

# The Purpose of Trials, Tribulations, and Tragedies

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[ 0 : 00 ] John chapter 6 verses 16 through 21.

! May God add a blessing to the reading of his word.

Would you please be seated? The worst day of my life occurred about five years ago.

I don't remember the exact date because in many ways it's a day that I'd rather forget. But along with the pain and the sorrow of that day came many blessings too that I wouldn't want to live without today.

Danny was 17 weeks pregnant with our second child.

[ 1 : 43 ] And she woke up that morning of that terrible day and knew that something was wrong.

I don't recall everything that happened that morning. I do remember that I called home and spoke with my father and asked him to pray.

I remember we tried calling doctors, hospitals. It was so early in the morning. There's nothing really anybody could do. I remember praying really hard. As hard as I can ever remember praying.

But we realized within a few hours that our fears had been realized. That we had lost our baby.

I remember Danny and I holding each other tightly on the couch in our living room and just sobbing.

[ 3 : 01 ] Not saying anything. Just crying. Holding each other. I remember. Personally for me I know a lot of things changed in that moment.

For one. As much. Sorry Yvonne you started it. She's gone now. As much as I loved my wife then.

My love for her that day intensified. And later that morning when Jack woke up our son and he came out to us. And the three of us embraced tightly.

My thankfulness for him and my love for him grew immensely too. As much as I prayed that God would intervene in some miraculous way that day to prevent our loss.

In the days. The weeks. And the months ahead. I learned how great his love was and is for us too. I realized during that time that my need for him.

[ 4 : 15 ] My faith in him. My trust in him. My hope in him. My love for him. Grew immensely. Immensely.

You've probably been in a similar situation. And some of you I know that you have. Been in a similar situation. Enduring a tragedy that you'd rather have not experienced.

But through it. As painful. As it was. And still is for you today to remember. God used it.

To work in you. In ways. That made you. The stronger. More mature. More resolute. Follower of Christ.

That you are right now. A Christian. Who is more like Jesus. As a result. A quote that I had heard before that time.

[ 5 : 15 ] But that made more sense after having gone through that tragic day. Was from Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon once said. I have learned. To kiss the wave.

That throws me against the rock of ages. I have learned. To kiss the wave. That throws me against. The rock of ages. How long oh Lord.

Is a question. That has rolled off the tongues. Of God's people. For centuries. It's the cry of those. Who suffer.

Sometimes asked with faith. That is still resolute. Sometimes asked with fear. And even a twinge of doubt. And I'm sure that you've probably asked that question before.

In either of those ways. Resolute faith. Or a twinge of doubt. Because. Let's be real. It's hard. It's hard.

[ 6 : 14 ] It's hard to learn. To kiss the wave. It's hard to learn. To kiss the wave. That throws us. Up against the rock. Of ages. And it takes a mature Christian. I believe.

To learn. To do so. Because often. That maturity. That they have. Has come. Of a result. Of their. Having endured. A trial.

A test. Or tragedy. Learning to kiss the wave. Does not mean. Delighting in tragedy. Don't. Don't take that away. That is not at all. What I mean to say.

Learning to kiss the wave. Does not mean. That you delight. In tragedy. Or that you look forward.

To tests. Or trials. It does not mean. That we go through. Tragic moments.

With enthusiasm. And without shedding tears. And keeping all of our emotions. In check. I remember. I preached. That Sunday.

[ 7 : 07 ] Of that same week. And it was hard. But I understood. That when a Christian. Faces a trial. And endures. A tragedy. Not only does God.

Use it. For an eventual good. But it also. In a way. Puts them. In the spotlight. Which I talked with.

About Yvonne. This morning. As we were walking. We know that when we are.

Enduring something. That the world. Tends to watch. Watch us more intently. Than they ever were.

Doing so before. So do our other.

Brothers and sisters. In Christ. When they are going. When we are going. Through one of those trials. Those tests. Or those tragedies. People are watching. Wondering. How that will affect.

Our faith. And our trust. In Christ. And so. It's so important. That when we go through. Those things.

When you go through. Those things. That you realize. That this is an opportunity.

[ 8 : 02 ] To. For you. To. Declare. That your faith. In Christ. Though maybe challenged. Is not lost. I learned too.

That God. Hadn't taken anything. Away from me. That he wouldn't. One day. Give me back. I have a child. In heaven. Whom I look forward.

To one day meeting. And spending the rest. Of my eternity with. I pray with the rest. Of my family.

And later that year. Danny would become pregnant again. With Hazel.

Our rainbow baby. Our blessing. After the storm. There are many. Many examples. Of God's people. Recorded in scripture.

Who suffered. Greatly. Their suffering. Suffering. Was greater than any. That I've endured.

