

Visiting Pastor Eli Williams

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Preacher: Eli Williams

[0 : 00] A guest that I have heard is quite entertaining and is quite good at presenting a message. So I look forward to this myself. This is Pastor Eli Williams.

Well, I don't know how entertaining. We'll see about that. Good morning. It is absolutely great to be here. Now, I'm assuming that this is on, right?

My man. It's good to be here. I want to thank my wife, Judy, and our friend, Carrie, for coming with me this morning. I appreciate it. Judy, raise your hand so we'll know which is which.

There you go. Saw Marv the other day, and I could not believe how good he looks. Shorter, but, you know, looks really good.

So I understand he's in his 80s, right? 83? You guys have taken really good care of him. Terrific. And we'll give his wife some credit for that as well.

[1 : 08] So it's good that he's able to get away, but I can see he has the same problem I do in taking a real vacation that doesn't involve any work. Yeah.

So you guys will have to get on him about that. You know, my wife will tell you, those things should be separate. You need some downtime, right? To just unplug and just relax and be you and enjoy your wife.

And I'm preaching to myself, guys. So that's what that is. She's over there going, amen, brother, preach. It's really great to be here, as I said.

It's been a long, long time. I was hoping to see Lynette. She's not here. Hey, Lynette. Hey. Hey. I wanted to call your attention to something that the Lord has put on my heart.

You know, we've had all these storms. It's kind of funny. I saw that little note on the bulletin board out there that said something like Florida has had 618 storms or something like that.

[2 : 20] But this last one was caused by global warming. Now, you know, I won't wade into that controversy.

But this has been an unusually busy, stormy hurricane season. There's been 13 main storms. And we're only two-thirds of the way through the hurricane season. So, you know, we could get more. So that's pretty amazing. The topic today is storm-stopping faith.

Storm-stopping faith. And I posted the title of the message on Facebook. And a friend of mine, he's a real friend, not just a Facebook friend, a real friend.

He also happens to be a backslidden pastor who has, you know, some issues, obviously. He said, you know, I love that story because it, you know, that Jesus was able to sleep during that storm.

[3 : 33] He said to me that's my favorite part of it. But I replied, but that wasn't the only storm going on. There was also a storm going on within the heads of the disciples.

And that's the message today. Storm-stopping faith. You know, it's really easy to panic in times of trouble, especially sudden trouble.

You know, when it happens like out of the blue. It's the tendency is to panic. And at times like that, we need storm-stopping faith.

Would you pray with me? Father, as we consider what your word has to say, help us, O Lord God, to get the message that you intended for us.

Help us, Lord, through the intervention of the Holy Spirit to teach us what it is you would have us to learn. Nothing you said or did was without purpose.

[4 : 39] So please help us to glean everything that you intended for us from each lesson. We thank you for it in advance.

In Jesus' name. Amen. You can say it out loud. Amen. See, I come from a different culture. And we like feedback.

Feedback. We like, you know, for stuff to bounce back at us. So when I say amen, it's like if you really agree with the statement, you can say amen out loud. You really can.

Amen? Amen. There you go. I'm feeling more at home every minute. You know, it's the same with singing. We like participation.

We don't use hymnals where I grew up in church. Everybody knew the songs. Most people knew the songs.

[5 : 36] And you really didn't need to be able to read music, which is a good thing. You could just learn. You learn the chorus and eventually, you know, the verses would come.

And there's one that kind of goes with the message that I'm going to teach you. And I have to warn you, this is going to stretch some of you. It's really going to push you, you know, beyond your comfort zone.

But could you, just out of a spirit of hospitality, you know, would you sort of humor me? But do you like this? Yes.

Okay. We really don't need any accompaniment with this, which is a good thing because, you know, where I come from, where my parents came from, they really, all they had was their hands and their feet and maybe a washboard or maybe a tambourine.

So you sort of make do with what you had. You give God the glory, right? Let everything that has breath, praise the Lord. So I'm going to ask you to help me out.

[6 : 41] Please don't hate me, but I'm going to ask you to stand up. I know you've already stood once and it's like, why is he asking us to stand?

Please, thank you so much. Really, bear with me on this, but I'm going to ask you to clap. I mean, I really, no, not for me, not for me, thanks.

That's funny. It's like this. Okay, everybody's got that, right? Now I'm going to throw you a curve because on the offbeat, you have to stomp.

So it's like. Okay, some of us are going to be challenged, right?

It's like. It's like. It's like. Stomp. Got it. Got it. Okay, let's try this again.

[7 : 55] Ready? Stomp. Stomp first, right? Cool. That is awesome. Now, there's one more thing.

