

# Jesus Speaks in the Storm

by Carter Conlon

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*This sermon emphasizes the heart of God towards His people, highlighting His power, compassion, and willingness to move mountains in response to honest prayers, even when faith may be lacking. It encourages believers to trust in God's goodness, power, and unwavering support, reminding them that God is for them and not against them. The message underscores the importance of knowing God's heart, believing in His ability to bring victory in every situation, and standing firm in faith despite challenges.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 8:23, 2 Kings 20:1, Mark 11:22, Daniel 11:32, Romans 8:31

**Topics:** "God's Compassion", "Trusting in His Power"

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## Description

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## Transcript

In general, God Almighty, we do ask today, Lord, that you would reveal to us something of your heart that will give us strength for the days that we're all going to now face. Oh God, let it be a day of miracles. Let it be a day where your name is brought to glory again, not in our strength, but in our weakness, that your power would be made known.

Your mercy would be made known so that all could look and say, tell me a reason for the hope that you have. So Father, thank you, God. I do pray that you'd give me the ability to speak this in a way that all who are listening online tonight, all who are here in the sanctuary could understand it.

Show us something of your heart. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Thank you so much, everybody. Thank you for those that are joining with us online from all over the world. We do believe, I do believe in my heart that we're entering perhaps one of the, one of the maybe greatest seasons in the history of the Christian church in this world.

Now, some of you look at me and say, like, on what basis are you going to be able to say that? You don't know my life. You don't know my situation. No, it's true.

I don't. Not in every case, but I do know the God that you serve. I do know that he is for you and not against you.

I do know that he has all power and all authority and that there's nothing come your, that has come your way that he has not conquered when he went to the cross and rose on the third day from the dead. He ever sits in heavenly places and he makes intercession for you. And I want to talk about, I want to talk about the fact that it's time to believe that God is for us.

It's time to put away the thoughts that God is against us, or God is somehow displeased in our weaknesses, and to finally understand that he is for us. Now, the Bible says that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Now, some people believe that the more scripture I learn, the more faith I will have.

There's, there is a measure of truth in that, but it's not when we learn scripture, when we come to the word of God, we're not just learning about what God can do, but we're learning more importantly who he is. And the fact that his heart is for us and not against us. All of his power is being displayed as we come to him with whatever struggles and trials we might have, whatever condition we find ourselves in.

In the gospel of Matthew chapter eight, I want to start there. And it's a season where the disciples in chapter eight, verse 23, followed him into a boat to cross over a sea. In verse 24 of Matthew chapter eight, it says, suddenly a great tempest, a storm arose on the sea so that the boat was covered with waves, but he was asleep.

Then his disciples came to him and woke him saying, Lord, save us, we're perishing. But he said to them, why are you fearful? Are you of little faith? Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea. And there was a great calm.

I believe in my heart that it stopped. Everything stopped to me. It wasn't a gradual calm.

It was from a storm that threatened to drown these men who were familiar with the sea. It was a storm bigger than they can handle. Just like maybe some of you here today, you feel like you're in a storm that's bigger than something you can handle.

And in the midst of this storm, he speaks to it and there's an, I believe, immediate calm. The sea was probably as calm as a paint of glass. A great calm, the scripture says.

So that the men marveled and saying, who can this be that even the winds and the sea obey him? I like another translation that says, what kind of a man is this that even the winds and the seas obey him? Now up to this point in their journey with him, they understood that he could heal. And most of the gospel of Matthew to the point of chapter eight is a teaching part of Matthew's recounting of the life of Christ. But in Matthew chapter eight, they saw him heal a leper.

They saw that he was willing to touch a man that nobody else in society was willing to touch and take his uncleanness upon himself and bring healing into his life. They saw that his word had power. The centurion came to him and said, my servant is sick.

And they saw that the word of Christ had power to travel to somebody's home and bring healing without him even being there. And they saw him heal Peter's mother who was sick with a fever, so much so that not just was she made well, but she was able to get up and serve those that were in her house. The

scripture goes on to tell us in the evening, people who were demon possessed were brought to him.

