

ABOUT THIS STUDY

Experience can be a good teacher. The disciples experienced Jesus and His power and His miracles daily. The disciples had seen His power over wind and waves (nature), they had seen Jesus feed thousands of people from practically nothing, they had seen all sorts of miracles.

Our experiences of God can help us face the storms of life which come in many different shapes and sizes; ill health/serious illness, bereavement, breakdown of relationships, work problems, financial problems, family difficulties, etc. and sometimes storms are a combination of these things.

Sometimes in the midst of these storms we cannot see clearly or understand what is going on, but we can know and trust that God is there with us. When we cry out to Him, He comes to us in the storm - He is in the back of the boat with us; all we need to do is trust Him and ride out the storm.

In the midst of the storm, we need to stay focused on Jesus - don't look at the wind and the waves. Whenever we take our eyes off Jesus and put them back on our problems, on the storm or even on ourselves - we will begin to sink.

Trust God -

He is all knowing (omniscient)

He is all powerful (omnipotent) and

He is all present - everywhere present (omnipresent).



Facing the Storms

Bev Beeson

INTRO.

The story of the storm on the lake can be found in three of the Gospels in the New Testament (the second half of The Bible).

Matthew Chapter 8 verses 23-27

Mark Chapter 4 verses 35-41

Luke chapter 8 verses 22-25

The workload in this study is meant to be relatively light and easy - there is only one question per day. This is to give you time to read the question in the morning then reflect on it **all day long**, allowing for deeper reflection, insight and answers.

This will also allow for more depth and hopefully more learning and blessing.

The enclosed post it notes are for you to write down the daily question and take it with you to work or put it up where you will see it regularly during the day - this will allow you to keep thinking about it.

This study is meant to be done by individuals who are committed to meeting weekly for 5 weeks in a group setting. The greatest value will come from meeting weekly and sharing **with one another**.



Bev Beeson

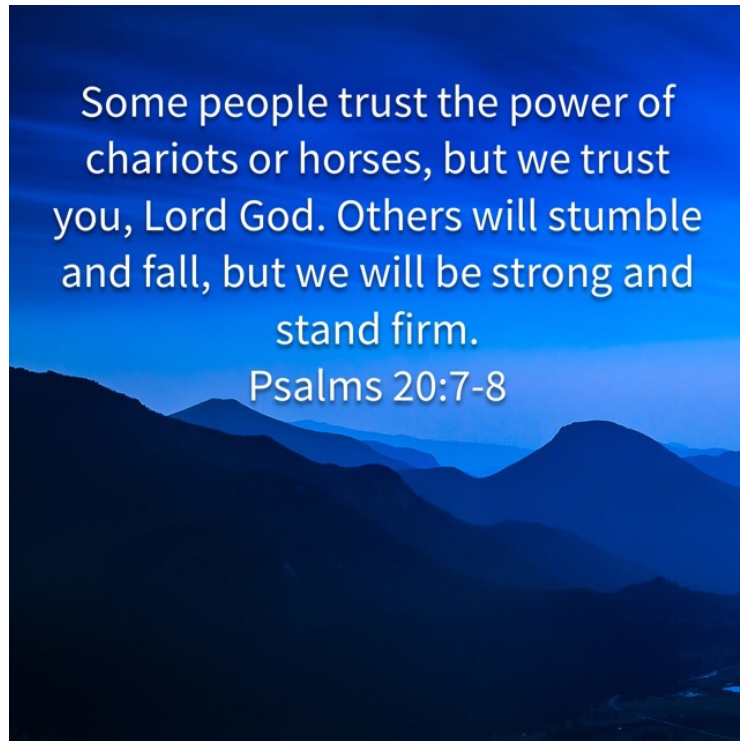
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I am currently in my 23rd year of full time ministry with The Salvation Army. Throughout my life I have faced many storms and have survived them and come through them stronger because of the presence and power of our awesome and mighty God.

My prayer is that this study will help you see how Jesus has been with you in the storms you have faced and also that you can trust Him to be with you in the storms you are currently facing or are yet to face.

Thanks to some dear friends; Carolyn, Lyn, Perri, Sherry, Suzanne and Violet for their help in trialling and editing this study. God gives us people in our lives that journey with us and encourage us along the way. I give thanks to God for these friends that have been a part of this journey with me.

May God bless you each as you look to Him and stay focussed on Him no matter the weather around you.



Some people trust the power of
chariots or horses, but we trust
you, Lord God. Others will stumble
and fall, but we will be strong and
stand firm.

Psalms 20:7-8

Further notes or insights.

