

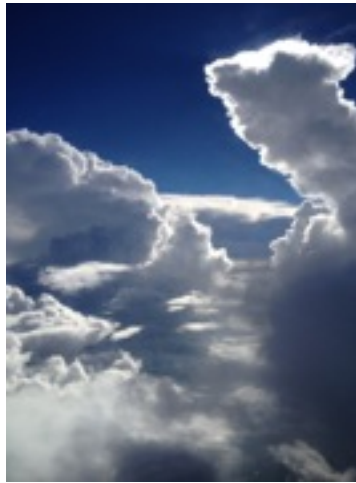
# THE GOOD NEWS GAZETTE

## THINK ON THESE THINGS...

PHILIPPIANS 4:8-9

### APRIL SHOWERS

April 2015, has brought more than our fair share of rain and storms. As I walked in my yard, it felt like a water-logged sponge. My storm weather radio went off over and over last weekend predicting severe storms and the threat of tornados and damaging winds. Over and over again the warnings suggested I take cover away from windows and doors. Weather predicting technology has come a long way since Austrian scientist Christian Doppler first proposed what came to be called the Doppler effect in 1842. Radar technology, initially a secret research project to help our military find enemy ships and planes in World War II, was in its infancy when my dad was a child. By the late 1970's and 1980's, the nightly news showed live weather radar shots. I can still remember the pride with which the local meteorologist reported that his station had the first and only Doppler weather radar system in our area. He entreated us to stay tuned to his station and guaranteed the most accurate predictions of storms and tornados. My dad loved watching the weather. He also loved making sure I (and others) knew when storms were predicted. When I was in college, he would call to tell me about storms -commanding me to stay in my dorm for safety. My dad was my own personal self-appointed weather man. Sometimes I'd call him to see if it was safe to travel. He always tried to make sure I'd be safe when the storms came. Unfortunately, not every storm is in the forecast.



In Mark chapter four as Jesus was teaching by the lake, the crowds became so large that he got in a boat in order to speak to all the people. When evening came, Jesus told his disciples to set out for the other side of the lake. Once on their way, Jesus took a cushion and went to sleep in the stern (back) of the boat. During the journey, a squall came up. Squalls are unexpected and intense storms. Matthew eight says it was a "furious storm." Waves broke over the boat so that it was nearly swamped. Luke 8:23 reports that "they were in great danger." This event is recorded in three of the four gospels - Matthew, Mark, and Luke. In each account, the disciples' distress is clear. The unpredicted storm caused them to fear death. The disciples finally cried out for help. In Luke 8:24, the disciples went and woke Jesus saying, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!" In Mark 4:38 we read, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" Lastly, Matthew 8:25 says, "The disciples went and woke him saying, 'Lord, save us! We are going to drown!'" The intensity of their fear and plea shouts out in each passage. Isn't it interesting that until the disciples felt death by drowning imminent, they didn't call on Jesus. Perhaps in the throws of the storm, the disciples forgot he was asleep in the boat with them. We don't really know.

At times we are like those disciples in the storm. Unexpected life storms catch us off guard. We feel suddenly thrust into a whirlwind

of difficulties and problems. We feel pressure and persecution. We ask, "Why me Lord?" Sometimes we just don't understand, but the answer to 'why me?' is found in Matthew 5:45. Matthew says that the Lord "causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." God says everyone gets fair and foul weather days. Good things and bad things happen to both the good and the evil person. We shouldn't be surprised when an unexpected storm blows up like the squall on the lake in Mark four. We also shouldn't be surprised when those storms of life cause us great and even life threatening danger.

Sometimes we wonder if God cares. In Mark 4:38 the disciples asked, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" Today, we question if God is sleeping or sitting idly by during our struggles. Psalm 121 answers this question and tells us that the Lord doesn't sleep and always watches over his people. In I Peter 5:7 we read "Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." God is there and he does care. In Matthew 10:31 we learn that God even knows the number of hairs on our head. Preceding verses say that though two sparrows are sold for a penny, "yet not one of them falls to the ground apart from the will of your Father." It says at the end of verse 31, "so don't worry, you are worth many sparrows." God sees you. He hears you. He knows you, and what you need. Psalm 46:1 says, "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall in to the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging." This scripture confirms that God will be with us in any storm.

In Luke 8:25, once Jesus stilled the wind and calmed the water, he asked his disciples in this question, "Where is your faith?" In the Matthew passage, Jesus said, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" I sense some disappointment here by Jesus in his disciples. These disciples had been with him constantly. They had seen his miracles and heard his messages. In fact, Mark 4:11 says that Jesus had "told them, 'The secret of the kingdom of God...'" Though the disciples were in what we

would call the "inner circle" with Jesus, they were still afraid and panicked by the storm. I think Jesus expected and wanted them to have more faith. "Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." (Hebrews 11:1) Perhaps fear during the unexpected storm displaced their faith.

What about us? Do we have faith in Jesus? In Matthew 17:20 Jesus told his disciples, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there.' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." This verse tells us that even a small amount of faith is extremely powerful. Do we put our hope for salvation in Jesus? Do we seek refuge in the safe harbor of the Lord? Do we remember that Jesus is in our boat - sailing with us through the storms of life? Is Jesus our first choice or last resort? Jesus knows how the winds blow. He warns us through his word how to keep safe in the storms of life. Just like my dad wanted to protect and keep me safe from storms, Jesus wants to keep us safe and help us navigate the storms of life. Whether storms are expected or not, I hope we can all learn from these passages to put our faith and trust in Jesus. Think on these things ...

Robin Robbins House



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## What Does the Bible Say?

Why did Jesus get in a boat to teach?

In the parable of the farmer, what was the farmer scattering?

Which seed did the birds eat?

Which seed sprang up quickly?

What happened to the seed that fell among the thorns?

What was the yield of the seed that fell on good soil?

Why did Jesus speak in parables to the people?

Who was given the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven?

In whom was the prophesy in Isaiah fulfilled?

What is said of the people's hearts who do not receive Jesus' message?

Who longed to see and hear what the disciples saw and heard?

What is the meaning of the seed that falls on the path?

What is the meaning of the seed that falls on the rocky places?

What two things cause the seed sown on the rocky places to not succeed?

What two things are said to be what chokes the seed among the thorns?

What is said of the man who hears the word and understands it?

Who sowed weeds among the wheat?

Why didn't the farmer want the servant to pull up the weeds in the wheat field?

What happens to the weeds at harvest?

What is said of the mustard seed?

Why is the kingdom of heaven like yeast?

What does the parable of the weeds mean?

Who are the harvesters?

What will be experienced in the furnace?

To what are the righteous likened?

How is the kingdom of heaven valued?

What will the angels separate?

What is thrown in the fiery furnace?

What was Jesus' hometown and where did he preach there?

What did the people think of Jesus' teaching?

Who were Jesus' brothers?

Did Jesus have sisters?

What did Jesus say in response to the people of his home town?

Why didn't Jesus do any miracles in his home town?

**Answers to these questions can be found in Matthew chapter thirteen.**

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## Fresh Strawberry Pie

Mix together and cook until clear and thick

1 cup of sugar

1 cup of water

3 Tablespoons corn starch

3 Tablespoons lemon juice (fresh squeezed)

Add 3 Tablespoons Strawberry Jello to the mixture above and stir until mixed.

Place fresh sliced strawberries in a baked pie shell.

Pour cooled liquid mixture over sliced strawberries in the baked pie shell.

Top with whipped cream.

Refrigerate 2 hours before serving cold.



## Memory Verse

“Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.”

Deuteronomy 7:9 (NIV)



May you fully bloom  
in God's garden!