

Part 1 - Key Verse:

Isaiah 26:3

You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.

Song: Peace Be Still by The Belonging Co (Featuring Lauren Daigle)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBzg4B3_yS8

In my life and family, it seems that we go through times that have a certain theme for a while. We have been like the Israelites wandering through the desert, we have been like David staring down our very own Giants, AND we have also had many joyous times filled with God's favor and blessing being poured out on us. Life just seems to ebb and flow that way.

Currently we are in a season of storms, one wave after another pounding on us. Sometimes it feels like it is hard to catch our breath. For the last three and a half years our 18 year old daughter has faced SIGNIFICANT health challenges. It started with some pain and joint hypermobility and progressed to the point that she dislocates up to 30 joints a day and can no longer eat food by mouth. Her stomach is paralyzed. She is fed 24 hours a day through a tube that goes directly into her intestines. For a couple of years, she could not control her body temperature. If she got too hot she would overheat and not be able to bring her body temperature back down, it was the same with cold. One October day we went to the doctor and just walking from the car into the office her body temperature dropped so low they were not able to get her temperature to register on their thermometer. She passes out if she stands too quickly. The list goes on and on, however, I felt it pressed upon my heart years ago that God is not glorified in the details so we can just agree it is a MESS!

Children's Hospital and The Mayo Hospital have become like a second home for us. Even our own home sounds like a hospital as IV and feeding tube pumps beep at us all day and night demanding our attention.

Unfortunately, the rest of our life has not stopped as we have been dealing with the demands of caring for a chronically ill child. We have had to keep our business going, with all that being a business owner entails. Our other kids still need rides to work, our dogs get ear infections (like multiple ear infections, are you kidding me???) and everyone likes to have clean clothes to wear and food to eat every.... Single.... day.

It is very easy to take our eyes off Jesus, to look only at the desperation of many of the moments we have faced. What we have learned by walking through these moments is that the key to getting through them is keeping our eyes on Jesus and trusting in his plans for our lives.

Matthew 14:22-33

After feeding the five thousand Jesus sent his disciples on ahead of him to the other side of the lake.

Vs.25 "Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified, "It's a ghost," they said and cried out in fear.

But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

"Come," he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him, "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

As I hear a pump alarm going off in the middle of the night, it is easy for me to look down.

As I watched red liquid being pumped into my daughter's veins with life-saving stores of iron, I was looking down.

As we were rushing down to Children's Hospital at midnight in a snowstorm, I was looking down.

Looking down is a recipe for anxiety, stress and desperation. It will leave **you** knee deep in the water, crying out for Jesus to save you.

What if, in the moments when the winds are battering us, we kept our eyes focused on Jesus? What if we blocked out the sound of the wind and the waves with our prayers and praises directed at the one who controls them?

It is **not** easy. I fail as often as I succeed at doing this and trust me I have had plenty of practice. I used to get down on myself after the crisis was over, when we were on our way home with our daughter safe in the back seat, that I had let fear and panic consume me rather than allowing the peace that is readily available to me rule in my heart. But then I remind myself that Peter literally had Jesus RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM, and he STILL took his eyes off Jesus when the wind picked up. If he had that kind of advantage and still looked down, I think I can give myself a little grace. **You** can give yourself a little grace.

Since I originally sat down to write this and today I have had to walk my daughter through major brain surgery, our wind and waves show NO sign calming anytime soon. IF you are not walking through a storm in your life now, another storm will come along eventually. What if we decide **now** to keep our eyes on Jesus when it does. It might not make the storm go away, but I know it will make it less scary!

Week of WWWC Weekend Day One:

In the passage in Matthew, the disciples were on a boat crossing the lake when they saw Jesus walking on the water. I find it interesting that all 12 men on that boat were followers of Jesus, yet only Peter asked Jesus to call him out of the boat and on to the water. The other 11 all believed in Jesus, had left their former lives to resolutely follow him, but they were content to stay in the boat.

I believe as Christians today that we are ALL called to step out of the boat and onto the water. Sure, it is easy to like the comfort and safety inside the boat. Wind, waves and storms can be scary! Here is the problem, if we want to **grow** in our faith, we need to step OUT of the boat! If we want to shine the love of Jesus into the darkness around us, we need to step OUT of the boat! Jesus didn't come to earth to play it safe so why should we?

The truth is, we do have a choice. When you look at your life, are you playing it safe and staying in the boat? OR Are you taking risks and chasing Jesus into places that will stretch your faith?

