I want to suggest to you, Brothers and Sisters in Christ; loved by the LORD, that when God calls you to go somewhere or to do something, or to be something for His purpose and glory, He never intends you to carry it out in your own strength.

And I want to remind you of that today. So let me show you how God does intend you to proceed. The first reminder comes from the book of Colossians on the screen.

Colossians 1:29 (ESV)

For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

"For this," Paul writes, "*I toil, struggling with all His energy that He powerfully works within me.*" This is interesting, isn't it? Do you see what looks almost like— it can look like a contradiction, but actually it's more of, kind of a Biblical paradox, and that is that Paul says, "*I toil.*"

Notice that? "*I toil.* But my toiling is done with *His energy*," which he (Paul) says, "By the way, I've just got to tell you, *it works powerfully in me when I allow it.* I'm toiling. I'm doing that toiling." And then again, that might sound

like a contradiction because sometimes we think, “Well, if it's all going to be God's energy, I’ve got to sit back and just watch.”

No, no, no. Not exactly. There's nothing wrong with hard work, and the Bible is positive about hard work, but when it comes to following the calling of the LORD, doing what the LORD wants you to do, *He wants you to do it in His strength and in His power.*

Ephesians 6:10 (ESV)

...be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

That's what Paul says in Ephesians chapter six verse 10 when he says, “*...be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.*”

You know, I love that and I'm so glad that Paul just didn't end that statement by saying, “Be strong. Just be strong, you guys.” Can you imagine if that was all we were kind of doing here at church? We were coming together and just going, “I know it's hard. Be strong.”

And that's the message I kind of got when I was a kid and was growing— my childhood wasn't always terribly fun. And I remember, you know, people saying to me, “Just— you need to buck up.” I wanted to smack them.

But that's, but they kept— they said that to me over and over, (Pastor uses a gruff voice.) “You just need to buck up, Paul. Just be strong.” Aren't you glad we don't say that to one another in the body of Christ?

We say, “Be strong *in His might.*” Right? *The strength of His might; be strong in the LORD.* That's what God intends for you to do when He calls you, directs you, sends you, and then you run into a storm. And then I love this passage from the Psalms.

Psalms 18:31-22, 39a (ESV)

For who is God, but the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God?— the God who equipped me with strength and made my way blameless. He made my feet like the feet of a deer and set me secure on the heights. For you equipped me with strength for the battle;

Psalm 18 says, the psalmist says, *“³¹ For who is God, but the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God?— ³² the God who equipped me with strength and made my way blameless. ³³ He made my feet like the feet of a deer and set me secure on the heights. ^{39a} For you equipped me with strength for the battle;”*

Isn't that a great passage? I love the imagery, you know. The psalmist obviously had seen this deer prancing around on the rocks— something that would be very difficult for you and me to do because there's hardly enough there to get a good foothold, and you're always concerned about twisting your ankle or losing your foothold or whatever. And the psalmist says, “No, God made me just like a deer.” In other words, “My footing was secure and I was able to literally dance across what would otherwise be dangerous circumstances and situations.”

And he (the psalmist) says, *“For You equipped me with strength for the battle. You equipped me. You gave me the strength for the battle.”* That's God's intention for how you deal with those kinds of storms.

Now here's the question we need to ask, and this is the further application. “How do we get there?” In other words, we know that when God calls us, He calls us and desires that we would walk in His strength. But how do we get to that point?

In other words, “What steps can we take to get to the place where we're relying on His strength and not our own?” Well one of the things that we need to do from this passage that we're looking at here in John chapter six, is learn what the disciples did, and we'll learn some interesting insights on what we should do.

So for those of you who take notes, we're going to title this, “What the Disciples Did.” Isn't that catchy?

What the Disciples Did

1. They recognized the One who had total dominion and control.

All right, let's begin reading again at verse 18. Look with me in your Bible (John 6). Here we go. It says, *“The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles,”* and I want you to take note of this, *“they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened. But He said to them, ‘It is I, It is I. Do not be afraid.’”*

What are they seeing? Remember, they're out on the sea of Galilee. The wind and the waves are threatening their very existence. But what are they seeing? What are they seeing, People?