You have to sing, too. Right? Right? You should see the look I got. Okay. All right. So let's go through the words of the song, and then we'll put the rest of it to it.

It goes like this. There's a storm out on the ocean, and it's moving this way. Real simple, right? There's a storm out on the ocean. On the ocean. And it's moving. And it's moving this way. This way. If your soul's not anchored in Jesus, you will surely drift away.

And then it goes. Drift away, Lord. Drift away. You will surely drift away.

[9 : 11] If your soul's not anchored in Jesus. You will surely drift away. You will surely drift away.

Oh, there's a storm out on the ocean. And it's moving this way. And it's moving this way.

If your soul's not anchored in Jesus. You will surely drift away.

Drift away. Drift away, Lord. Drift away. You will surely drift away.

If your soul's not anchored in Jesus. You will surely drift away.

[10 : 05] Give yourselves a hand. That was really good. You may be seated. That was awesome. That was awesome. It really was.

You know, I do this a lot. And some people never get it. Okay. So you did good.

Even you. He's a good sport. It's one thing to be able to see the storm coming.

That's what some people say about hurricanes. Hurricanes, at least you can prepare for them. You have some idea of where they're going, you know, within a cone of probability.

But if you are out on the ocean. That's a different thing.

[11 : 05] Because if you don't make sure that your boat gets into a secure place and that you anchor it. The chances of that boat and you surviving are pretty slim.

And even then, if you take a direct hit, there's not much you can do if it's a powerful storm like the ones we've had. So, it's good to have warning.

But whatever the case, it's important to be anchored. Hurricane Irma, for example, that hit Florida. When it was still out over the ocean, the power of the hurricane was felt in Tampa Bay.

I don't know if you saw the pictures. But Tampa Bay, the water in Tampa Bay had been sucked out into the ocean. It was amazing. Did you see the picture of that?

That was something. And we're familiar with Tampa Bay because Judy's a 102-year-old mother lives in the area. And so, we go down there quite frequently to see her. Did you hear me say 102?

Yeah.

[12:23] So, to think of that, what really is a, it looks like a sea, to be dry was pretty amazing. So, if you were in a boat in Tampa Bay and that hurricane sucked the water out, you know, that would be, you would find yourself out in the ocean someplace if not capsized.

So, it's good to prepare. In the lesson today, there's a different type of storm.

And we'll get into that as we read it. So, if you have a Bible handy, which would stand to reason since this is a Bible church, I would hope that you have a Bible, at least handy.

Please open it to Mark 4, 43 through 41. And I'm going to be reading it from the New King James Version.

Mark 4, 35 through 41. And I did ask, you know, what time, usually everybody's out of the building, and I was told by noon, but that if I want to go over by a couple hours, it's okay.

[13:47] We'll try to get you out of here. Sometimes a day. It's easy if somebody said amen. But he didn't say it with feeling.

Alright. Mark 4, 35 through 41. When you have it, say amen. If you don't have it, say oh me.

On the same day, when evening had come, he said to them, let us cross over, this is Jesus, let us cross over to the other side. Now, when they had left the multitude, they took along in the boat as it was.

They took him along in the boat as it was. And other little boats were also with him. Hmm. More than one boat.

Jesus in a boat. Other little boats. 37. And when, and a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.

[15:01] But he was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke him and said to him, teacher, do you not care that we are perishing? Then he arose and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, peace, be still.

And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But he said to them, why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?

And they feared exceedingly and said to one another, who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him.

Lord, thank you for your word. Teach us, oh Lord God, what you would have us to know. In Jesus' name. Jesus was about to go on a mission trip.

He was headed across the Sea of Galilee. Because there was a guy over there who was demon possessed.

[16:08] You've heard, you've read the story. He was, he was filled with a demon, multiple demons. And he lived in a cemetery among the tombs. And no matter what they did, they would bind him and he would break the chains.

He was just totally under the control of these evil spirit forces. Jesus, being the compassionate Savior that he is, was willing to cross a sea to save a soul.

So he was on a mission. And I've heard some say, well, that's right. And, and, and, and, and the devil didn't want him to make it there safely.

So the devil sent the storm. Well, maybe. What we do know is that those sudden storms are quite common on the Sea of Galilee.

Because of the geographic location and the situation of the sea, of that huge lake. It is 600 and something feet below sea level.

[17:25] And it's surrounded by mountains. And because of the temperature difference. On the other side of the mountains.

And the temperature difference. That temperature difference. Caused sudden storms.

