**SLIDE #1) THROUGH DARK STORMS**

- Many of us have gone through dark storms- a hurricane, typhoon or destructive storm

- Almost all of us have gone through dark spiritual storms- danger, or depression,

 financial debt or other dark trials.

- Let us read about what happened when Christ’s disciples went thru a dark

 storm on the sea of Galilee(**READ MATTHEW 14:20-33**)

BACKGROUND: JESUS HAD JUST MIRACULOUSLY FED THE 5,000 AND John 6:15 SAYS THE PEOPLE WERE GOING TO MAKE HIM THEIR KING.

**SLIDE # 2)** Jesus’ disciples were probably very excited- Christ will become a king! He can feed all the people & they will follow Him! And when Jesus becomes king, we will get to sit on thrones too! But Jesus did not do what they hoped for!

**# 3)** After this glorious miracle, when everything was looking great, Christ made his disciples get into a boat and leave, sending them out, alone, into a storm in the darkness- while He went to pray!

**# 4)** THERE CAN ALSO BE TIMES WHEN WE ARE SENT AWAY FROM A PLACE OF BLESSING INTO TIMES OF DARKNESS AND STORMS:

* SPIRITUAL DARKNESS,
* PERHAPS FINANCIAL OR FAMILY TROUBLE
* PERHAPS SICKNESS OR DANGER
* A DARK TRIAL WHERE JESUS SEEMS TO BE FAR AWAY!
* God does not always deliver us FROM trials,

many times Christ will deliver us THRU a trial!

**# 5)** JESUS WAS FAR AWAY UP ON A MOUNTAIN PRAYING… FOR THEM!

MK 6:48 tells us that as Jesus was praying He saw His disciples rowing with difficulty in the middle of the storm. Not by natural sight- it was night time & they were kilometers away! But through prayer He was watching over them.

If we feel alone in a dark storm, we need to remember that Jesus is in heaven where He is watching us and praying for us. Heb.7:25 tells us “He ever lives to make intercession for us”

-He is our great High Priest in heaven, always watching over us & praying for us- just like He did for His disciples!

SOMETIMES CHRIST ALLOWS US TO GO THRU DARKNESS & STORMS- WHY?

**# 6) PURPOSE # 1: TO TEACH US TO TRUST & OBEY**

“Who among you fears the Lord, who obeys the voice of his servant, who walks in darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord and rest on his God.” –Isaiah 50:10-11

IN TIMES OF DARKNESS AND STORM, GOD IS TRYING TO TEACH US 2 THINGS:

 1) WITHOUT CHRIST WE CAN DO NOTHING, Jn.15:5 **(SEA ONLY 10 KM WIDE)**

 2) WE CAN DO ALL THINGS THRU CHRIST, WHO STRENGTHENS US, PHIL. 4:13

 (ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD, FOR THOSE WHO LOVE GOD!)

**# 7) PURPOSE # 2: TO BEGIN A NEW DAY FOR OUR LIVES**

“So the evening and the morning were the first day” - Gen.1:5

“So the evening and the morning were the second day” - Gen.1:8

“So the evening & the morning were the third day” - Gen.1:13 **and on!**

MAN SAYS: DAY & THEN NIGHT MAKES A 24 HOUR DAY

GOD SAYS: NIGHT & DAY COMPLETES A 24 HOUR DAY!

MAN MAKES DARKNESS AN END, *A* *TOMB-*

GOD MAKES DARKNESS A BEGINNING, *A* *WOMB!*

 *(we all started life in darkness for 9 months in our mother’s womb!*

- IN THE DARKNESS OF TRIALS AND SUFFERING, GOD WILL OFTEN START TO SPEAK TO US AND CREATE A NEW DAY IN OUR LIVES

-HOW MANY OF YOU 1st TURNED TO CHRIST IN A TIME OF PEACE & COMFORT?

-HOW MANY OF YOU 1st TURNED TO CHRIST IN A TIME OF DARKNESS & TRIALS?

**# 8) PURPOSE # 3: TO GIVE US THE TREASURES OF DARKNESS**

“AND I WILL GIVE YOU THE TREASURES OF DARKNESS, AND HIDDEN RICHES OF SECRET PLACES,” ISAIAH 45:3

Often, the deeper something is underground, the more valuable it is!