Week One

Mark 4: *“Suddenly a storm struck the lake. Waves started splashing into the boat, and it was about to sink. Jesus was in the back of the boat with his head on a pillow, and he was asleep. His disciples woke him and said, “Teacher, don’t you care that we’re about to drown?””*

Mark 4:37-38 CEVUS06

Day 1. Read the story from Marks version in Chapter 4: 35-41. What jumps out at you in this passage?

Day 2. Mark is the only version containing the word 'sink'. There are many things that can cause us to feel like we are sinking. What gives you that sinking feeling?

Day 3. The disciples were obviously in great fear and so they woke Jesus. Do you feel at times that you need to wake God up - that He does not know what is going on with you? Or do you feel that God is **omniscient** (knows everything), and therefore knows exactly what you are going through?

Day 4. In Mark's version we find the word 'teacher'.
"Teacher", they said to Him, "don't you care that we are about to drown?"
Jesus was their rabbi, their teacher, what is He to you?

Day 5. All of life can be a learning experience. What do you think that 'the teacher' (Jesus) taught his disciples or was about to teach his disciples on this occasion?

Day 6. What can Jesus teach you/us from this story?

Day 7. Do you notice when others may be sinking or drowning? Are you a person who wants to remain asleep in the back of the boat (not get involved) or do you offer your presence and your help to others in a storm?

Day 6. In this story it is not recorded at all that the disciples were terrified by the actual storm, only by what they thought they saw - a ghost coming towards them. In the midst of a storm our vision/focus can be blurred and we may miss seeing something. Sometimes God sends other people to us to be His hands, His feet, His voice..... Can you recall this happening to you?

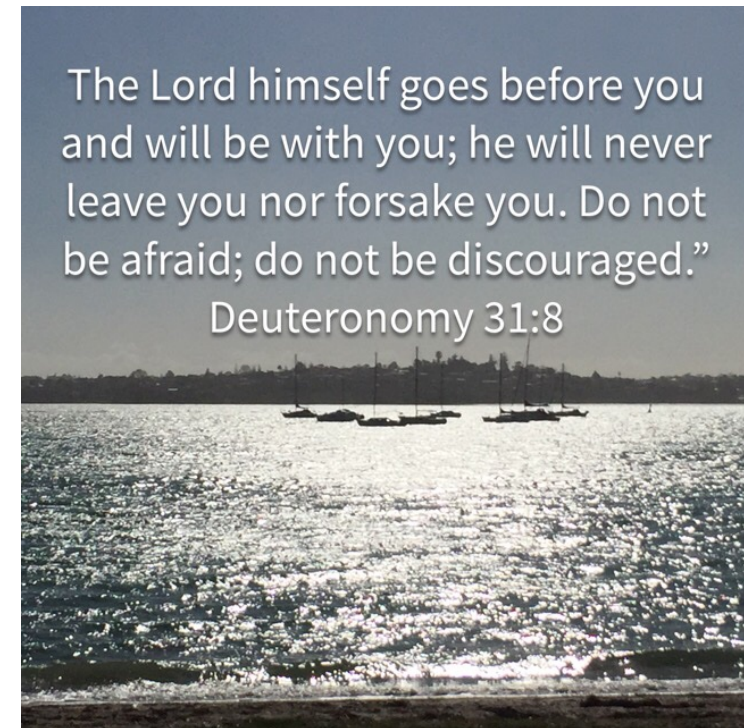
Day 7. Our greatest weapons in a storm are not umbrellas - in fact, umbrellas can be pretty useless in a storm. Next time a storm hits, how will your past experiences of God's power and presence or what you have learnt in this study, help you face the storm?

Day 3. Read the account in John 6: 16-21. It is recorded here that Jesus said to them..... "I am Jesus. Do not be afraid."

Today your challenge is to keep repeating this phrase over and over; "You are God and I will not be afraid of.....(fill in what fits for you).....!"

Day 4. The disciples in this story were doing what Jesus had told them to do - they were in the right place at the right time - being obedient and yet they still found themselves in the midst of a storm. Why do you think this happens?

Day 5. In the previous storm Jesus had been in the boat with them - now He was watching them from the sidelines. Why do you think this was?



For your extra notes, insights, questions.

Week Two

Matthew 8:23-24 (NIV)

Then Jesus got into the boat and his disciples followed him. Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping.

When Jesus and his disciples put out into the lake, it seems as though all was calm. However, as recorded in all three gospels, a furious storm **SUDDENLY** arose. Life can be just like that. Everything can seem fine one moment and then all of a sudden a storm arises.

Day 1. Read the all of the story from Matthew 8: 23-27. Reflect on the story throughout the day. What has struck you in this story?

Day 2. Can you recall a time when life was like this for you, when all seemed calm and then a storm suddenly arose?