They're seeing Jesus walking on the water, walking on the very thing that now threatens their life. It is under His feet. It is under His dominion. And so what they're doing, and this is going to be the first thing we'll put up on our list, is they recognize the one who had total dominion and control.

What the Disciples Did

1. They recognized the One who had total dominion and control.

And that's the first thing that you and I have to do when we're facing a storm as a result of the calling and direction of the LORD and this storm just blows up. What's the first thing I've got to do? Well I, as I recognize my own inability to fight this thing and to move past it, and the futility of my own efforts, I have to recognize first, the One who has total control and has dominion over the circumstances that I am now facing. *He is the one who has all dominion.*

Do you guys remember right before Jesus sent His disciples out in what we call the Great Commission? You guys familiar with that? It's at the very end of the book of Matthew, chapter 28 (verse 19). It's where Jesus says, "Go out into all the world, you know, preach the gospel, you know, make disciples of all nations..." da, da, da, da, da.

Do you know what He said right before that? Right before He commissioned them to go out? He said (in verse 18), "*All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to Me.*"

That's a great lead-in when you're about to send somebody out on a dangerous, difficult, challenging mission or calling— to say, "I want you to understand something before you head out. *All authority in Heaven and earth has been given to Me.* It is Mine." In other words, "All of these things that would otherwise threaten you, they're under My feet. They are under My feet."

And that's what Jesus was showing as He walked on those waves, the very thing that was threatening the lives of those disciples. "This does not dominate Me; I dominate it." Does that make sense? So they recognize the One who had that dominion.

Look at verse 21. This is where we pick up our second point of what the disciples did. It says they were glad to take Him into the boat. And you can

about imagine; I would be too. And so the very next thing that we see here that the disciples did is *they received Jesus into the boat*.

What the Disciples Did

1. They recognized the One who had total dominion and control.
2. They received Jesus into the boat.

And this is where you, and this is where— if I'm in this situation, we have to invite Jesus into the storm, into the very thing that has been threatening us; into the very problem. I find that so many Christians are hesitant to invite Jesus into their problems, and I don't really know why that is.

I don't know if it's pride or stubbornness or what; I'm not really sure. But we all kind of need a kick in our complacency and just get it done and just ask Jesus, humble yourself and ask Him to come in. Ask Him to come into that place that's threatening you, whatever it may be. If it's your marriage or your home, or your parenting or your job, or your livelihood— whatever it is, whatever the problem is, invite Him into the boat!

Let Him get in there with you. In other words, that's just inviting Jesus to be a part of every aspect of our lives. So many Christians, I find, feel like God's going to be disappointed in them or something if they don't get this thing done on their own, you know, “Can't really turn to the LORD for help because, you know, He's expecting me to do this.”

Well, He's expecting you to come to Him to do this, to trust Him, to get whatever done that He's called you to do.

So they receive Jesus into the boat. Now look at the end of verse 21. This is where it says, “*and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.*” And this is number three on the list.

What the Disciples Did

1. They recognized the One who had total dominion and control.
2. They received Jesus into the boat.
3. They found that their assigned task was now supernaturally completed.

After they received Jesus or invited Him into the boat they found that their assigned task, which by the way had been assigned by Jesus, “Get in the boat; go to Capernaum.” Suddenly, when they invited Jesus into the dangerous

equation, (Pastor snaps his fingers.) boom! They're there. They find that by supernatural means this thing got accomplished.

Not by the means of self. Not by my power and might, but by the might and power and the presence of the LORD, because I saw that He had dominion over this thing. I invited Him into my circumstances, into my dangerous situation, and I said, "LORD, I need to trust You." And suddenly there's these supernatural things that begin to take place because now He's working. Isn't that something?

Can I suggest to you that these are some guidelines for how we should respond in those— in the midst of those kinds of storms? But may I also suggest to you that we're not going to be perfect in our responses? You know what's really interesting about this story here in the gospel of John? John leaves out one of the most dynamic parts of this story, which Matthew gave us, but John left it out.