He cast out the spirits with just a word and healed all, not just some who were sick. Now he, they understood all of these things, but now he was going to take them to a whole new place. And in this new place, I believe we see something of the heart of God for you, for me, for all of humankind.

He got into the boat and a great storm arose and the disciples there, it was a prayer, but it wasn't much of a prayer. He looked like he was asleep. He wasn't, he was just completely at rest.

He is in charge of all things. Everything is under the word of his power. He was totally confident in the journey and was hoping they would become that way too.

Did you know that that's the way it is with you today? That Christ knows where you're going. He's got you in the palm of his hand. You might be in a storm and it looks like your boat is going to go down.

It looks like your mind is going to be overcome, but you won't be. And just like with the disciples, you're crying out, say, Lord, what is wrong with you? Do you not care? Another version of this, another gospel says, Lord, do you not care that we are perishing? We can end up with prayers like that. Say, God, do you not see my situation? Don't you know what I'm going through? Don't you know how hard my life has become and my situation is overpowering me? And so even in response, in response to what I don't consider a prayer of faith, it's almost like a veiled accusation.

Lord, Lord, where are you? What are you doing? In response, sometimes our prayers are like that, right? God, where are you? You know, it's not exactly a prayer of faith, but we at least acknowledge that we know that he exists and we know he's supposed to be in our lives. And it appears that he's asleep in our storm. It appears sometimes that he doesn't care, but we cry out and say, where are you? And he arises and says, why are you fearful? When did you stop believing that I had you in the palm of my hand? When did you stop believing that when I said to you, we're going to the other side, that we're going to go to the other side? How did you let this unbelief get a hold of your heart? But even then, in the midst of this, he stands and brings their understanding of him to a whole new place.

That he has not only power over demons and diseases and such like things, he has power over nature. He has power over the elements. And he stands and speaks to the wind, and it stops, and he speaks to the waves, and there's an immediate and a great calm.

What kind of a man is this, they said? What kind of a man is this? You know, suddenly, as we begin to study the scriptures, we start to understand something about the heart of God. He could have easily just got up and just simply rebuked them and gone back to sleep. But instead of just rebuking his disciples, he speaks to their storm and brings it to a close.

And in a sense, he's showing us that I'm not offended by your questions. I'm not offended by your struggles. I'm not going to draw back because even of your accusations against my faithfulness will not cause me to draw back from you.

And in the scriptures, we see something about the heart of the Son of God. What an amazing heart he has. If our friends accused us of the things that we accuse God of, we probably wouldn't have any friends left.

At a certain point, people would draw back. You're five minutes late. Don't you care? Where have you been? You know, if you lived like that in relationship with other people, they would just say, oh, enough of that.

I'm not hanging out with this person anymore. But not Jesus. But not Jesus.

He is touched with the feelings of our infirmities, the scripture says. And he tells us in our times of need that we can boldly come to the throne of God to find grace to help in our time of need. Boldly, not because we have it all together.

Boldly, not because we've done it all right or built this great resume of faith. Boldly, just because he is who he is. Just because he loves us.

Just because he's for us. Just because he understands our struggles and our trials. The scripture says he was touched in all points like as we are.

He went through all the tests in some degree that we go through, yet without sin. It wasn't his first miracle over nature. But in it, we see his heart for his disciples.

And that's what I want to convey today for whoever's out there online. And the best prayer you can muster is God, where are you? You know, sometimes he'll get up and do what he needs to do for you, just to show you that where he is. And especially in his heart towards you.

I'm going to go through this quickly, but in the book of 2 Kings, there was a king of Judah called Hezekiah. And a word was given him from a prophet of God that he was going to die. Prophet of God Isaiah said, set your house in order, you're going to die and you're not going to live.

But he turned his face toward the wall and he began to pray and said, God, I've walked before you in truth and with a loyal heart, and I've done what was good in your sight. Now that's not exactly totally honest. Nobody can make that boast.

Nobody can honestly say I've walked before you in truth. I mean, that's a pretty arrogant prayer in my opinion. We've all fallen short in somewhere in our lives, in our minds, in our hearts.

I've walked before you with a loyal heart and I've done what is good in your sight. Well, some of it maybe, but possibly not all of it. And he wept bitterly.

