

When our cradle rocks

Mark 4:35-41

INTRO. By way of introduction I want to think on God's plan for those times when the cradle rocks and the bough breaks, and it is this,

From God's standpoint, when the bough breaks and the cradle falls, it falls right into the hand of the ever watching, ever caring, ever loving God. I would like to think about fear, fear when the storms come, our cradle rocks, and the bough creaks. I want to begin by looking at

I. Sources of our storms The things that feed our fear,

The things that rock the cradle of our lives and threatens to break the very bough we are resting on. Here are a few storms of life: Death of a loved one, Sickness of a loved one, Loss of our means of support, Fear of being left alone, Serious auto accidents, Airplane crashes, Cancer, Being shot, Being beaten, Being stabbed, Molestation, Wars, Road rage, Inability to pay bills, High gas prices

Pretty good list wouldn't you say. Have any of these rocked your cradle lately?

II. Our general responses to those storms.

The fishermen in the boat there in Mark 4 panicked. They were in a tizzy, and to them, the fact that Jesus was sleeping didn't give them a fuzzy feeling that he really cared about what they were facing.

How many times do we panic when it seems to us like Jesus is sleeping instead of helping us RIGHT NOW? Their faith sank quicker than the ship ever would. How fast does our faith sink when the wind starts? We see and think the worst, first and fast, don't we??

They saw the waves but they actually forgot the wave maker's ability. Much like Peter in Mt. 14: 29-32 And He said, "Come!" And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But seeing the wind, he became afraid, and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind stopped.

It's easy to forget that the Lord is still in charge even when bad things happen. In the first case they saw the waves, in the second, Peter saw the wind but in both cases Jesus was still in control

It's easy to forget Jesus when the winds of fast and sudden change sweep over us and the resulting waves make us seasick.

That is what happens when we get wound up in our self and self interest. We forget that there is a bigger world than our personal one, and that bigger world has a Creator who can speak peace and keep us from being sea sick on the journey.

III. God's reasons for the storms

A. Sometimes it is to test our faith.

Someone noted that, a faith that fizzles before the finish was faulty from the first. Sometimes God allows the storm so he can see, and help us to see, if our faith is all we think it is or if it needs a tune-up.

B. Sometimes it is to tensile us

Tensile means capable of being shaped or bent or drawn out. For us to be stretched, we need to be taken out of our comfort zone and that happens when the storms hit.

C. Sometimes it is to temper us

Temper means to toughen, whereas tensile means to stretch. The temper of an item, is its ability to absorb considerable energy before cracking. God tempers us for possibly bigger situations, by rocking our cradle with many minor trials so that we will be ready for the bigger trials of life. God doesn't want us to break *when the bough breaks*, but he does want us to stretch and adapt to our changing world.

IV. How Jesus handles the storms in our lives.

We know He has the power to stop them, but if that doesn't happen, then we have to trust him to make the storm a productive event *which is what he really wants*.

Question: So how does he go about this? I read where

A well known American internist and a growing body of medical specialist say, that 90% of the chronic patients they treat, that their illnesses started not with a cough or cold but with fear. Fear of losing a job, of old age, of money troubles, or of being exposed.

They went on to say that, sometimes the fear is nothing more than a superficial anxiety; sometimes it is so deep seated that the patient himself denies its existence.

But sooner or later these fears manifest themselves as "a clinical symptom." The patient begins a series of rounds, doctor to doctor, taking injections, hormones, tranquilizers and tonics in search of for relief.

So to help us, lets look at how He deals with our fear to help us. First

A. Sometimes Jesus calms the storms.

He who created the mountains of fear and problems can say to those mountains, "Move and be cast yonder in the sea," and they will obey Him.

B. Sometimes He picks us up out of the storm

A little boy who was fishing one day years ago. He saw one of the big beautiful Paddle Steamboats headed down the river and he immediately stood up and began yelling and waving, "Over here! Over here!" I want to ride."

An old man who was fishing near the boy on the bank tried to calm down the boy explaining that the big riverboat was much too important a ship to stop and give rides to little boys. Well, you can imagine the old man's surprise when the huge ship began crossing over to the riverside where the two were fishing.