Perhaps. Their suffering. Even greater than anything. That you've endured.

[ 9 : 00 ] But we have the benefit. Of seeing how. As a result. Of those trials. How. God brought blessing. Into their life. Not only. For them.

But for. Others. Around them. One of the primary. Examples. That we have. Of that. Is Joseph. Of the Old Testament. Joseph.

If you remember. Was thrown into a pit. By his jealous brother. By his own. Family. Who despised him. And then they. They pulled him out. And then they. Sold him.

Into. Sold him. I should say. Into slavery. Where there. We know. Eventually. He was wrongly.

Incarcerated. Accused of a crime. That he did not commit.

But forced. To pay. The penalty. Anyway. But eventually. Through Joseph's. Trials. God elevated him.

[ 9 : 55 ] To a position. Where he would be. A blessing. To many others. Who are facing. A trying time. Of their own. And so. I want us to go back. And look.

Real. Real. Quickly. At. Joseph. At. The trials. The tragedies. The tests. That he endured. And see. A common thread.

That runs. Throughout. Them all. First. We go to. Acts 7. Where. Excuse me. There. Stephen. Is preaching. If you remember. And he's going back through.

And he's talking about. The history. Of Israel. And he brings up. Joseph. In Acts 7. 9. He said. And the patriarchs. Jealous of Joseph.

Sold him into Egypt. But God was with him. Now. We go back. To Genesis 39. Verses 2. Through 3. It says there. The Lord was with Joseph.

[ 10 : 48 ] The Lord was with Joseph. And he became. A successful man. And was in the house. Of his Egyptian master. His master saw. That the Lord. Was with him.

And that the Lord. Caused all that he did. To succeed. In his. Hands. Then again. After he's wrongly accused. Genesis 39. 21. Says.

That. The Lord. Was with. Joseph. And showed him. Steadfast love. And gave him. Favor. In the sight. Of the keeper.

Of the prison. Then in Genesis. 39. 23. The keeper. Of the prison. Paid no attention. To anything. That was in Joseph's charge. Because.

The Lord. Was. With him. And whatever he did. The Lord. Made it. Succeed. Do you see the thread? Do you see the thread?

[11:44] Do you see the continual theme. That runs through all of those trials. In Joseph's life. It's this. The Lord.

Was. With him. When he was in the pit. The Lord. Was. With him. When he was. Sold. As a slave. By his brothers. The Lord. Was with him. When he worked in Potiphar's house. And Potiphar's wife. Accused him. Of a crime. That he did not commit. The Lord.

Was with him. When he was in prison. Serving a term. For again. A crime. He did not commit. The Lord. Was with him. When he interpreted the dreams. Of. Of Pharaoh's men.

Of Pharaoh's servants. And they left. And they forgot all about him. The cupbearer. Right? The Lord. Was still. With him. With him. Throughout. It all.

[12:39] Until the point. Where he became. A powerful man. In Egypt. Second only. To.

Pharaoh. Himself. God was with him. When. Joseph. Had to face. The most.

Dramatic. Confrontation. Of his life. To that point. When his own brothers. Came back to him. Needing.

Something. From him. Needing food. To get through that great time. Of famine. But not realizing. That they were speaking to. The brother. Whom they had despised.

And whom they had sold. Into slavery. But Joseph. Having endured. Those trials. Those tests. That tragedy. And with the power.

[13:37] To exact. Retribution. Upon them. For what they had done. To him. And able to. Enact. Justice. Upon them. For their heinous deed.

That they committed. Against him. Chose. Instead. To. Take. A different. Course. Joseph. Was. The victim. Joseph.

Was. The offended. Party. But. He chose. To. Forgive them. And to bless them. Instead.

Of seeking. Justice. Upon them. After revealing. His true identity. To his brothers. Joseph.

Showing. Great. Spiritual. Maturity. And insight. That he gained. Through those trials. Those tests. And those tragedies. Said to them.

[14:32] In Genesis. 50. Verse. 20. As for you. You meant evil. Against me. But God. Meant it.

For good. To bring it about. That many. People. Should be kept. Alive. As they are. Today. The waves.

That continually. Crashed. Against. Joseph. Kept. Tossing him. Into the rock. Of. Ages. As Christians. We learn.

To kiss the wave. Because it is. Through those times. That we encounter. Jesus. On a more. Deeper. Level. We know. That the waves. No matter how.

Tense. Intense. They are. Cannot drown us. Because. We. Are in. Christ. Because. We have. Christ. He is. Our great.

[15:27] Substitute. Who endured. The greatest. Of all. Trials. For us. By taking. Our place. As he died. On the cross. For our sins.

