

WHO Cares?

November 20 & 21: When I'm Afraid

Series Overview

Do you ever ask yourself, "Does anyone really care about me and what I'm going through?" This series explores ways God walks with us even when we feel alone. In the midst of life's struggles, it is possible to experience peace, support and hope.



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Sermon Highlights

Job 1:1-4, 7-22

Since we all live in what is called a "fallen world," each of us has to face difficulties and struggles. Our storms vary in intensity and duration. Some may be going through a relational storm. Financial storms are beating down on some because of the present economy. There are marital storms.

We all go through storms, and we have to deal with them when they come. To properly deal with the storms of life, we must:

1. Expect storms to come.

Storms are a part of life. Sometimes we see them off in the distance—thunderclouds forming. Other times they come up instantly and from out of the blue. Sometimes the storms we face are caused by poor choices and bad decisions that we make. However they get here, storms will come. Jesus tells us this Himself.

John 16:33, In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

Matthew 5:45, He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

2. Expect benefits from your storm.

James 1:2-4, ²Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Storms have a purging and purifying effect. If we remain faithful and expectant, we will see benefits from the struggles we face.

Romans 5:3-4, ³Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴perseverance, character; and character, hope.

Although it is tough at the time, many could testify that the storm was one of the best things that could have happened to them.

3. Keep focused.

Job 38:1-13; Mark 4:35-41

Jesus doesn't promise to always take us out of the storm, but He has promised to go with us through it, even the storm in the valley of the shadow of death. When you're dealing with the storms of life, Jesus says, "Do not be afraid." He cares for you.

On being afraid...

- God in the flesh is the end of fear; and the heart that realizes that He is in the midst will be quiet in the middle of alarm. –F.B. Meyer
- *Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. –Isaiah 41:10*



Take it home ... Practical Applications

Maybe someone you know is in the midst of a life-storm right now. In your time alone with God, ask Him how you can be a testimony of the love and care of Christ to that person. If you are going through the storm yourself, ask God to surround you with people who will help you to see God's work in your life in this difficult time.



Take it to the source ... Bible Study

Introductory question: What is your strangest fear or phobia? Spiders? Snakes? Stuffed penguins? Why?

Read *Job 1:1-4, 7-22*.

1. Have you been through any experiences in your life that can help you relate to Job? How? Why?
2. What would be your response be if you lost nearly everything that was important or dear to you?
3. Verse 20 says that after Job heard all this bad news, he fell on the ground and worshiped. What does this do to your idea of what worship is? What do you think your worship would look like in a situation like that?
4. If you had been a friend of Job's, or a member of Job's small group, how would you have responded to the storms in his life at that time?

Read *James 1:2-4* and *Romans 5:3-5*.

1. Do you think James is being realistic about the trials of life? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever had a time of difficulty in your life that actually helped you to grow in your relationship with God? In what area of your spiritual life did you grow the most?
3. Do you trust God to produce meaning from the miseries of life? How might a deep trust in God produce joy, knowing that God is in control, even in the midst of difficulties and hardship?
4. Why do storms help us in gaining maturity in our spiritual lives? How much of it depends on how we face the situation?

Read *Job 38:1-39:30* and *Mark 4:35-41*.

1. What do the two chapters of *Job* say to you about God? How often do you take a moment to think of the awesome majesty of God and the fact that He is in control of all things?
2. How does the story about Jesus calming the storm speak to you? Would you say you trust Him to calm the storms in your own life? Why or why not?
3. Do you ever feel like there are times when Jesus is asleep in your life? How do you respond to that?
4. What does the fact that Jesus was sleeping peacefully say about His trust in God, even in the middle of a storm? What things could you do to develop that kind of peace and confidence in God in your own life?
5. How can your small group help each other to have a sense of the presence of God in your lives, even in the midst of the worst storms?

SPECIAL NOTE:

There will be no study guide next week. We encourage your small group to get involved in some kind of community outreach project or take some time to reflect on what it means to be thankful for all that God has done in your lives during the past year.



Sermons are just a click away! Watch or listen to sermons online @ cpccweb.org.

All Bible references are from the New International Version unless otherwise stated.

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