When, when warm air and cold air clash, you know what happens? There's turbulence in the atmosphere. And when the wind would, would be pushed down into the middle of the sea, Galilee, which often happened, it causes wind storms.

And over the ocean that means waves. So it really was not an uncommon thing. But Jesus, knowing the danger, wanted to get to the other side.

And those that were with him decided that they wanted to go as well. He was going out of his great love for a lost soul.

[18:37] And was willing to go all out to rescue the perishing. He came to seek and save that which was lost.

Because of his great love. John 3, 16. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. So that whosoever will, would not perish, but have eternal life. He came to seek and save. The loss. Luke 19, 2. So, here's some lessons to be learned. And here are two lessons. Following Jesus requires faith. And it requires courage. Because storms will come. Look at the person sitting next to you. Look him square in the eye. And tell him storms will come. [19 : 43] If you follow Jesus. Come on, tell him. Storms will come. If you follow Jesus. That's one lesson. Another lesson is.

But he will be with us. In the midst of the storm. Tell him that too. Thank you. I know this is hard. Trials do come without warning sometimes. So, we may as well know that. And be prepared for that as best we can. So, while Jesus and his disciples were sailing across the Sea of Galilee, a furious wall came up. And the waves broke over the boat so that they were nearly swamped. And the disciples panicked. They thought they were going to drown. Problem. [20 : 45] Why did they panic? Why did they think they were going to drown? Jesus was on board. Right?

I mean, they had been following Jesus. They had seen his miracles. He could raise the dead. He was controlling nature. They witnessed it.

They knew it. But there was a sudden onslaught of amnesia. As panic set in. And so, they woke Jesus.

As though, you know, Jesus was fully man, right? Fully God and fully man. Amen? Fully God and fully man. So, he was tired.

He had been teaching. He had been preaching. He was pretty exhausted. He didn't get a nap before going on this mission trip. It was immediately after teaching and preaching to the people from the boat.

[21 : 50] The crowds were so big. Went out onto the lake and preached from there. You ever notice how sound carries? When you're on a boat, you can hear what's happening on the boat.

If you're on the land, it's magnified by the water. So, he was teaching from the boat. And from there, he said, let's go across the sea. So, he was tired.

He took a nap. He laid his head down on the captain's cushion. That means the captain didn't have a cushion. But anyway, that's another.

That's another message. And so, they woke him up. There he was with this storm raging.

If I had had a picture, I could show you. In fact, I did get a picture of it. And you can't see it. But it looks pretty terrifying, actually.

[22 : 54] The waves are pretty high. And the boat is rocking back and forth. And no doubt, as it says, the water was coming in.

It was breaking over the boat. And so, Jesus' companions panicked. But was Jesus panicking? Sounds sweet.

And they forgot that Jesus is who he says he is. And that he can control the sea, you know, just by waving his hand or speaking a word.

They forgot that. Don't you care if we drown? It's kind of an insult when you think about it. Had he not already proven how much he cares?

Nevertheless, he woke up and he rose and he calmed the sea.

[23 : 56] Let me ask you a question. How do you react when sudden trouble comes? Do you panic?

Don't raise your hand. Do you call on Jesus? And is your calling on Jesus out of panic?

Or is it out of faith? Is it doubting? Is it questioning God? Don't you care? Or is it out of faith?

Do you wonder if God is even watching? If he's even aware? We all have those moments.

But it's exactly times like that that we need storm-stopping faith. Jesus wasn't worried.

[25 : 03] So he got up. He rebuked the wind and said to the waves, Be quiet. Be still. Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. Once again, demonstrating his complete control over nature.

And everything else for that matter. These guys knew that as they were following Jesus, that every time, as it's recorded in Scripture, every time he came across a sick person, what did he do?

He healed them. If they were dead, what did he do? He raised them. I mean, he loves that much. He cares that much. He has that much compassion.

And he has that much power. So they knew that. But all of a sudden, they had amnesia. had they really forgotten?

We have a mission. We're on a mission. Because we have been given a commission from the Lord. You know what? Matthew 8, 28, 19 through 20, we are told what?

[26 : 17] To go, therefore, into all the world and preach the gospel. Making disciples. That's our mission.

We're all on that mission. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, and you are following him, you have a mission. We have a mission. And along with that mission goes our calling to be his disciples and to be his witnesses.

You shall be my witnesses, he said in Acts 1, 8. Not that we will go witnessing or do witnessing. We shall be witnesses.

That means our life is to testify of our relationship with Christ. His saving power that transformed us and made us into his ambassadors.

So that when people see us and observe our behavior, it's like looking at Christ. because we're representing him. We are testifying by our lives that he is Lord of our lives.