When the boat edged to the riverbank and dropped it's gangplank the little boy climbed aboard. When he reached the pilot house on the ship the little boy called down to the elderly gentleman,

"Mister, I knew this ship would stop for me. The captain is my father!" The little boy knew his location - he knew where he stood in relation to the Captain and he could call the ship over fully expecting it to do so.

The next time a storm comes we can know that the captain is able and willing, to stop pick us up out of the storm or else calm it altogether. If that doesn't happen remember that sometimes

C. He lets the storms of life temper us

In His wisdom, Jesus will sometimes allow us to go through many storms. It is a test of faith. It is for our good, to refine our faith and give us overcoming faith.

In James 1:2-4, we read, "*Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance*

have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."

I Peter 1:6-7, we read, *"In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."*

Through difficulties come victories. The trials we face build our faith. They make us mature. The fact is, we all need certain storms in life. You see, without them, our faith would not mature and our lives would be incomplete.

D. He lets the storms stay on us till we blossom

The caterpillar must struggle His way out of the cocoon on his own. Sometimes there needs to be a great fish for a Jonah to come to his senses. This may be a trial to refine our faith, or it may be a chastening to bring us back to our senses. But remember, whatever it is, it is done because of the love of God for us.

E. Sometimes He lets the storms of life strain us.

Jesus wants our best. The gold is put into the fire because it is gold. There would be no use putting a rock there. The finer the diamond, the more the cuts in order that it may reflect light through numerous facets, and become thus more glorious.

If we are tried and chastened, it is because we are sons, not because we are illegitimate. Hebrews 12:8 says *But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.*

That word discipline here has the idea of teaching, not necessarily spanking. We are trained by going through a process not just thinking about a process or observing a process. Don't forget the old adage, experience is the best teacher.

The best way to learn to handle trials is to experience trials and learn through the hands on process, how to deal with them Remember, God is with us in the midst of the trial. Would He let your foot slip? Would He forsake one for whom Christ died?

To do so would be to forsake His own nature. The Scripture says, of God's love for us. *"I have loved thee with an everlasting love,"* Sometimes it's hard to believe, because trials cause us to think that Jesus leaves us alone.

It was like the little boy who came home from Sunday School and his father asked him what he had learned that day. "The teacher taught us about the children of Israel

escaping from Egypt," the little boy replied, "and when they came to the Red Sea they pumped up their inflatable boats so they could get away from Pharaoh's soldiers." "Now wait a minute," said Dad. "Is that really the way it happened?" The little boy replied, "If I told it the way she did, you'd never believe it!"

Yes, its hard to believe, but when trials come and our cradle rocks and it seems like Pharaoh's army is after us, but it is still true, God is still there and very much able to part the sea in front of us, or, if necessary, even provide inflatable boats so that we survive.

We can be encouraged in it all because, Hebrews 12:8 reminds us, *"suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope."*

"Suffering," whether it comes in the form of the storms of trials, troubles, pressures or problems can be productive. Problems in our life are meant to produce maturity not for our downfall or defeat We can learn from our losses much, much easier than we can learn from our successes.

We need to see that fear is the opposite of faith. Over and over we are commanded, "Fear not!" Isaiah 35:4a Say to those with anxious heart, "Take courage, fear not.

V. Things to remember

THE STORMS WILL COME!

THE STORMS WILL GO!

BUT

JESUS ALWAYS REMAINS

The next time the winds start to blow, and your cradle starts to rock violently and you think God has abandoned you, take heart from this final portion of scripture from

Isaiah 43:1 -3 But now, O Israel, the LORD who created you says: "Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through deep waters and great trouble, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

When the Christian stays his mind upon Christ, he develops a wonderful "Calm-plex" May you remember his plan for you the next time your cradle rocks from the storms of life.

In closing, maybe you are reading this and your cradle is rocking violently and you are afraid but you have never met the maker of the wind and the rough seas. You have no one to help you develop a "Calm-plex".

If you would like to meet Him and invite him into the cradle of your life just read the next few lines, and follow the directions. Then you will be able to say, let the wind blow because if my bough breaks and my cradle falls, it will fall right into the hand of the ever watching, ever caring, ever loving God.

Realize you are a sinner Romans 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God.
Romans 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Romans 6:23b and John 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the _____ day of _____ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: _____

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life.

You can reach us at lapeerchurch@gmail.com Subject line: (Salvation)