

39 It's Only the Wind – Weathering the Storms of Life

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We made it through a hurricane this past weekend.

Hurricane Isaias came ashore Friday night as a Category 2 storm with 105 mph winds. Most of the locals figured it would be no big deal.

Our little beach town was front and center.

We were ready. Generator fueled. Extension cords running all through the house.

The wind picked up in the afternoon, and by 8 p.m. it was blowing hard. Strangely, it came from the north. We rarely get wind from the north.

Later I learned why. The center of the storm came ashore just east of us, and on that side of a hurricane, the wind wraps around from the north.

We heard the gusts.

Thankfully, our house was built well, and we didn't have any trees close enough to cause trouble. We still had internet, of all things, so we watched a movie on generator power while the storm roared outside. It moved through quickly, and for that I'm grateful.

Overall, we fared pretty well.

But the storm turned out stronger than most of us expected. Neighbors who have lived here through several hurricanes said this was the worst one they remember.

A Song About the Wind

All weekend, a Billy Dean song from the 1990s kept running through my head. It's called "Only the Wind," and it's one of my favorites.

The song opens with a little boy lying awake on a stormy night. The screen door slams, and he's terrified by the noise. His mother comes to his room and comforts him. It's only the wind, she tells him. Go back to sleep.

Those words stay with him. For years, whenever life gets hard, he remembers them.

Then the song turns.

He's grown now, and the screen door slams again. This time it's someone he loves walking out. And he admits he can't make himself believe his mother's words anymore.

That's what makes the song stand out. Some storms are more than wind.

Storms You Didn't See Coming

Have you ever been there? You thought you were prepared, and then the storm hit, and in the middle of it you realized you weren't as ready as you hoped.

Maybe it was a medical diagnosis.

A phone call in the middle of the night about an accident.

A spouse saying they're leaving.

A layoff after years with the same company.

A child who stops answering your calls.

A parent with dementia who no longer recognizes you.

Depression that rolls in without warning, the way the wind turned north on Friday night.

Every one of those is a real storm and there are many more.

A Storm on the Sea of Galilee

Several of Jesus's disciples were fishermen who grew up on the Sea of Galilee. They knew that lake, and they had likely weathered storms there before.

It sits about 700 feet below sea level, surrounded by hills. Cool air can rush down off those hills and turn calm water violent in a matter of minutes. These men knew how to read the weather.

One evening, Jesus said to them, "Let us go over to the other side" (Mark 4:35, LSB).

Partway across, a storm hit that none of them saw coming. The waves broke over the boat until it started filling with water. Seasoned fishermen thought they were going to die.

And Jesus? He was asleep in the stern, on a cushion (Mark 4:38).

They woke Him up. "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" (Mark 4:38, LSB).

This is one of my favorite stories in the New Testament, because it speaks so directly to the storms in our own lives.

Read that question again. "Do You not care that we are perishing?"

Don't we say the same thing when a storm hits us full on? In the moment, it can feel like Jesus doesn't care what we're going through.

Do you think Jesus didn't know what was coming when He chose that evening to cross? I don't. I think He knew exactly what was coming, and that's why He chose it.

He had been teaching crowds all day, so I'm sure that in His humanity He was tired. But I believe there was a purpose in His sleeping through the storm, and a lesson in it for His disciples and for us.

I believe this was a test. Scripture doesn't use that word in this passage, so take that as my interpretation. But in another story, John tells us plainly that Jesus asked Philip a question "to test him" (John 6:6), so testing His disciples was something He did.

Jesus got up. He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still" (Mark 4:39, LSB). And it became perfectly calm.

Notice how He responds. No panic. No "What are we going to do?" He simply gets up, takes in the situation, sees the fear in His disciples, and tells the storm to settle down.

Then He asked them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" (Mark 4:40, LSB).

That one stings a bit, doesn't it? It does for me.

Picture the disciples' faces in that moment. Storms don't stop like that. Even after the wind dies down, the waves usually keep rolling for hours. Anyone who lives near the water knows that. Yet Mark says the sea became perfectly calm.

That calm may have been just as frightening as the storm itself. In fact, Mark tells us that afterward they "became very much afraid" (Mark 4:41, LSB).