Day 3. As you recall past storm/s in your life, can you remember the feelings you experienced during these times?

(NOTE: If recalling these feelings is hard for you - you may need to seek some further help.)

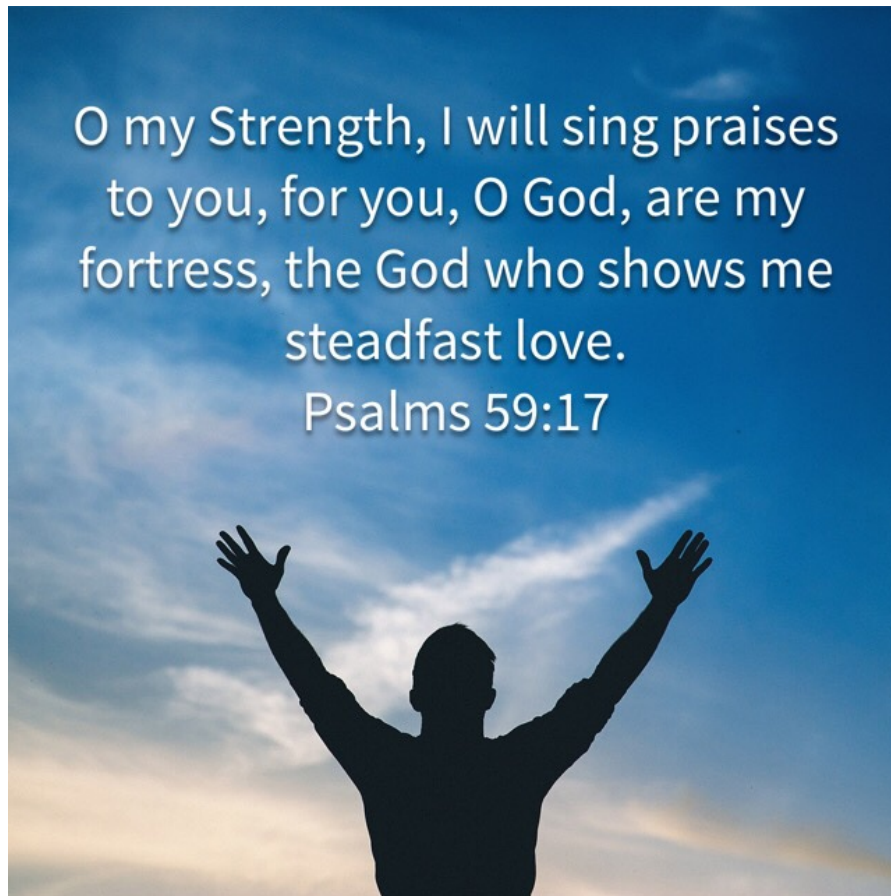
Week Five

Just a few Chapters later in Matthew 14: 22-36, Mark 6: 45-52 and John 6: 16-21 there is another recorded story of a storm. This time, Jesus is not in the boat with the Disciples, He has made them get into a boat to cross to Bethsaida on the other side of the lake, ahead of Him.

Interestingly this story happens just after they have witnessed Jesus perform a wonderful miracle - feeding thousands of people with just 5 small loaves and 2 small fish.

Day 1. Read the account in Mark 6: 45-52. Verse 48 tells us that Jesus could see the disciples struggling hard and so He made his way to them. However, they failed to recognize him and thought He was a ghost. Can you recall a time in the midst of a storm when Jesus came to you and you failed to recognize him?

Day 2. Read the account in Matthew 14: 22-36. In this story we see Peter get out of the boat and walk on the water towards Jesus, however Peter takes his eyes off Jesus and looks at the storm raging around him and he begins to sink. What does this say to you?



Further questions, notes or insights.

Day 4. What questions arose for you during this time? (Why me? Why now? Where are you God?)

Day 5. The Bible records that the waves swept over the boat. Can you relate to this feeling of waves sweeping over you, being overwhelmed or even drowning?

Day 6. Jesus was in the back of the boat, sleeping, he was present, in the midst of the storm, with the disciples. Have you sensed God's presence with you during your storm/s?

Day 7. During your storm/s did it seem as though God was present but asleep? Can you recall a time when you did feel that God was asleep and not caring about, or not aware of, the storm you were facing?



For your extra notes, insights or questions.

Day 4. What has Jesus, 'the teacher', taught you from this story?

Day 5. Sometimes God will calm the storm and sometimes God calms us while the storm still rages around us. When the next storm hits, and there will be another storm, how will you choose to handle it?

Day 6. Look this song up on the Internet; ***Praise You In The Storm by Casting Crowns***. (You could even download it to your device and print out the lyrics as well - focus on it as much as you can during the day).