Chase after him sisters with everything you have. It may be safer in the boat, but the company is better on the water!

I Will Follow You by Chris Tomlin

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kgqD_HQQir0

Key verse: Isaiah 26:3 "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you."

Day Two:

Hopefully you have followed Peter's lead and stepped out of the boat!

Once Peter was out on the water and walking toward Jesus the wind around him picked up.

Storms in life WILL come, our wind and waves ARE going to pick up. Jesus said that in this life we WILL have trouble.

John 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. **But take heart! I have overcome the world.**"

The stronger you follow after Jesus the stronger the storms can feel sometimes. In my family and marriage it seems the harder we chase after Jesus, the bigger our storms get! When my husband left the business he started 20 years ago to work in full time ministry, our seas got a lot more turbulent. As we have gotten involved in ministry efforts at our church, the winds blew with more force. As we minister to people in the halls of Children's hospital the waves can make us dizzy!!!! You can expect right now that trials will come, Satan won't mess with ineffective people! But guess what, we already know who wins in the end. You do not need to fear the storms that will try to chase you back into the safety of the boat! You can be steadfast!

Francis Chan once said something that I loved. "If you are going to direct traffic at the gates of hell, you can expect it to be HOT!" We can expect the storms.....BUT we can be prepared to withstand them!

What are the wind and waves in your life that are trying to chase you back into the safety of the boat?

What do they sound like?

Today (and every day) lets make our prayers and praises **LOUDER** than any storm in your life!

Louder by Alisa Turner

"Til the darkness breaks at the sound of praise, I will sing it out louder"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmqQ-fSBRdc&list=RDzmqQ-fSBRdc&start_radio=1

Day Three:

Key Verse: Isaiah 26:3 "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you."

The definition of steadfast: resolutely or dutifully firm and unwavering.

What would a faith that is resolute, dutifully firm and unwavering look like? I think it might look a little like asking Jesus to call you out onto the water. I think it might be like the kind of faith that keeps your praises **louder** than the wind and waves. So how to do we get faith like that?

Personally, I had to develop my faith muscle in a sink or swim fashion. I am sure it looked a lot like Peter, taking his eyes off Jesus, starting to sink, crying out, refocusing on Jesus and repeat over and over (I am not the fastest learner HAHA!). Thanks to all of the practice that has come my way I am learning to trust more and more that Jesus has me and I am able to walk more confidently as the wind whips against me.

Other ways to strengthen your faith into a sure and steadfast faith are getting to know Jesus, his character and his promises through study of scripture, lifting up praise to him through worship and prayer. Every relationship takes intentionality and time to grow, including your relationship with Jesus. Seeing how Jesus comes through time and time again will help your confidence grow. Jesus deserves to be a priority in your life. Bottom line is you **cannot be passive and steadfast at the same time!**

If we are going to withstand the wind and waves while walking on the water with Jesus we need to be STEADFAST! Seek him before, during and after the storm! Keep steady after Jesus!
Are you steadfast in your faith? Are there ways you could work towards a more steadfast faith?

Steady by for King and Country

“You keep me steady when the sky is falling. I’ll keep steady after you!”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-Kz_iq0x_M

Day Four:

Once Jesus reached out and caught Peter, they walked together back to the boat and THEN the wind died down. Did you notice that the wind did not die down until they were back in the safety of the boat? I think this is my favorite part of this story.

As you know our family has been in a season of storms. The wind is harsh and the waves are furious at times. BUT I am in LOVE with the one who has reached out, taken us by the hand and walked with us. He is literally everything to me. His presence has been so real that, like Peter, I have felt like I could open my eyes and see him standing right in front of me. As long as I have Jesus I know we will be ok until we make it back into the boat.

Sisters if you are being whipped by the wind right now, I pray that you can feel his sweet presence beside you. If you are lucky enough to be in calm waters now, then I pray that you don’t fear the inevitability of the winds picking up because Jesus will be there to walk with you back towards the boat. Peace can be found even in the storm. So, let’s chase after Jesus, step out of the boat, be steadfast in our faith, lifting our praises louder than any wind can blow and keep our eyes focused on Jesus in whatever waters we might find ourselves in.

Isaiah 26:3 “You will keep in perfect **peace** those whose minds are **steadfast**, because they trust in you.”

I am so looking forward with stepping out and serving with all of you on this weekend!

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