

VOICE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

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THE PLACE OF THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD TODAY

The church seems to be pictured as a wounded and non-effective part of our society by the world today. The fact is, the church is not wounded and is the most effective power that is keeping our world together. The world as described in the Bible means a system or the world's system, a way of thinking. The church is God's system and it sustains the world's system. If the church was removed from the world, the world would probably implode. The world system thinks that it is self-sustaining, independent, free from an outside source and is ruled by its own laws. We Christians believe and operate in the opposite. Because of our faith and trust in God, the world is allowed to operate in its system. The world wants everyone to think that the church is just a good historical thought brought forth from the past but that just isn't true. You and I are the link to God that allows this world to stand. We need to remember this and never be intimidated by the lies of Satan. The world must have us to exist and doesn't even know it. I'm proud to be part of that vital link, aren't you?

Pastor George Ferrington

THE SUPERNATURAL POWER OF A TRANSFORMED MIND "Putting the Will of God on Display" Where Storms Come From In Our Lives

The storms that appear in our lives, like miracles, can present terrific challenges and opportunities for us. They especially can slow or stop our opportunity to grow and mature in Christ. In order for the believer to deal with these storms they first must determine what kind of storm they are in and where it came from. As most of us know, some storms are sent by the devil, and these storms should provoke us to action by causing us to enter the "first response" mode of warfare. In Mark 4:35-41 we read of one such storm: **"On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, 'Let us cross over to the other side.' Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they woke Him and said to Him, 'Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?' Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace, be still!' And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, 'Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?' And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, 'Who can this be, that even**

the wind and the sea obey Him!” Here was a miracle waiting to happen. All the disciples had to do was to use the revelation they already had and require “the experience” of that revelation by using the “mind of Christ” which promotes “heaven’s reality.”

But there is another type of storm that shows up in our lives, and it is there for a purpose, and we don’t want to miss that purpose. These storms are allowed by God as told in Jonah 1:4-6: **“But the Lord sent out a great wind upon the sea, and there was a violent tempest on the sea so that the ship was about to be broken. V5, Then the mariners were afraid, and each man cried to his god; and they cast the goods that were in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone down into the inner part of the ship and had lain down and was fast asleep. V6, So the captain came and said to him, What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call upon your God! Perhaps your God will give a thought to us so that we shall not perish.”** It’s important that you remember what I stated—these types of storms are sent to show us we’re going in the wrong direction. The sailors on the ship knew in their hearts that there was a reason for this storm and they asked Jonah in verse 8: **“Then they said to him, Tell us, we pray you, on whose account has this evil come upon us?”** Jonah answered them and said in verse 9: **“And he said to them, I am a Hebrew, and I [reverently] fear and worship the Lord, the God of heaven, Who made the sea and the dry land.”** The men answered him in verse 10: **“Then the men were exceedingly afraid and said to him, What is this that you have done? For the men knew that he fled from being in the presence of the Lord [as His prophet and servant] because he had told them.”** Verse 11-15 tells us how that they did everything possible to spare Jonah’s life and not cast him overboard, but even though they rowed hard to bring the ship to the land they could not, so they cast him overboard. The Bible then tells us that the sea ceased from its raging and in verse 16 we are told the final result, **“Then the men [reverently and worshipfully] feared the Lord exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.”**

The above Bible story brings us to a question—are there storms that God allows in order to straighten our course in order that men may praise His greatness? In order to answer that we will need to look at Psalm 107:21-29 and see what the Word of God says about this: **“Oh, that men would praise [and confess to] the Lord for His goodness and loving kindness and His wonderful works to the children of men! V22, And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving and rehearse His deeds with shouts of joy and singing! V23, Some go down to the sea and travel over it in ships to do business in great waters; V24, These see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep. V25, For He commands and raises up the stormy wind, which lifts us the waves of the sea. V26, [Those aboard] mount up to the heavens, they go down again to the deeps; their courage melts away because of their plight, V27, they reel to and fro and stagger like a drunken man and are at their wits’ end [all their wisdom has come to nothing]. V28, Then they cry to the Lord in their trouble, and He brings them out of their distresses. V29, He hushes the storm to a calm and to a gentle whisper, so that the waves of the sea are still.”** The result of such a storm will hopefully be a repentant heart that cries out to the Lord and a heart that will refuse to trust its own wisdom any longer. Remember, the Word said in verses 30-31, **“Then the men are glad because of the calm, and He brings them to their desired haven. V31, Oh, that men would praise [and confess to] the Lord for His goodness and loving kindness and His wonderful works to the children of men!”**

This concludes this month’s lesson, but we will continue next month with the conclusion. We

will look at how each storm involved a situation where a man was sleeping in the boat, one because of depression and a way of escaping his unpleasant reality, the other because He was on this earth, but living in the Kingdom of Heaven, and in the Kingdom there are no storms. Until then, may God bless each of you and yours, may His mercy and grace be a part of our lives.