[27 : 28] That's our calling. Amen? So how we react in times of trouble and even with the onset of sudden trouble reflects upon the one we say we represent.

Hmm. People are watching. So how we do what we say what we do and what we say in times of trouble people are observing.

And if what they see is someone who is panicking they doubt. Well, if that's a child of God what are you panicking for?

We're supposed to be able to come to you for help and prayer in times of trouble and you're panicking. But thank God he gives us the power to be able to have storm-stopping faith.

After all he's in the boat with us. He said after he gave that great commission and I will be with you always.

[28 : 47] Always. Now that's not just linear. Like I'll be with you always out to the future. That means also that I will be with you every day.

in every circumstance. Whenever problems arise I'm with you. I'm with you now.

And I'm not going anywhere. So when you're faced with that mountain when that trouble hits out of nowhere I'm with you. Happy about that?

Amen. I am. I'm with you even until the end of the age. So here are some keys to remaining calm in the time of trouble.

Number one not in the order necessarily but the first one is don't fear. Don't be afraid.

[29 : 56] You see fear does some strange things to people. It can make you forget who Jesus is for one thing. They were so terrified believing that they were about to drown that they panicked.

Fear. Even after Jesus had calmed the sea everything became calm they were still afraid. and Jesus said to them why are you so afraid?

Do you still have no faith? So it's about fear versus faith. You can't have fear and faith in the same place at the same time.

It's like light and darkness. They can't coexist. The light will drive out the darkness. Right? And faith will drive out fear.

They cannot coexist. You either have faith or you don't. You either have and if you don't have faith you're probably going to have fear because there's a lack of trust in God.

[31 : 20] fear. But thank God we're promised in scripture 2 Timothy 1 7 that God has not given us a spirit of fear or a spirit of cowardice it can be translated.

God has not given us a spirit of cowardice of fear. fear. That's what the word says. Fear is not from God. Let me say that again.

Fear is not from God. I'll say it again. I'm looking for these amens. Fear is not from God. So God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

We read elsewhere in scripture that perfect love casts out so perfect love and fear can't exist in the same place.

So God has given us power. Power what kind of power? Power over fear. self-control. That can be, that phrase, end of a sound mind can also be translated of self-control.

[32 : 51] God has given us a spirit of power and of love and of self-control. So a sound mind and self-control are synonymous in this context.

Self-control, how? Well, how many of you have studied brain science? Okay, maybe studies are too big of a word. How many of you have read about brain science?

Okay. Yeah, because I haven't studied it either, but I've read about it. You know, I'm not a psychiatrist, but I did stay at a, never mind, bad joke.

The amygdala is this little almond-shaped thing kind of in the middle of the brain. And the amygdala is the, it's like the panic center.

It's the alarm center. It's whenever there is danger or a perception of danger, the amygdala sends out signals.

[33 : 58] chemicals that the frontal lobe, the cortex translates as, okay, there is a danger.

There's a problem here. And the frontal lobe, which we'll call flow for short, and we'll call the amygdala Amy. Isn't that cute? So Amy streams to flow.

There's a problem. You better do something. And it's up to the flow to process that. To look at the situation.

This happens, you know, in microseconds. This happens immediately. The cerebral cortex or flow computes all the known facts.

brain. It's the supercomputer of the brain. And it figures out whether or not this danger is real.

[35 : 07] But what happens often is that the signals from the amygdala Amy are so strong, so powerful, and are coming with such rapidity, with such urgency, that the cerebral cortex, the frontal load there, can get overwhelmed.

And it cannot process it. It's just happening too fast. There's too much going on. There are too many chemicals flowing to flow, and she gets confused.

And it can cause a person to what? Fight? Flight? Or freeze?

It's like paralyzed. Now all this was set in place by God for good reason. If you're in the woods and you see a bear, and he goes haywire.

Bear, bear, bear, bear, bear, do something. And so flow has to process that. Okay, is this danger real? Yeah, that really is a bear.

[36 : 28] Okay, so unfortunately what a lot of people do is what? They react by running. Bad idea. Because you can't outrun a bear, right? Or they'll climb a tree. Another bad idea. Or they'll jump in the water.

Another bad idea. Because bears can do all that. So the best thing to hope for is that there's somebody with you that you can outrun. Kidding.

No, the smartest thing to do is do what? Play dead. Right? Because then you're no longer a threat. And the bear is like, okay, no issues.

