

It is an amazing thing to get a fresh look at an old story. And today, Stephen has given us so many great points to ponder! Read Jonah 1:1-17. The word for this chapter is Rebellion, but the word that caught my eye was that Jonah DELIBERATELY chose to rebel. Just last week, I shared in my Life Group that the NLT says in Luke 8:46, (when Jesus was speaking of the woman who touched the hem of Jesus's robe), "Someone **deliberately** touched me." My question to them was, 'Are we deliberately pursuing Jesus?'

Today we have an example of someone deliberately rebelling. My phone defined 'deliberate' in this way: intentional, calculated, conscious, intended, willful, planned, and purposeful. The deliberate choice to rebel was very costly to Jonah and to the others around him. "*God sent a storm into Jonah's life. It was not an accident.*" Stephen went on to say that when we are in rebellion, God can and will send turmoil into our lives!

I want us to take a look at another type of storm as we head into our time of prayer today. Turn in your Bible to **Matthew 8:23-27**. The disciples will follow Jesus into a boat, where He promptly falls asleep. It says a furious storm came up, while Jesus slept. The disciples woke Him up. He calmed the winds and waves, and notice their response: "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey Him!" Mark 8 also tells this story, but Mark adds some words that I think we should note. Verse 38 says, "Teacher, *don't you care* if we drown?" You and I can feel forsaken in storms, especially those that we have not created ourselves!

Turn over to **Matthew 14:22-33** and read about another storm. It is very important to note that vs 22 says that Jesus MADE them get into the boat. He did not get into the boat with them. They had no idea that they were headed into a storm. Hours later, Jesus will walk toward the boat where Peter will get out and briefly walk on water. When Jesus climbed into the boat, notice Peter's words: "Truly you are the Son of God."

ADORATION

- Praise God that He is the God of all creation and he controls the winds and the waves.
- **Read Acts 14:15**. This description of God is used throughout the books of Acts. We might do well to begin our prayers addressing God as the "Living God who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them." You will find those words many times throughout Acts. We serve the God of all creation. It bolsters our faith to repeat these words.
- Praise God that He can bring glory to Himself through these storms – whether they are storms of punishment following our deliberate choice to rebel or storms that result in a deliberate choice to obey. Notice again what Peter said above: 'Truly you are the Son of God'.
- When God brings glory to Himself, there is a purpose to it and that purpose is not his pride! Read **Isaiah 60:1-3**. God will draw the nations to Himself as His glory is revealed. Praise Him that He entrusts us with His glory. 'The glory of the Lord rises upon you.' God longs to use His children as instruments of His glory so that others will be drawn to Him.
- Turn to **1 Kings 10:6-13**. This is a great story of the Queen of Sheba coming to see Solomon to see if what she had heard about him was actually true. Look at what she says about the God of Israel. Praise God that He can reveal Himself to others around us so that they too might want to experience the Living God.
- Now let's praise Him that He loves us enough when we have rebelled to send storms our way to turn our boat around so that we might once again pursue Him and His call on our life to be disciples.

CONFESSION

- Are you like Jonah – completely exhausted from running from God's call to obedience?
- Have you fallen asleep amidst the turmoil around you, while others know nothing of the Living God of all creation?
- I want to quote Stephen: *'The men in Jonah 1:13 did their best and were failing miserably. How many times do we as Christians do our best and fail? How many times do our churches do their best in their own strength and fail?'*
- Are you operating right now in your own strength with your own plan?
- One more powerful quote from Stephen: "Sin/Rebellion doesn't jump out. It must be a choice to be removed by force." Do you need the Lord to forcefully remove a particular sin in your life?

THANKSGIVING

- Thank the Lord this morning that storms have the ability to 'wake us up' and send us running to Jesus – whether we think He is asleep or walking toward us on the water. A storm heightens our spiritual senses as we seek help.
- Thank Him that He is able to help us discern the source of the storm. Is this storm something He is using to redirect our path or is it a storm to unveil more of His glory? Is He teaching us things in preparation for the next leg of the journey?
- Thank Him for what we learned last week regarding the provision of the Holy Spirit. I want to share from a book, Healing For Damaged Emotions. *"Do you remember the story of Henry Ford and Charlie Steinmetz? Steinmetz was a dwarf, ugly and deformed, but he had one of the greatest minds in the field of electricity that the world has ever known. Steinmetz built the great generators for Henry Ford in his first plant in Dearborn, Michigan. One day those generators broke down and the plant came to a halt. They brought in ordinary mechanics and helpers who couldn't get the generators going again. They were losing money. Then Ford called Steinmetz. The genius came, seemed to just putter around for a few hours, and then threw the switch that put the great Ford plant back into operation. A few days later Henry Ford received a bill from Steinmetz for \$10,000. Although Ford was a very rich man, he returned the bill with a note, "Charlie, isn't this bill just a little high for a few hours of tinkering around on those motors?" Steinmetz returned the bill to Ford. This time it read: " For tinkering around on the motors: \$10. For knowing where to tinker: \$9,990. Total: \$10,000." Henry Ford paid the bill! "*
- As for us, we have the Holy Spirit who knows where to tinker. We do not know how to pray. We often do not know how to discern what the Lord is doing. BUT we have the Spirit within us to reveal truth to us. Thank Him again this week for that amazing gift. Spend time with Him so that He might tinker around inside your soul!

SUPPLICATION

- Is the Lord prompting you to intervene in the life of someone who is obviously in a storm?
- Ask the Lord to AWAKEN your senses to those around you who need to hear the TRUTH of the Gospel!
- Are you calling out the names of those in your family and in your Life Group who are currently enduring storms in their lives?
- Are you willing for God to use you as an instrument of His Glory in this community?
- Ask the Lord today to use the storms around the world to prompt Gospel conversations, especially for those who have gone out from LHBC to serve in difficult locations.