Great song, great lyrics. Do you feel that you can now praise God in the midst of your next storm or is there something you are still struggling with?

Day 7. We can praise God in both good and bad times, what are some other things that may help you to face the next storm that hits?

Week Four

Mark 4: “He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!””

Mark 4:40-41 NIV

Day 1. Read Marks version of the story again. Jesus asked His disciples several questions. Why are you so afraid, was the first question He asked them. Imagine Jesus standing in front of you, and asking you; "what are you afraid of?" Record your answer/s here.

Day 2. Do you still have no faith, was the second question recorded in Mark. In what areas of your life does your faith fall short or do you feel it might be lacking?

Day 3. Then the disciples asked themselves a question, "Who is this, even the wind and the waves obey him?" They were both terrified and amazed. Who is Jesus to you and what does He mean to you?

Week Three

Luke 8: 24b CEV “So they went to Jesus and woke him up, “Master, Master! We are about to drown!” Jesus got up and ordered the wind and waves to stop. They obeyed, and everything was calm.”

Day 1. Read the whole story from Luke 8: 22-25. What jumps out for you in Luke's version of the story?

Day 2. In this version Jesus is called Master by His disciples. Yes, He was their Master, but He was also Master of the wind and the waves (all of nature). God is **omnipotent** (all powerful). How have you seen the power (omnipotence) of God made real?

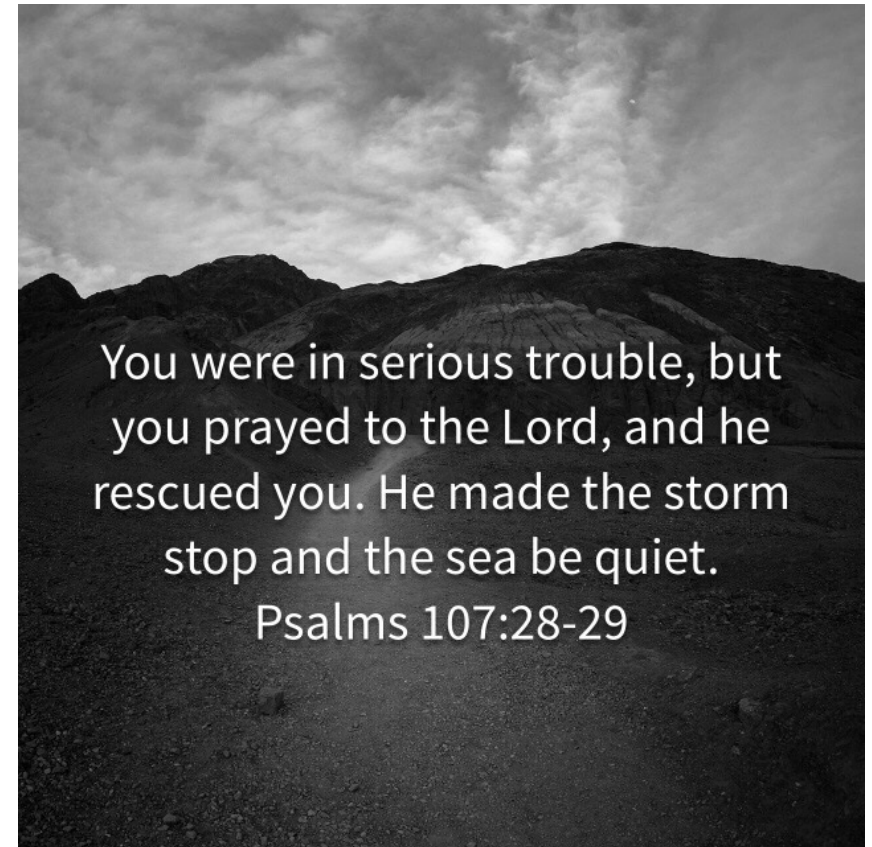
Day 3. Imagine being in the boat with the disciples and being terrified. How do you imagine you would have felt being there and seeing Jesus' power over nature?

Day 4. The wind and the waves responded and obeyed immediately - do you always do the same and respond with obedience immediately? What makes us different to nature?

Day 5. Immediately they (the wind and the waves) obeyed and all was calm. Does being obedient to God bring you storms or bring calm to your life?

Day 6. In what area/s is God asking you to be obedient to Him right now?

Day 7. We have seen that God is '**omniscient**' (all knowing) and '**omnipotent**' (all powerful). God is also '**omnipresent**' (all present or everywhere present). He was present in the boat with His disciples. He can be there for you in the midst of your storms as well as being present for others at the same time in their storms. Do you have trouble accepting any of these 'o' words about the character of God?



Your questions, notes and further insights can go here.