**FOCUS** in 2020

December 20, 2020

Dr. Jerry Edmonson, *Lead Pastor*

**GOD WITH US**

***In the Storms*** *–*Acts 27:20–25



**2020 was a record breaking year for storms** – financial storms, political storms, racial storms, cultural storms, medical storms and even physical storms. 2020 will go down in history for all of its storms. When it comes to physical storms –

**After six long months and 30 storms from Arthur to Iota,** the record-shattering 2020 Atlantic hurricane season ended on Monday November 30th. Of the 30 storms, **12 hit U.S. shores**, another record number. The previous record was **9**, set way back in 1916.

Never let the presence of a **storm** cause you to **doubt** the presence of God.

*Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall* ***call his name Immanuel****” (which means,* ***God with us****).* Matthew 1:23

*When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest lay on us,* ***all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned****.* Acts 27:20

Storms have a way of **robbing** you of hope.

Some storms are because sometimes we are **stupid**.

I know that is a terrible thing to say and I am putting myself right there with you. But the fact is ... some of the stuff we do is ignorant, brainless, and foolish at best.

*Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, “****Men, you should have listened to me*** *and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss.* Acts 27:20–25

*saying, “Sirs,* ***I perceive*** *that* ***the voyage will be with injury and much loss****, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives.” But the centurion paid more attention to the pilot and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul said.* Acts 27:10–11

*Yet now I* ***urge you to take heart****, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For this very night there* ***stood before me*** *an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, and he said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.’* Acts 27:20–24

There is not a **storm** in your life that can stop God from **saving** you.

*So* ***take heart****, men, for* ***I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told.*** Acts 27:25

***I have set the Lord always before me****; because he is at my right hand,* ***I shall not be shaken****.* Psalm 16:8

There is another story found in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke where Jesus is with the disciples … Look at Mark 4

*On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. And* ***a great windstorm arose****, and* ***the waves were breaking into the boat****, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, “****Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?****” And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “****Peace! Be still****!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, “****Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?****” And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”* Mark 4:35–41

In the presence of a storm, your **fear** can become **peace** in the presence of the Lord.

*God is our refuge and strength,* ***a very present help in trouble****. Therefore* ***we will not fear*** *though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.* *Selah* Psalm 46:1–3

Peace is not found in the **absence** of a storm. Peace is found in the presence of **Jesus**.

*I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”* John 16:33

There is a **purpose** in the storm.

*At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them! But* ***the Lord stood by me*** *and* ***strengthened me****,* ***so that*** *through me* ***the message might be fully proclaimed*** *and* ***all the Gentiles might hear it****. So I was rescued from the lion’s mouth.* 2 Timothy 4:16–17

**Remember what Jesus says …**

The storm will **not** take you down.

*What then shall we say to these things****? If God is for us, who can be against us?***Romans 8:31

***Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?*** *Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?* Romans 8:35

*No, in all these things* ***we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.*** *For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,* ***will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord****.* Romans 8:37–39

I am **with** you.

*Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “****I will never leave you nor forsake you.****” So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”* Hebrews 13:5–6

I will give you **peace**.

***Peace I leave with you****; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.* John 14:27

If you are in a storm right now and need peace, cry out to Jesus and let Him speak to your storm.