Unless you happen to lay down on top of a cub and it's a female. Yeah. don't do that. So, but, but it's important to have prepared and to have that knowledge so that flow then says, stop, don't do anything, don't look at the bear, don't make eye contact, get down on the ground, into a fetal position, and hold your breath.

[37 : 57] Right? But in order to do that, what did you have to do? Stop. Just stop and think. But unfortunately, in too many cases and in the world that we live in, panic takes over.

There is so, so many chemicals flooding the brain that there's confusion, there's panic, and some people, if this happens frequently enough, a person can actually develop a disease, chronic anxiety, panic attacks, it has to be treated.

If this is you, get help. Because the doctors who are still just practicing, but they have come up with interventions, pills you can take to help regulate the flow of those chemicals to keep you from panicking and having those attacks.

And when children grow up in a situation where they experience too many things, too many traumas, it can cause them real problems throughout their life.

Talk to any school teacher, and they'll tell you so many kids that they deal with, they have trouble even learning, or sitting still, concentrating because of all of the trauma, the adverse childhood experiences, ACE they call it.

[39 : 40] They've had so many adverse childhood experiences that it makes it difficult for them to even succeed in school. Here's my point. God gave us the ability to control our responses to adverse situations.

And this sounds almost insulting to say it, but I'm going to say it anyway. Sometimes you need a time out. When sudden trouble happens, we need to just stop and think. That's what the disciples needed to do. They need to stop and think. Wait a minute. That's Jesus over there.

That's the Lord over there. He's the master of the sea. We shouldn't be worried. Settle down. Settle down. Jesus is not going to drown.

And if he's not going to drown, I'm not going to drown. Because I'm in the boat with him. I'm with him. I don't need to worry. See, but that takes time.

[40 : 58] That takes thought, right? That takes stopping, giving the brain a chance to process what's happening. So, the first lesson is don't fear.

If we're going to remain calm, don't fear. fear. If we don't fear, we won't lose faith.

Faith is what will help us to stop our storm in its tracks.

thoughts. We need to take that time to process things and to remind ourselves of just who Jesus is.

Faith is so important because faith is the key to us regaining control of our thoughts.

And it doesn't take a lot of faith. It just takes a little bit. That's why Jesus said in Matthew 17, 20, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, move from here to there, and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.

[42 : 37] How many believe that Jesus cannot lie? How many believe that God cannot lie? How many believe that the word is true? he said we can move mountains with just a little bit of faith.

No ifs, ands, or buts about that. Let me demonstrate something for you. I'm looking around.

I would say, how many people are here? What's the average attendance? What would you say? without me having to count? Okay.

Let's say 75. 75 people here. And would you say the average weight is about 100? Somebody said amen!

all right, 200? Let's say 200. Let's say 200. So, 200 times 75 is how much?

[43 : 52] 1500 pounds? 15,000 pounds?

Okay. All right, everybody stand up. I just moved 15,000 pounds. You can sit down.

it's amazing what we can do with our thoughts.

I just moved a small mountain. So, all it takes is a little bit of faith. We can actually, with a little bit of faith, speak to our situation and take control.

This is not mystical. This is actually, brain science agrees with it. We can take control of our thoughts. And if we take control of our thoughts, we take control of our situation.

[45 : 04] Now, those disciples, had they done that, it doesn't necessarily mean that the waves and the wind would have stopped, right? Because we don't control nature. Jesus does that, but he's God.

So, he can speak to the waves, he can speak to the wind and say, would you just shut up? And they listen. But we can speak to our thoughts and say, would you just shut up?

And then it doesn't matter what the waves and the wind are doing, right? Because once you become calm, once you have achieved peace within, then it doesn't matter what's going on around you.

That's storm stopping faith. Aren't you happy about that? Boy, I am. I really am, because I run into a lot of situations that can cause panic.

you? Yeah. So, I mean, we live by faith. Judy, she's the finance director at our ministry, Urban Light Ministries.

[46 : 22] I did say I would give you an update, so I'm going to do that real quick. This is a good place to do that. We are, how am I doing? Oh, I'm good. I wrote this down so that I could zip through it real fast.

We have 14 sunshine clubs in 13 locations. Sunshine clubs are children's ministries that we do after school, and this, sometimes people need a second to process this.

We do these one hour weekly Sunday school type ministries after school in 14 club settings, in public school elementary gyms.

Process that for a second. In a world where church and state are separate, where there can't be any crossover there, and there isn't, we've been doing this since 1994.

four. And tens of thousands of kids have heard the gospel in their elementary school, after school.

[47 : 47] I only got about two amens on that. Wow! Some of these kids have grown up and they're sitting in churches. some of them haven't fared so well, because there's other things working against them.