Gene R. Brown, Associate Pastor

FROM YOUR MISSIONARY SISTER

I just want to let you all know that I am getting ready for another journey with our Lord. He sure has made my life amazing as He takes me all over this world to share His love. It is sometimes very hard for me to believe all of the things the Lord has done in my life. He truly is an awesome God. You know, I have been able to share His love on every continent in this big world but Antarctica. That is nothing less than a miracle in itself. I am just a country girl. I know that I am nothing without Him, but I can do all things with Him. He has taken this shy person who would never speak in a crowd and given me confidence in Him to speak before thousands and not be afraid. He says in His Word that all things are possible to them that believe and He has proven it to me over and over again.

He has a plan for each of us. He tells us in His Word. Lots of times we have a different plan for ourselves and try to fulfill it. I can tell you from experience, following your plan and trying to get God to do what you want can cause a lot of stress. His Word says, "My burden is light and My yoke is easy." He showed me myself with a chain over my back. I asked Him, "What am I doing?" He showed me the chain was hooked to His throne and I was saying "Come on God, let's go this way," pulling as hard as I could pull. He spoke these words to me, "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. My burden is light and My yoke is easy. Cast your cares upon Me for I care for you but you must leave them with Me and trust Me. Do not take the cares back upon yourself, trust Me." He then taught me to be able to trust Him I had to know Him and to know Him, I must spend time with Him. I spent all of the time I could with Him and now I can say, I know Him and I trust Him with all that I am. He is an awesome God.

In 1986, God put me with Rick Bonfim ministries. My first mission trip was to Brazil. We were going to finish the parking lot in a church. We would do concrete work during the day and have services at night. I had no idea that I would have to speak. The first night Rick called me to testify. I said no, but he would not take no for an answer. He came and took me by the hand and led me to the pulpit. My knees were knocking as I trembled with fear. I had never spoken before a crowd in my life. Rick prayed for me and God's peace flooded my soul. That was the beginning of ministry in my life. God has a path prepared for us and when we get on that path, wow! can things happen.

In 2005, God led me to Alaska to meet Ms. Mary Adams. He had put me on His path that He had planned for me once again. Ms. Mary has been traveling the world since 1986 also. She asked me to travel with her on her next trip and I agreed. We both knew it was a God appointed meeting. We left in February 2006 going to Malaysia, India, and Borneo. It was an awesome time in the Lord. We have been traveling together every year since. This will be our fifth trip this year and we are both expecting a great move of the Holy Spirit.

I have been calling Ms. Mary "Choo Choo" for quite some time. She says every time this will

be her last trip and I tell her, “No its not, you can do it. Come on Choo Choo. I know you can!” We have laughed about it many times as I tell her she is the engine that CAN! Now, she calls me Caboose. We have fun on the mission field. There are many times when the going gets tough, so the tough need to know that they are the engine that CAN! Our engines are fueled with the fire of the Holy Ghost and it never goes out! Praise the Lord! When we get tired and weary it is nice to know that we have the prayers of our friends and family to keep that fire stirred. You all will never know how much we appreciate your prayers.

I will be going to Alaska around the 15th of February. We will then leave for Malaysia, on to India, back to Malaysia and possibly Indonesia before we return home the middle of May. Please keep us in your prayers as we prepare to leave. There is a lot to be done before we leave. Thank you for your love and support of the ministry call on my life. Again I say thank you for your prayers, for they are truly cherished.

Much love to you all,
Your Missionary Sister, Bess Graham

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH, WE WILL HAVE A CHURCH WIDE FELLOWSHIP SUPPER AT ABOUT 5:00 to 5:30 IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL. FRIED FISH WILL BE THE ENTREE AND EVERYONE IS ASKED TO BRING SLAW, GREEN SALAD, POTATO SALAD, DESSERTS, ETC. WHATEVER YOU THINK IS APPROPRIATE. EVERYONE IS INVITED AND WELCOME. THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO VISIT WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY.

MAY GOD RICHLY BLESS AND KEEP US ALL!!!

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U R LOVED!!!