The most tragic event. That the world. Has ever known. Or will ever know. Was the rejection. And crucifixion. Of God's only son. But through. That tragedy.

Tremendous. Unspeakable. Blessing. Has come. To many. Today's text. Teaches us.

How. To kiss. The wave. By reminding us. Of God's purpose. In them. And the truths. That we have. To lay hold. Of. As we.

Go. Through. Trials. And tests. And tragedies. And so. Here. Is the main idea. For this morning's. Message. The main idea. The.

[16:26] Trials. Tests. And tragedies. That a Christian. Endures. In their life. With Christ. Are used. By him. To deepen. And strengthen.

Their faith. Faith. Is the fill in there. The trials. Tests. And tragedies. That a Christian. Endures. In their life. With Christ. Are used. By him. To deepen.

And strengthen. Their faith. In this passage. Of scripture. We are given. Four truths. To cling to. As we endure.

Trials. Tests. And tragedies. In clinging. To these truths. During difficult times. You will learn to. If you haven't already. To kiss.

The wave. That throws you. Up against. The rock. Of ages. So let's look at the first truth. From this passage. And it's this. That trials. Tests.

[17:20] And tragedies. Have. A. Purpose. Trials. Tests. And tragedies. Have. A.

Purpose. Let's review. And look back again. At verses 16. Through the beginning. Of verse 19. It says there. When evening came. His disciples went down. To the sea. Got into a boat.

And started across the sea. To Capernaum. It was now dark. And Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough. Because a strong wind was blowing.

When they had rowed about three or four miles. They saw Jesus. John says that after Jesus avoided the crowds.

Attempt. If you remember from last week. To seize him. And make them their king. That he left. And he sought solitude. By retreating up into the mountains.

[18:16] By himself. Mark accounts this event as well. And he includes some more details for us. He says that Jesus. Left the disciples. With instructions.

To get into the boat. And to go to the other side. Before him. And Mark tells us. What Jesus was doing. As he went up to the mountain. That he was praying. The Bible says that Jesus is omniscient.

He knows all things. He sees all things. And so being omniscient. He was well aware. That he was sending his disciples. Out into a boat.

And doing so. That they would encounter a storm. While they're on the sea. Without him. He was. Sending them. Into danger.

He was sending them. Into danger. He was sending them. Into a trial. He was sending them. Into a test. A test. That would test.

[19:19] Their faith. And. That in the end. Would produce. Stronger faith. Within them. As a result. Now this was a wind storm.

That the disciples encountered. The kind that comes. Quickly upon the sea of Galilee. Given its geographic. Location. And situation. The wind. Made the waves.

Choppy. And the boat. Difficult then to row. The disciples. We are told. Rowed for about. Three or four. Miles. They started rowing.

Around dusk. And they rowed. Their boat. Until. Approximately. About three. O'clock. In the morning. Could you imagine. Rowing a boat.

From. Nightfall. To about. Three. O'clock. In. The morning. And so. No doubt. They were. Tired. Physically.

[20:16] They were worn out. Mentally. Emotionally. They had probably experienced. Just about all the emotions. That you can. Experience. As a human being. And maybe.

Even spiritually. They were. A wreck. I wonder. If. In that moment. The disciples. Had any idea. That Jesus. Though he was far.

Away from them. Physically. Still. Had. The power. To help them. Or. Were they tempted. To think. That without him. In the boat. That they were doomed. That there wasn't anything. That could help them. That hope. Was lost. I wonder. If they were tempted.

To doubt. That Jesus cared. About them. I wonder. If they were angry. For his having sent them. Ahead in the boat. While he was. Praying safely. On dry land.

[21:12] They shouldn't have doubted. They shouldn't have doubted. His ability. Or his care. For them. After all. They had just witnessed. As we've just gone through. They had just witnessed.

The Lord care for. Upwards of 20,000 people. By feeding them. By his miraculous power. People whom. They didn't really know. People whom.

Jesus. Hadn't had much. Personal interaction with. Before that. Day. But he didn't turn. Any of those. People away. Even though they would.

Many of them. Eventually turn away from him. Jesus still cared for them. And fed them all. He provided for them. Perhaps. While straining. Against the waves.

The disciples. Were tempted to think. As we often do. When we face. Trials. Tests. Or tragedies. That Jesus power. Has limitations. Or that he's too busy.

[22:06] Or he's too preoccupied. To care. Or pay attention. To our need. Again. If they did. They shouldn't have. Because they'd already. Witnessed.

Jesus ability. And care for them. When he was asleep. In the boat. In a similar storm. John does not. Record that event. But the other. Gospel writers do.

And they record it. As having taken place. Before. This event. Before this time. That they were now. In. Maybe they felt. That the situation. Was hopeless.