But many of them have turned out okay. I could drop some names of kids who are sunshine club kids now and that are growing up and doing some good things in the world.

All right, I'll drop one name. One is the head basketball coach at Springfield High School, Isaiah Carson. this is an amazing ministry.

And so we've got that going on. There are between six and eight hundred kids, it fluctuates, who are members of the Sunshine Club this year. So we're, we're, amen.

It's a wonderful ministry. We need help. We need help. We're limited as to the number of kids, the number of clubs we can have because we're limited in the number of volunteers that we have.

[48 : 53] In other words, the more volunteers, the more adults of all ages and sizes and colors and means, the more volunteers we have, the more kids we can serve.

Right? I mean, because they're kids. They're elementary school kids. And if you don't have enough help, enough adults there, and you've got a gym full of kids, you've got trouble.

Right? You can't control children unless you have enough help. And there are schools that want the Sunshine Club, but we can't deliver because we don't have the volunteers.

So we are in desperate need of volunteers. So that is a way in which you can help. You can pray to the Lord of the harvest to raise up workers. And I believe if you pray sincerely, he might just call you.

But don't let that stop you from praying. And really, it's just an hour a week. And, you know, it doesn't matter about the age. You can be a senior citizen.

[50 : 00] In fact, kids love senior citizens. They really do. Because a lot of them, you know, they don't have grandmas and grandpas. A lot of them, they don't.

And so they just long, you know, to to, it's kind of funny, I've become one of those. And, you know, they just, they gravitate to you.

They hold on to you. They want you near. They want to sit by you. Because they just, they love older people. You know, you really don't have to do much else.

Just show up and be there. That counts. That counts. But you can take a leadership position as well if you want to teach. Or be a helper and help to teach.

So that's the report on the Sunshine Club. So we also would like to bring back Sunshine Camp. We had to do away with Sunshine Camp some years ago because we were not able to raise the necessary funds.

[51 : 06] Because it's not cheap to take hundreds of kids away for, you know, the better part of a week to a campground and have professional services and everything that's needed to run a camp.

So we had to discontinue it. And our hearts are broken and have been broken because we aren't able to do it. Because that four days for these kids is life-changing.

Because you get to, you know, for a solid four days be able to pour into those kids. and for them to experience things like, you know, campfires, you know, canoeing, you know, some of these kids have never been in a canoe.

Some of them have never been fishing. Some of them have never seen a red winged black bird.

Because they don't, you know, they're not common in the city, but when you get out, you see things that, kids see things that they ordinarily wouldn't see.

Some of these kids have never heard a tree frog. You get them out there, and you got them, it's just you and the Lord, you've got them to yourself and the Lord.

[52 : 23] And so prayer and Bible study and all kinds of fun activities throughout the days and evenings makes a profound impact on these children. We've got two young ladies who were in Sunshine Club, and now they're in full-time ministry working for the Salvation Army.

that's the power of the Sunshine Club camp. So pray for us that, you know, the Lord would raise up the folks who would give us the money, several thousand dollars, in order to bring back Sunshine Camp.

also our fatherhood program, which we started out of the need, our fatherhood program, that was born out of a need.

We saw that so many of these kids were growing up in homes where there was no father. There was no healthy father figure there. And how many know that God intended for every child to have a

mother and a father?

Amen. Not just in the house, but actively engaged, you know what I mean, participating in parenting the child in every aspect of that child's life.

[53 : 43] Every child needs that. And I don't know if you know it or not, but Clark County has a 40% father absence rate. It means four out of ten children are growing up in a home in which their biological father does not live.

And nationally, half of America's children have never set foot in their father's home. Can you imagine that? So we started the fatherhood program to help fathers understand their importance in a child's life.

And we try to give them the tools that they need to be engaged, whether they live in the same house or not, and whether the mom and the dad get along or not, to help them understand that their kids need them, no matter what.

And that is important to do whatever you can to be engaged with those children. children. Our need is, again, it's for funding because the government gets this.

They get this, that this is driving, this father absence is driving most of the social problems that we have in the world today. The crime, you know, the drug abuse, you know, all of it.

[55 : 05] The violence, it's being driven because children are not being raised in homes that are stable, where there is a mother and a father, and both parents are healthily engaged in raising their children.

School failure, it's all tied to father absence. It's a \$100 billion problem just from the federal government standpoint. That doesn't even begin to count the state and the local cost of all the social services required in order to help children not suffer so much from the poverty and all the other things caused by the lack of a daddy.

So, we've got government funding. The problem with that is you can't count on it. For the first part of this year, we had local, state, and federal money to do our fatherhood work.