Silver & gold mines go down 100s of meters- drilling for oil, sometimes 1 or 2 km!

Sometimes the Lord allows us to go into deep darkness- to give us the treasures of darkness!

**# 9)** All the world heard the story of the 33 miners in Chile who were trapped underground in 2010 for more than 2 months.

**# 10)** In those months of darkness they all started reading the Bible & had 2 prayer services each day- They knew they needed God, and needed God’s help!

**# 11)** These 33 miners gained many treasures in their hearts thru their dark & difficult experience- they became very close to each other, their families were united, they became thankful for the littlest things: their hearts & lives were forever changed!

**# 12)** The Apostle Paul said that the Lord comforts us in our trials, so that we can in turn give that comfort to others in their own time of need!

**# 13)** These 33 miners in South America all drew much closer to God, and many were born again!

**# 14)** For Christ’s 12 disciples, they came to know Christ in a much greater way through their dark trial- WALKING ON THE WATER! GOD WALKING AMONG MEN!

A man (Peter) walking with God!

When we go thru dark trials, we can know Christ in a greater way-

Sickness? Christ the healer!

Financial trouble? Jehovah Jireh!

Sadness or depression? Christ the comforter!

Our Lord Jesus himself went into the deepest darkness to gain the greatest treasure!

Christ took the sins of the world upon himself- great darkness!

On the cross the sun became dark & God hid his face, “My God, My God..”

Christ took upon himself all the sins of all men… of all time!

Christ descended into death -to hell -to gain the keys of death & hell!

-To arise in victory having all power in heaven & earth!

-To arise as the Savior who will give eternal life to all who trust in Him!

**# 15)** As Peter saw Christ in a greater way, his own faith was built up!

 1) JESUS WALKED ON THE WATER

 2) CHRIST COMMANDED THE WIND AND WAVES

 3) PETER ALSO WALKED ON THE WATER

- THESE WERE HIS “TREASURES OF DARKNESS”

**# 16)** Peter learned how important it was to always keep looking to Jesus!

* When Peter looked away from Jesus & saw the wind & waves he became afraid & started to sink- only by keeping our eyes on Jesus will we walk in victory!
* Martin Luther, the great leader of the Protestant Reformation- changed nations! Great faith!
* Once he was in a town where everyone in the center market started chanting for his death! He strode among them, stood on a table and sang his song, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” -He gave a fearless testimony!
* Many opposed him- armies threatened to march & destroy his followers- so many attacks! One time he started to look at all the problems and was growing depressed… HIS WIFE CAME DOWN FROM UPSTAIRS ONE MORNING, WEARING BLACK FUNERAL CLOTHES- he asked why? “Oh, the way you have been talking & acting, I thought that God had died- so I am wearing my funeral dress” (Martin Luther started to keep his eyes on Jesus better!)
* WE NEED TO KEEP OUR EYES- OUR FAITH- ON GOD WHEN DARKNESS & TRIALS COME!

**# 17)** Peter learned how to walk on the water- and in dark and stormy times, Christ can teach us how to walk above the difficulties!

**THE OUTCOME OF THE DISCIPLES’ DARK STORM:**

**# 18)** IN TIMES OF DARKNESS & STORMS, THE LORD IS ABLE TO REVEAL HIMSELF TO US IN A GREATER WAY: HE IS THE LORD OF ALL!

AFTER THIS EXPERIENCE HIS DISCIPLES SAID, "TRULY, YOU ARE THE SON OF GOD." MAT.14:33.

-The multitudes who were sent away the night before never saw Christ walking on the water- all they said the next day when they saw Jesus on the other side of the Sea of Galilee was "When did you come here?" Jn.6:25.

**# 19)** Let us trust the Lord that He will meet with us in times of darkness & storm; and will cause us to gain victory over all difficulties and trials.

-CHRIST CAN ALSO BRING YOU INTO A GREATER FAITH & VICTORY, SO THAT **YOU** CAN WALK ON THE WATER & OVERCOME THE DARKNESS & STORMS OF LIFE!