And his prayer was, God, let me live. God, let me live. And I know some who are in this age where you're going home for this season.

You've been traveling home and your prayer is, God, I want to live. I'm going into a storm. I'm going into a family situation.

I'm going into the holiday season that everybody says is supposed to be such a joyous time, but it's not joyous for me. It's not joyous in my heart. It's not joyous in my home.

I know I'm going into a storm. God, I'm going to need you. You're going to have to be there for me.

And this man Hezekiah, and he just said, God, I want to live. I want to live. And so even before Isaiah had left the outer court of that particular residence, the word of the Lord came to him and said, go back to him

and say these things.

I've heard your prayer. I've seen your tears and I'm going to heal you. And on the third day, you're going to go up again into the house of the Lord.

And I will add to your days 15 years and I will deliver you in the city from the hand of the king of Assyria. And I will even defend the city for my own sake and the sake of my servant, David. So not just am I going to let you live, I'm going to defend the city that you're in.

I'm going to fight for you. There's going to be victories that you didn't even pray about this, but I'm going to throw in an extra. It's like the bonus points in a contest.

You won the prize, but I'm going to give you this extra thing just in addition, because you turned to me. And now Hezekiah says something to Isaiah, which is very unusual. He says, what is the sign that the Lord will heal me? And I'll go up to the house of the Lord the third day.

Now God could have been offended at this. If God speaks to our heart, he doesn't have to give us a sign. If I was God, I would have said to Hezekiah, the sign is that you will be in the house of the Lord in three days and you'll be healed.

That should be good enough for you. But the fact, what we begin to see in the scriptures is the heart of God that is for us, the heart. He could easily be offended by the disciples in the boat who should have known at least in some measure by this point who he was, instead of saying what kind of a man is this.

And here is Hezekiah has been given a word from God. And in the midst of that word, he now seeks a sign that God's spoken the truth. I mean, that could be an offense to God.

You know, give me a sign that what you've said is true. And instead of being offended, the Lord speaks to Isaiah who speaks back to Hezekiah and says, do you want the shadow of the sundial to go forward 10 degrees or backwards 10 degrees? Now 10 degrees is 20 minutes. So in other words, do you want time to advance 20 minutes or do you want time to go backwards 20 minutes? And this is God responding to a prayer that's not a prayer of faith.

Do you understand this is not a prayer of faith. This is a, it's an honest prayer, but it doesn't have much faith in it. It's a, it's a prayer that seeks a sign from God.

This is where I, what I'm trying to convey to you is the heart of God is in the scripture. When you see his heart, it becomes so much easier to believe. You can't believe God until you know his heart.

Otherwise it becomes just a pile of scriptures that you're quoting back at him. But you can't believe in anybody until you know what their heart is towards you. And so here is the Lord saying back to this man who's just said, give me a sign.

And Hezekiah says, well, it's an easy thing for time to go forward because in 20 minutes it will be 20 minutes forward. Time just naturally progresses forward, but it's impossible for time to go backwards essentially. So he says, give me the sign of turning the sundial backwards.

In other words, turn time back for 20 minutes. Phenomenal. What God would do for a prayer that doesn't even have faith in it.

There's no, there's no faith in his prayer at this point. He's just saying, I want a sign. So God says, he says, it's an easy thing for time to go forward, but impossible for it to go backwards.

So if you turn time backwards 20 minutes, then I will, I will believe the word you said that I'm going to be healed. And the shadow of the sundial, the scripture says went back 10 degrees, which is 20 minutes. God turned time backwards for a prayer that didn't even have that much faith in it.

I want you to think about it. Think about his heart in doing that. Think about the kindness of God.

Think about the fact that he's for us and not against us. Think about, think about the largeness of the heart of God. And this is probably next to raising Lazarus from the dead and his own resurrection, probably one of the greatest miracles in all of the Bible.

Now, of course, you'll find it again in Joshua's battle as well, but to turn time backwards 20 minutes tells us a couple of things. Number one, Jesus Christ is the Lord of time. He doesn't dwell in time like we do.

We dwell in time. We're looking at the, he dwells in eternity, always has, always will dwell in eternity. That's why, thank God, he can go back into our past and heal it.

