

Summary

This sermon, drawn from Mark chapter 4, explores the story of Jesus calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee. Pastor Jason uses this passage to help us understand how Jesus sees the storms of life differently than we do. Rather than simply offering relief from difficulty, Jesus offers something deeper: a shalom, or fullness, that fills us from the inside out regardless of what is swirling around us. The message challenges us to say yes to Jesus's invitation to follow Him, even into uncomfortable and unknown territory, trusting that He is present and powerful in every storm. The sermon outlines three key aspects of saying yes to calm: saying yes to Jesus's invitation (leaving the crowd and committing to follow), saying yes to his shalom (understanding that peace is not the absence of conflict but the fullness of God's presence), and saying yes to His heart (recognizing that God uses our storms not only to shape us but also to free and influence others). He emphasizes that the most meaningful encounters with God often come not in moments of comfort, but in the middle of life's most painful storms.

Intro Prayer

Lord, thank you for bringing us together today. As we open your Word and discuss what it means to trust you in the storms of life, we ask that you quiet the noise around us and inside us. Give each person in this group an open heart and open ears. Speak to us not just as a group, but individually, meeting each of us exactly where we are. Whatever you want us to take from this time together, we surrender to that. In Jesus's name, amen.

Ice Breaker

What is one thing that always helps you feel calm or at peace after a stressful day?

Key Verses

- Mark 4:35-41
- James 1:2-4
- Romans 5:3-4

Questions

- Pastor Jason drew a distinction between a bad day and a storm. How would you describe the difference in your own words, and can you share an example of each from your own life?
- In the story, Jesus invited the disciples to go to the other side of the lake, a place they were uncomfortable going. Has Jesus ever invited you to step into something uncomfortable? How did you respond?
- The sermon pointed out that many boats started the journey but turned back. What are some of the things that tempt us to return to the shore instead of continuing to follow Jesus into the unknown?
- The disciples asked Jesus, 'Don't you care if we drown?' Have you ever felt like God did not care about what you were going through? What helped you work through that feeling?
- Pastor Jason explained that shalom is not the absence of conflict but the fullness of God's presence. How does that change the way you think about praying for peace in a difficult situation?
- The sermon suggested that some storms have a spiritual darkness behind them, while others are simply the result of living in a broken world. How does knowing that Jesus has authority over both types of storms affect your faith?
- Pastor Jason shared that after the storm, Jesus used the healed man to eventually reach thousands of people. Can you think of a storm in your own life that God has used, or could use, to help or influence someone else?

Life Application

This week, identify one storm or ongoing struggle in your life that you have been trying to manage on your own. Set aside 10 to 15 minutes each day to bring that specific situation to God in prayer, not just asking him to make it stop, but also asking Him to meet you in it and show you what He wants to do inside of you through it. At the end of the week, write down anything you noticed about his presence, his character, or what he may be forming in you through that storm.

Key Takeaways

- Saying yes to calm begins with saying yes to Jesus's invitation to follow Him, which requires letting go of the crowd mentality and committing to go where He leads, even into uncomfortable places.
- Shalom, the biblical word for peace, is not the absence of conflict or storm. It is the fullness of God's presence filling every part of us, even while the storm still rages around us.
- Jesus sees storms differently than we do. Where we want him to stop what is around us, he is focused on what he wants to do inside of us, using storms as sacred altars where he reveals himself more deeply.
- God sometimes calms a storm, but He always uses a storm. Storms produce perseverance, character, and hope, and they deepen our understanding of who Jesus truly is in ways that comfort never could.
- The storms we survive are not just for our own growth. God uses our weathered storms to bring freedom, healing, and hope to others who are watching and listening to how we made it through.

Ending Prayer

Father, thank you for this time together and for the truth of your Word. We are reminded today that you are not distant from our storms. You are in the boat with us. For those in this group who are in the middle of something sudden and violent and overwhelming, we ask that you calm what you choose to calm, and that in everything else, you would fill us with your shalom. Help us to keep our eyes on you, to trust your invitation even when it leads somewhere uncomfortable, and to believe that nothing we go through is wasted in your hands. Use our storms to shape us, and then use us to reach others. We trust you, Jesus. Amen.