Now, one problem is with that, you can't really preach the gospel. You can't really make disciples on taxpayer money. There's that church state thing. You know, and being a Christian ministry, we don't step across that line.

Not only is it illegal, it's unethical to use taxpayer money to do Christian work. But we've had to settle for that because the government gets it, the church doesn't.

[56 : 29] So, we've not been able to raise the funds needed to do this work strictly as a Christian ministry. That needs to change. church. So, the Lord put it on my heart to write a book.

I wrote a book. It's called Father Love, the Powerful Resource Every Child Needs. And this is a Christian book. It comes from a biblical basis, and it's designed to help fathers understand their role as a father according to what the Bible teaches.

And from this, we are developing a study guide so that we can work with fathers in a discipleship mode.

So, that part's done. God has blessed us to get the book self-published. So, now it's a matter of buying books and developing that study guide and then publishing that and getting it into the hands of folks who will work with fathers using a Christian program.

Isn't that good? I mean, not because I'm doing it, because it needs to be done. So, by the way, we've brought some of these along. I'm not going to hawk the books. This is the last thing I'm going to say about it.

[57 : 43] We have some out there if you'd like to have one for yourself and read it, or if you'd like to buy one for a father you know, or some potential. Hey, hey, all right, we have a witness.

Okay, Lynette, I'll pay you afterward. So, we're looking for help, and we've asked a church, just full disclosure, we've asked a Dayton church to help us with funding to develop this program, but there's no guarantee that we'll get that.

We also asked the Turner Foundation. Again, no guarantee that we'll get it, and even if we do, it's not all the funds we need. That's kind of the way it works. So, we're looking for help.

Let's see. We're also looking for coaches. These are men who are willing to mentor a young dad. Because, you know, you bring something, you bring something these men need, and that's a father figure themselves.

Because a lot of them were raised without a dad. So, they need to see what it looks like to be a father. So, maybe you've raised your kids, you know, great.

[59 : 03] Or maybe you're in the midst of raising your kids. That's great, too. Whatever your circumstance, you have something to bring to the table for these young men. So, we're looking for mentors to coach young fathers.

Some other volunteer needs, we need fundraising help. So, if you're willing to serve on a fundraising committee, that would be great. We do a golf event, and we do an annual banquet. We're always looking for volunteers. Thank you, Lynette, for being on our fundraising committee. I'm hoping you're still on our fundraising committee. Okay. Thank you. Great. Glad you are. We also need board members, and we need some capital improvement. I don't know if you've been in our parking lot, but we definitely need help for things like that.

Other ministries, personal ministries, I am a broadcaster. This is my 30-something year as a broadcaster. I have a weekly gospel music countdown show that is heard virtually around the world because of the internet.

[60 : 13] It's on local, not one local station, but it's on traditional radio stations as well as internet radio stations, and we do a podcast. So people can visit anytime.

It's called Hot Gospel 20. I've been doing that for a weekly radio show for over 30 years, and I have a new show. It is an afternoon show on a new low-power FM licensed to Englewood called WGJM. So on that show, I combine Bible teaching and gospel music. It's on from 3 to 5, Monday through Friday, 96.9.

If you're within the area that can hear that station, or you can listen to it on the internet by going to gospeljam.net.

So there are plenty of things that we are doing that sometimes causes us to encounter storms.

[61 : 21] Judy can tell you, as Urban Light Ministries Finance Director, that there are times when we don't know if we're going to be able to make payroll. That's a storm.

We don't know if you're going to be able to pay the bills and pay your fee. And it's real easy to panic. We have, you know, we've come down to within days of missing payroll or paying a bill. We're not careful. We can panic. And probably in your life, you have at some point known what it's like to have these storms arise.

Sometimes suddenly. So it becomes critical that we remind ourselves of who we are and who he is. That means taking time. Stopping and thinking. Okay. Let's assess the situation. Who are we?

[62 : 34] Oh. I'm a child of God. He promised that he shall supply all of my needs according to his riches and glory by Christ Jesus.

Oh, okay. That's right. That's right. He did promise that. Oh, and yeah. He's done it before. Oh, he does it every time. So why am I worried?

Why am I panicking? Where is my faith? We have to remind ourselves. And we have to remind ourselves of who he is. He is the Lord God Almighty.

He owns the capital on a thousand hills and the hills too. There is nothing for me to be panicking about. Stop. Stop.

And think. And pray. Pray. Paul said to the believers at Philippi.

[63 : 39] In Philippians chapter 4. Wow.