Isn't that amazing? He has our present in the palm of his hand and he's already in the future so we don't have to worry about when we get there. He's already there. He already knows what we're going to face.

He's already made provision for us. He's already planned to keep us. He's intertwined the very glory of his name in keeping us in all of our storms and all of our struggles.

He's not bound by time like we are. He's the Lord of all time. He can do anything he wants.

In that context, you begin to see him standing up in the boat and you start to understand who it was that was speaking to the wind, who was speaking to the waves. In order to, I did a little bit of reading and I read some comments by people who study astrophysics and such like things and essentially the universe is, at least our portion of the universe, moves in a divine order. You can't just turn one part of it back without turning the whole thing.

It's like my watch. If I were to pull out this little knob and if I were to turn the dial back 20 minutes, everything in the watch moves in one direction. Every little spring, every little wheel, every little intricate part moves in a certain direction.

If I turn it backwards, everything has to reverse and turn backwards with it. It can't keep going forward while the hands go backwards. And that's the way to describe this miracle that was done in the Old Testament by God himself, of course, who is also Christ as well.

And so that in order to do this, everything has to stop and move backwards. Now, the laws of gravity have to be suspended because once you stop the world moving in a certain direction, everything, if you stopped it, first of all, the oceans would overflow, all the land, we'd all be dead and drowned, the whole thing would be over. The law of gravity had to be suspended because we would be flung off the surface of the earth into space.

There would have been nobody left. I mean, you think of the things that God had to do to answer the prayer of a man who just said, give me a sign. What kind of a man is this? That even the wind and the seas obey him.

He's a man whose heart is for us. He's a man who will answer our prayers when our prayers seemingly fall short of the grand measure of faith that we think we should have. But he's never offended by an honest heart, never offended by an honest cry, never offended by you and I coming to him with our concerns and our needs and saying, God, I need you.

Even if our prayer has a veiled reference that you're asleep in the middle of my struggle or how can I believe that you're going to change my life? How can I believe you're going to use me for the future? How can I believe that you can take me and make something out of my life? And God says, well, let me make it clear for everybody who's ever going to pray that prayer. I'm just going to stop the universe and turn it back 20 minutes. I'll show you what I can do.

I'll show you the extent of my power, but even more than showing you my power, I'll show you my heart. I am for you, not against you. I am with you, not aloof from you.

I'm willing to take the journey with you through your life, through your storms, through your struggles, through your questions, through your trials. I will not abandon you in your struggle. I will not walk away when you have questions.

I will not walk away even when you accuse me of being unfaithful. Even when in your heart you determine I'm not able to change your situation, I still will not walk away from you. I will still be there.

I will still be God. I will still do the things I've determined to do. As we heard when Pastor Josiah got up today, that he has predestined us in Christ to be conformed to the image of the Son of God.

He has a divine purpose for each life. And we've said it from this pulpit before, and I've heard it preached all my life. He will move heaven and earth to answer you.

And I just showed you in the scriptures, he will move heaven and earth. He will stop the wind. He will calm the waves.

He will move back time if necessary. He will heal you in those areas where you think your life is never going to be whole again. He will give you calm in your present storm, and he will give you that peace that passes understanding about your future.

Praise be to God. Praise be to God. Praise be to God.

That's who this man is. I say it's time for us to believe that God is for us. Now let me finish with this thought.

It's in the context of the New Testament where Jesus says in Mark chapter 11 verse 22 to 24, have faith in God. Have faith in God. Not just faith in faith.

Have faith in God. Have faith in his goodness. Have faith in his heart.

Have faith in his power. Have faith in the fact that he is for you and not against you. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, be removed and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.

Therefore, I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. Whoever says to this mountain, whosoever, he doesn't say, for assuredly, I say to you,

people of magnanimous faith, people who have it all together, people who have no struggles, people who believe every every line of the Bible. It doesn't say that.

It just says whosoever. Whosoever. That's you.

That's me. That's the strong. That's the weak.

That's when we have it all together. That's when we have nothing together. That's when we're believing for the victory.