I don't know if it's because he had a beef with Peter or whatever, but it— and it all had to do with Peter in Matthew. And it was that whole story about Peter walking on the water, too. John left it out. Matthew told it. Here's how it goes.

Matthew 14:28-33 (ESV)

And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Goes like this, "²⁸ And Peter answered Him," This is after Jesus said you know, (in verse 27) "Don't be afraid, it's Me."

"Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." ²⁹ He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out His hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" ³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ And those in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

I don't know if this is a little add-on to the story that you can relate to. I sure can. There have been plenty of times in my life where Jesus has had to reach down and pluck me up out of the waters of self doubt and fear. Because I had to do just what Peter did, cry out and say, "*LORD, save me.*"

I mean, Peter started off pretty good. You have to admit, even before Jesus got in the boat, Peter just rose up with faith and he's like, "It's the LORD! LORD, let me come to You walking on the water."

"Okay, come," [replied Jesus]. And Peter was doing pretty good—till he got his eyes off the LORD—and then he started to sink.

So you see, the whole point about inviting Jesus into our circumstances is not just making the invitation, but then *keeping our eyes on Him* throughout the course of what He's going to do and *not taking our eyes off Him* and getting them back onto your circumstances. Because remember, that's where fear is going to rise up or it's going to cause fear to rise up because we look at our circumstances and they look very bleak, and that's what happened to Peter.

He's out there walking on the water for Heaven's sake, but then he gets his eyes off the LORD and looks at the water; looks at the waves, (Pastor looks up.) "Whoa, that's a big one. I think I can even see a fish in that one. This one's going to take me down." And he starts to go down; begins to sink. But he has the smarts to say, "*LORD, save me.*"

And Jesus is right there. People, *Jesus is always going to be right there*—to lift you up out of that place of doubt and fear *if you call upon Him and trust in Him.*

So I really think that the great lesson from this passage. It is all about recognizing the power of the One Who has complete dominion in the midst of the kind of circumstances that we see that show us up as being completely unable to make any sort of positive change, and then in inviting Him and His power and His presence into whatever He has called you to do or to be, whatever that may be. Amen?

Let's stand together. I want to take a moment to pray for those of you that are going through a storm right now. And by the way, we'll have some people up front here after we close who—they're our prayer team, and they'll be available to pray with you if you want some further prayer on whatever's happening. But just—I want to pray for you right now for just a minute, and for the storms that you're going through and the circumstances that are scary and overwhelming

and look just totally beyond your ability. And it's a good reason they do. It's because they are; they are beyond your ability. *But they're not beyond His.*

And that's an important thing to be able to say to the LORD, “LORD, this is too big for me, but it's not too big for You. And I need to learn how to trust You.” Because that's a tough one. I spent so many years of my life learning to trust myself. And that is something I have to continually unlearn, to put things in the hands of the LORD and trust Him with the outcome.

So, Father God, we come to You collectively as a family here this morning, and we just, first of all; *first of all*, we recognize that nothing is too difficult for You. We need to see You for Who You are; the God for Whom nothing is impossible. Secondly, we invite You into our storm, our storm-battered ship; we invite You in.

We invite You into our circumstances. We invite You into our family drama. We invite You into our financial woes. We invite You into our health problems. We invite You into our issues at work, at school. We invite You into all of these areas that are just overwhelming.

We invite You into our addictive behaviors. We invite You into our besetting areas of sin. And we ask You, LORD God, to help us to keep our eyes on You for the victory and to stop straining against the oars in our own strength, because LORD we're getting nowhere.

Strengthen us, LORD God, with the power of Your might to walk this calling out and to get to the other side— and let it be a supernatural work of Your Spirit. We invite You in and we trust You LORD, to see it through. And we ask all of these things in the Name of Jesus Christ, Who has saved us from our sin by bearing the punishment of our sin on the cross.

We thank You and praise You in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. And all God's people said together, amen.

God bless you. Have a good rest of your Sunday.