That's a mouthful.

that no matter what our situation is, we don't need to be anxious. We don't need to be panicking. We don't need the anxiety.

Why? Because he's given us the key. Pray. With thanksgiving. I like that that was added. Because as we pray, we're doing it with an attitude of gratitude.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you that you've brought me out of so many situations. Thank you, Lord, that you are God and there's nothing too hard for you.

[64 : 46] Thank you for that. And thank you, Lord, that I'm your child and you have promised to take care of me. Lord, you said if I seek first the kingdom and your righteousness, all these things shall be added unto me.

So I don't have to worry. Thank you, Lord. Help. With an attitude of gratitude, make your requests known.

Whatever it is. And the peace of God, it doesn't say, and the answer will come immediately. It doesn't say that.

And the peace of God shall guard your hearts and minds. The peace of God will surround you like a garrison.

That's really what it means. I'm going to dispatch soldiers all around you and they are going to protect your rear.

[65 : 47] Shall guard what? Your heart and your mind. Going to protect your heart and mind from anxiety so that you can have peace in the midst of your storm.

Even if the wind is still blowing, even if the waves are still rising, I'm going to guard your heart and your mind from anxiety.

You see, the storm is here. It's not so much what's happening, it's what's happening here. And he promised to give us peace with him.

And with that peace within, we can deal with whatever's happening on the outside. It can't hurt us. There's nothing that can happen on the outside that's going to hurt us if in here we've got peace. Isn't that great? That's the most important thing. And that's what Paul, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is promising here.

[66 : 54] That the Lord would guard our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. And it's such a peace, it's a supernatural peace really.

Because it is beyond our understanding. Don't try to figure it out. Like, how can I have such peace with what's happening?

I'm about to be foreclosed upon. Why am I at peace? My car broke down in the middle of nowhere. Why am I at peace?

Because the Lord is guarding your heart and your mind from anxiety. And because you don't have that anxiety, you can think.

And the Lord can show you what to do. But as long as that storm is raging, you can't think. Your mind is overwhelmed with anxiety.

[68 : 00] But by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, by letting it be known to God what you need, it's going to protect your heart and your mind from anxiety.

He's going to give you peace in your heart. That's storm-stopping faith. So to wrap it up, stop and think.

Think about who He is. Think about His promises. Think about what He can do. Think about what He has already done. And the God of peace will be with you.

There may be turbulence all around you. A storm of emotions raging in your mind, in your heart. But through faith and courage, you may have peace in the midst of your trouble.

Stop. Pray. Think. Think. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your mind through Christ Jesus.

[69 : 28] That's storm-stopping faith. Amen. God bless you. Amen. Now, I think I'm supposed to dismiss you now.

Is that right? Let's pray first. Would you stand with me? If anyone would like to have prayer, I'm going to be, my wife and Carrie are going to go out to the table, but I'm going to stay in here. And if anybody would like prayer, I'm going to ask if any of the elders would like to join me. We'll pray for you to help you in any situation, but especially if there's something related to this message that you want prayer for, please don't hesitate to come.

Let's pray. Father, in the name of Jesus, we are just so grateful that you have laid out a plan for us to deal with the situations that arise in our lives that can cause us to panic.

You've given us, oh Lord, a formula, kind of a game plan. Help us to be aware and help us to pray about these things so that when we are hit with this trouble, whether it's sudden or not, we know what to do.

[70 : 57] Teach us, oh Lord God, to pray. Teach us, Lord God, to just stop and to take the time in the midst of our storm to assess our situation and to pray and to ask you, oh Lord God, to intervene and to give us a plan for how to deal with our issues rather than panicking.

May people see the peace that we have in you and be drawn to us, oh Lord God, so that we can share with them the reason for the hope that is within us.

Help us to activate whatever faith we have in order, oh Lord God, to be that kind of witness for you. Forgive us, Lord, for those times when we have fallen short.

We all do, oh Lord God. You know that. Forgive us. Help us, oh Lord God, to learn from those mistakes and to be ready the next time to handle things in a way that's going to bring you glory and honor and praise.

Open the door for us, oh God, that others will seek us out in times of their trouble that they would have the confidence knowing that we know how to pray.

[72 : 14] And may that open the door for us to be able to share with them the gospel of Jesus Christ. We love you. We thank you. We pray, oh Lord God, that the words of our mouth and the meditations of our heart will be acceptable in your sight, oh Lord, our strength and our redeemer.

We pray this and give thanks in Jesus' name. And all of God's people say it with a loud voice.

Amen? And amen. God bless you. You are dismissed in Jesus' name.