

# “Wowing”

## Those Who Wait on Him

### THE STORM

Late that day He said, “Let’s go across to the other side.” Other boats came along. It had been a busy day, and Jesus fell asleep as the boat glided through the water. A huge storm came up. Waves poured into the boat, threatening to sink it. Suddenly, as they bailed furiously in the blackness, a flash of lightning showed the disciples that Jesus was still there, in the stern, head on a pillow, sleeping!

Now they called to Him, almost in a rebuke, “Don’t You care? Why aren’t You helping us? Teacher, is it nothing to You that we’re going down?” And then, what a moment, imagine the look of love on Jesus’ face as He saw their fear. Awake now, He told the wind to calm itself and said to the sea, “Quiet! Settle down!” The wind ran out of breath; instantly the sea was like glass, and they were gliding over the water again.

And then a kind rebuke, so typical of Jesus, helped the disciples choose faith without excusing their fear. “Why are you such cowards? Don’t you have any faith at all?” They were in absolute awe, staggered. “Who is this, anyway?” they asked. “Wind and sea at His beck and call!” (Mark 4:35-41, paraphrased from *The Message*).

This story gives me goose bumps. Have you ever forgotten Jesus in the midst of your storm? I have. Have you seen the look of love on His face as you cry out to Him, “Lord, save me”? Have you seen the problem dissolve in front of your eyes? I have.

In today’s society we don’t travel on boats much, so maybe we aren’t physically on a lake when storms come, but we often face threats to our spiritual lives, and sometimes we find ourselves in literal life-threatening circumstances. In these crises, do we remember to call on Jesus and ask Him to quiet our storms?

It was 1993, and I was in Cape Town, South Africa. A terrorist attack on the St. James Church left 11 people dead and 58 wounded. Around 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, July 25, as the congregation of 1,400 listened to a hymn of worship, a group of gunmen burst into the church and opened fire with automatic weapons. I lived just a few miles away.

I felt numb. How could this happen, so close to me? I was deeply impressed, though, when I heard that some of the church’s other members were in a restaurant when they heard about the attack, and the first thing they did was fall on their knees and pray fervently. They didn’t let fear paralyze them. Although in public, they weren’t afraid of what people would think. *They prayed*, trusting God, hanging on to Him in the middle of their storm.

### THE STILLNESS

How do we find a faith that won’t flounder in fear? It is said that the canary learns to sing in the dark. We also learn a life of faith when we are alone in the quiet, often in the dark times. In stillness before God, we learn to wait on Him.

In his book *Experiencing God*, Henry

## “Let Him sit alone in silence, for the Lord has laid it on Him.”

*Lam. 3:28, NIV*

circumstances and asking God to interpret them by revealing to you His perspective” (p. 242).

Scripture translates the word *wait* also as *hope*, indicating that they may be interchangeable. When I wait on God I put my hope in Him, rather than in myself. The Psalmist says, “I wait for the Lord, my soul waits. . . . more than those who watch for the morning” (Ps. 130:5, 6, NKJV). How do night watchmen, or any people awake all night, feel as they wait for the sun to come up? Ambivalent? Casual, hopeless, despairing? Absolutely not! They are expectant, eager, confident. They are sure the sun *will* rise.

How do I wait on God in my devotional time? Do I eagerly, confidently believe He *will* meet me and bless me, show me His ways, and give me strength *right now*, today, and every day?

The Bible says a lot about being quiet, which is part of the discipline of waiting on God. “Let Him sit alone in silence, for the Lord has laid it on Him” (Lam. 3:28, NIV). “God is in heaven, and you are on earth, so let your words be few” (Eccl. 5:2, NIV). “Be still, and know that I am God” (Ps. 46:10, NIV).

Ellen White writes, “When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 363).

When I was 21 I spent a year and a half in the Marshall Islands as a teacher. Having personal worship outside my apartment to the accompaniment of ocean waves, I was free to talk aloud to God. I poured out my heart to Jesus and

Blackaby says, “You may think of waiting as a passive, inactive time. Waiting on the Lord is anything but inactive. While you wait on Him, you will be praying with a passion to know Him, His purposes, and His ways. You will be watching



*“The Lord will teach us our duty just as willingly as He will teach somebody else. If we come to Him in faith, He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Our hearts will often burn within us as One draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch.”*

The Desire of Ages, p. 668

listened for what He would say to me. It was so exciting. Jesus was actually talking to *me*. Wow!

I still love to be outside to talk to God. Walking down our country lane, I sing, meditate, and talk over a few scripture verses with my Father. This is my sanctuary. I read a passage, confident that God has something to say to me through the Word.<sup>1</sup> As I think about what the verses might mean, I am led to confession, heart-searching, thanksgiving, or praise.

I wait for Him to speak and ask Him to bring to my mind His purpose for my day or the answer to a question. When I’m in His presence, and God is in control of my time with Him, I get to hear things I did not know (Jer. 33:3) and that I desperately need. Learning to wait on God has transformed my life.<sup>2</sup>

After all the drama of the storm, after the wind ran out of breath, how did the disciples respond?

In sheer awe. It’s like those times when you see God doing things, and you just stand in amazement saying, “Wow!”

#### THE SUMMARY

Jesus stilled the storm, and the Sea of Galilee was quiet. We too can carry this calmness while waiting on God and lingering in His presence, even during life-threatening circumstances, pain, sickness, or trauma. The Psalmist says, “On You I wait all the day” (Ps. 25:5, NKJV).

Why not take the time to wait on Him and let Him still your storm, today? ■

<sup>1</sup> For more about this way of waiting on God, see the pamphlet *Soul Nourishment First* by George Müller at [www.ncs-az.net/m%c3%bcller.pdf](http://www.ncs-az.net/m%c3%bcller.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> For a 30-day experience and simple instruction, read the book *Waiting on God* by Andrew Murray

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