That's when we're thinking we're going to go down. We still have the power. We still have the ability to speak to the mountain.

Whatever that mountain is that that any of us are facing today, whatever that mountain is that we're going to face in the future, we still have the power to speak to that mountain. And in the name of the one who died for us, in the name of the one who stands with us, the name of in the one who will never leave us, nor forsake us, we can speak to this mountain. We're just simply moving in unison with the heart of God now.

It's not our faith that moves the mountain. It's God who moves the mountain. It's our confidence that he is for us that makes the difference.

We can speak to the mountain. You will not overcome me again. You will not stand in my way of the things that God has determined my life to be and to do through my life.

You will not cause me to believe that I can never get up again or never see victory again or never go forward again. I speak to the mountain. I speak to it in the name of the one who died for me and loves me with an everlasting love.

The one who can reverse time. The one who can calm the seas. The one who can speak to the winds.

The one who can open every prison door, heal every bruised heart, and give sight to every blinded eye. In the name of Jesus, I speak to this mountain. It's time to believe that God is for us.

It's time. Praise be to God. The prophet Daniel talks about the peril and the upheaval that's going to accompany the last days, but it also says something in Daniel.

He says that those who know their God will be strong and do exploits. Those who know their God, those who know the heart of their God, those who understand what he was trying to convey to us about himself in the scriptures. Praise be to God.

I don't know about you, but I'm going to speak to every mountain that stands in my way, whether it's in my own heart or something we face in the future. I'm going to speak to the mountains that stand between those that are listening online and the living God who loves you and died. I'm going to speak to that mountain and command it to be moved so that you can hear just as Jesus said of the stone of Lazarus' tomb, move that stone.

I'm going to speak to that mountain that stands between you and the voice of God trying to get you to believe that you have no hope for your future. That is a lie. God is for you.

God is with you. God is wanting to raise you. God is wanting to give you strength.

Jesus came for that reason. You can have a new life. You can have a purposeful life.

You can have a life that has peace no matter what kind of storms all of us are going to face in this coming time that we're going into by the grace of almighty God, by the grace of almighty God. My brother, my sister listening around the world tonight, I want to encourage you. Have the courage to stand up and just say God is for me.

God is for me. The apostle Paul said it this way. If God is for us, who can be against us? God is for me.

You got to get that so deep in your heart. God is not sitting in heaven looking at your struggles and your flaws and your trials and difficulties shaking his head going, oh, it's too bad. I had such hope for so-and-so.

No, no. He knew us in our weakness. That's why he came.

He knew we could never get to where we need to go in our own strength. That's why he came. He is for us.

He is for you. He's not against you. Just simply believe in your heart that Jesus Christ died for you because he loves you, died to break down that wall that separated you from all that God has for you, not just in time but for eternity and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord in the full forgiveness of all the wrongs that you've done that built up a barrier between you and God and begin to walk with him.

Decide to walk with him for the rest of your days. You're going to be amazed what God's going to do. I speak to you tonight as somebody who has lived a great measure of this.

I've seen what God can do. I've walked with him. I've talked with him.

I've let him reveal his heart to me. By God's grace, he eventually reveals his heart through us as his people. Father, tonight, I thank you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the people that you are speaking to.

Lord, I feel bad that we went through a season where we knew all about you, but we didn't know you as a nation, as a people. So many, Lord, to just pile scripture, but don't really see your heart in the midst of it. I just want to thank you for revealing something of your heart to us tonight.

As we go into 2023, God, give us the grace to believe. Give us the grace to believe that these mountains, these storms, these trials, these difficulties, these questions can be overcome by the mercy and the power of a great God. Jesus Christ, we love you.

We thank you with all of our heart for loving us, and we give you the praise and give you the glory in your precious name. Amen. We're going to go to the communion table just in a moment, and as we prepare to do that, I want to encourage you to get some bread and some juice in your home.

We're going to celebrate the victory of Christ on the cross for you, and then we're going to pray together. We're going to believe that this coming year will be the beginning of a victorious season in your life, victorious time. Nobody has to go backwards.

All of us in Christ are going to go forward. We're going to see the victory won. God bless you.

I'll see you in just a moment.

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