They ask each other, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?" (Mark 4:41, LSB).

These men had left their nets to follow Him. They had watched Him heal the sick. Andrew had already told his brother they'd found the Messiah (John 1:41). And still, on that boat, they were discovering that He was far more than they had grasped.

But notice something else. They never answer Jesus's questions. They talk to each other instead.

So in the middle of whatever storm you're facing, why are you afraid?

I understand our fears. Fear is part of being human. But it's worth asking why.

David wrote in Psalm 23, "I fear no evil, for You are with me" (Psalm 23:4, LSB). His reason for not fearing was simple. God was with him.

On that boat, God in the flesh was with the disciples, and they were still afraid.

So don't be alarmed, and don't be ashamed, when you struggle with fear in the middle of your storm. You're in good company.

But I'll leave you with the follow-up question Jesus asked. "Do you still have no faith?"

I think much of our fear comes from that same place. Matthew's account of this storm records Jesus calling them "you men of little faith" (Matthew 8:26, LSB). Later, when Peter began to sink while walking on the water, Jesus asked him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Matthew 14:31, LSB).

I know this can feel condemning. I'm not a fire-and-brimstone preacher. I'm a man traveling this road with you, facing the same kinds of storms, wanting my faith to grow and wanting to trust more in the One who loves me and has called me by name (Isaiah 43:1).

Knowing who Jesus is doesn't always stop us from fearing the storm, even with Him right there in the boat.

What Jesus Said to the Wind

The mother in the song meant well. Her words helped a frightened child fall back asleep.

But the boy grew up, and one day those words weren't enough.

Jesus offers something stronger. He took that storm seriously enough to speak to it. The waves were real. The water filling the boat was real.

And the One who spoke to that storm is the same One who sits in the boat with you in yours.

Do you trust Him enough to believe that even when He allows the storm to rage, He is still with you?

When the Storm Doesn't Stop

Here's the hard part. Jesus does not calm every storm the way He calmed that one.

He never promised He would. In fact, He told His disciples to expect trouble. "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33, NIV).

You may need to ride the storm out. You may need to wait a season for it to pass, and that season might be longer, much longer, than you ever hoped.

But God has promised, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5, LSB).

I think many of us in the West misunderstand what forsaking means. We assume that unless Jesus steps in and fixes every struggle, He must have abandoned us.

He hasn't. And He never will, even when we have to weather the storm.

So what will you believe today? Will you believe the lie the storm tells you, and let fear overwhelm you? Or will you take His hand and trust Him, even while the wind is still blowing?

He offers peace inside the storm, before it ever ends.

The Morning After

Hurricane Isaias passed eventually, and we all went to bed.

The next morning I went outside to assess the damage. We were fortunate. The house had no major damage.

Others in our neighborhood weren't as fortunate.

One side of our fence was gone, and branches covered the yard. I spent time helping neighbors, and we cut down a couple of trees the wind had bent over.

The storm was real. The damage was real.

And the morning still came.

Whatever storm is blowing through your life right now, remember what Jesus said before the boat ever left the shore.

"Let us go over to the other side."

He intended to get them there. And He was in the boat the whole way.

You are on a similar journey, maybe one you set out on or maybe one that God has set you out on, either way He is with you – even when the storms of life rage.

For Further Study

The full account appears in three Gospels: Mark 4:35–41, Matthew 8:23–27, and Luke 8:22–25. Read all three and notice the details each writer includes.

Hebrews 13:5 quotes God's promise from Deuteronomy 31:6. Read the original context, where Moses is preparing Israel to face an uncertain future without him.

Check the sources. Read the passages for yourself. Be a Berean.

If you're struggling:

- Christian Faith-Based Resources: <https://mentalhealthhotline.org/christian-faith-resources/> or call 1-866-903-3787 (24/7)
- The Hope Line: <http://thehopeline.com/> Chat with trained professionals for free 24/7.
- Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988 (call or text)

You matter. Whatever storm you're in tonight, you don't have to ride it out alone. Please stay.

William James Meyer is the author of Do You Live in a Castle? Breaking Free from the Walls That Hold You Hostage. He writes from a Christian perspective from the Gulf Coast of Florida, where he is still learning that the One who commands the wind is also the One who stays in the boat.

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