

## Faith in the storm

copyright@gcromeaugust2020

This is the second message of my *'in the storm series'*, the first focussing on 'peace in the storm'. Philippians 4:6,7 says do not be anxious about anything, but pray with thanksgiving...and the peace of God that passes all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Even though storms rage on the outside, we can still the storm on the inside through prayer.

**Matthew 8:23 -27** – read. He replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” (v26).

Jesus rebukes the disciples for their lack of faith. In fact, as we read the Gospels, we see that Jesus always responds to people's faith or lack thereof. E.g. The Centurion (8:10) 'I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith'. (8: 13) 'Go, it will be done just as you believed it would' The Centurion believed that if Jesus just said the word, his servant would be healed.

In our storms, it is critical that we exercise faith in God and His Word. Why?

And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. (Hebrews 11:6 NLT)

We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised. (Hebrews 6:12 NIV)

1. God is! GOD IS! He exists and He is willing and more than able to help.
2. Faith pleases and honours God. Unbelief denies Him.
3. It is through our faith in God and His Word that we inherit (receive) the promises made to us.

### How to build your faith?

#### 1. Meditate on God's Word.

'So, then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God'. (Romans 10:17 KJV).

#### 2. Change your confession.

In the boat the disciple's confession was, "We're going to drown". And yet, Jesus had already said to them they were going to the other side (Mark 4:35). It is critical to align what we believe and say with the Word of God. This applies to our spoken word, but also to our internal monologue. Did you know your favourite preacher is.....you! We speak and preach to ourselves all the time. But what are we preaching? Unbelief or faith in God and His Word? What is our confession in the storm? 'Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;)' (Heb 10:13).

Examples of confessing the Word in the storm.....

It is important to speak out what God says in His Word and pray it out too. Paul did:

'He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us', (2 Corinthians 1:10 NIV). Paul is paraphrasing Psalm 34:19, 'Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all'.

#### 3. Give thanks in the Storm.

Corrie ten Boom shared a testimony from her time in a Nazi concentration camp during WW2. The accommodation was appalling, cramped, filthy, stinking, and with flea infested beds. Her sister Betsie encouraged her to remain thankful to God amid their suffering, instructing her to even be thankful for the fleas. The fleas! Really? They later discovered the reason one of the most brutal guards never came into their dormitory to implement his cruel trade. The fleas! (E. Metaxas, *Seven men, Seven women*, Nelson 2016)

Giving thanks helps to build our trust and faith in God and His providential care for us – even in suffering.

Giving thanks refocuses our attention on God who desires to help.

Giving thanks changes our perspective. *Two men looked out from the prison bars. One saw the mud, one saw stars*

Giving thanks deals with selfish motives and pride. What good we have does not come from ourselves.

Giving thanks and praise is the highway of faith. It is hard to remain in unbelief when you're praising God. \*\*Paul and Silas in prison (Acts 16:16ff). *Imagine if those guys in the boat did the same?*

So, there are ways we can build faith. In closing let me say that if we practice these things before the storm, we will be able to overcome in the storm and see the working and deliverance of God.