That if they were going. To be saved. This time. It was up to them. Since Jesus was not. Physically. In the boat. This time. To command. The winds. And the waves. To be still.

Of course. We are blessed. With knowing. The end result. And that they had. No reason. To fear. Or doubt.

[ 22 : 59 ] Or be dismayed. In that moment. Yet. When we face. A test. A trial. Or a tragedy. We still.

If we're honest. Find ourselves. Struggling. Even overcome. By fear. And by doubt. And so.

It's imperative. That we immerse. Ourselves. In God's word. In order to. Counter. And fight against.

Those doubts. And those fears.

That we're tempted. To give. A greater audience to. During our times. Of trials. Tests. And tragedies. Years before. That tragic day.

That Danny and I. Experienced. She wanted. To do something. Different. For Christmas. She wanted us. To make gifts. For each other. Part of the reason.

[ 23 : 56 ] I think. For that. Was that I was in. Seminary. Seminary at the time. And we were broke. So it seemed like. A cheap way. To do something nice. And so I decided.

That I would paint her. A picture. With a Bible verse. On it. And since I was in. Greek class. At the time. I chose. To write. That verse. In the Greek language.

And then on the back. Of the canvas. I had an English. An English translation. Translation. Written.

And you know. Of all. The great. And many verses. That I could have chosen.

To. To write. To paint. That picture of. The one I chose. Was Romans 8. 28. I want to read. Romans 8. 28. To you. I feel like.

I read. This verse. A lot. On Sunday. Morning. It's. It's. One of. It's. It's. It's. It's. helped me immensely. Romans 8, 28, it says there, and we know that for those who love God, all things, all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.

[ 25 : 10 ] And for about four years prior to that tragic day, that picture hung somewhere and wherever it was that we called home. As a reminder, I think, and also as preparation for us to know that God works all things together for the good. Whether we perceive them to be a good thing or a bad thing, God uses all things according to His purpose. What is that purpose? Well, verse 29 of that same chapter tells us, for those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son in order that He might be the firstborn among many brothers to make us more like Jesus Christ, to prepare us for our eternal home, inheritance, and blessing. Over the years, as we moved and got new decor, that picture was given an increasingly lessened place of prominence prominence in wherever we were living because I'm not that great of an artist. But it still served as a reminder for us during that difficult time. I noticed that picture soon afterwards in our basement bathroom. And I remember taking it off the wall and bringing it upstairs to Danny and going over the fact that, you know, God had put this verse on my heart years and years ago. And I this was a verse that helped us so much as we went through the weeks and the months of that difficult time. And it was just a reminder, one of God's ways, one of God's little graces, a reminder of His goodness, a reminder of the fact that He loves us, a reminder of the fact that He's always with us, a reminder of the fact that our tragedy was not in vain. There was a purpose.

Jesus sent the disciples into the storm for a reason. So know that whatever trial, whatever test, or whatever tragedy you are facing today or have experienced, you will not and have not endured it in vain.

There's a purpose. Now, you may not know that purpose right now. You may not know it for some time, but one day I believe that you will.

And so now the next three truths about our trials, tests, and tragedies tell us of what some of those purposes are. What some of those purposes are. So the second truth we see here is that trials, tests, and tragedies are used by God to remind us that He is always watching over us.

Reminding us that He is always watching over us. Again, continuing on in verse 19, it says, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat. They were frightened.

[ 28 : 40 ] Jesus knew what the disciples were going through as they were going through it. Again, in Mark's account of this event, he says that as Jesus was alone on the mountain, that He saw that they were making headway painfully for the wind was against them from where He was. He saw them. He was watching. He knew what they were going through. Jesus again sent them out in the boat knowing that they would encounter this storm. And He saw them as they struggled in it. This

isn't an easy test that Jesus was going to give them. And let me tell you, you probably know this, that rarely are His tests easy. To grow our faith, we must undergo some measure of stress, some measure of pressure. And you think about it, this is how muscle is built in your body, isn't it? You lift weights. You put them under stress. You put your muscles under pressure. And that pressure and that stress tears your muscle fiber, but it regrows.

It repairs itself. And guess what? It grows back bigger and it grows back stronger. And so it is with our faith. Test and pressure, trials and tests, they have a way of putting stress on us that increases our strength and our faith and our trust, not in ourselves, but in Jesus Christ.

Christ. You know, Jesus was not like many of our modern day helicopter parents. You guys ever heard the term helicopter parent? A helicopter parent is a parent that is always hovering over their children, watching everything that they're doing, afraid that, you know, the worst thing that could happen is going to happen. Always taking their child's side over adults or anything else. They're constantly hovering over their children, concerned that they might get hurt physically, that they might have their feelings hurt, or something else like that. They want to protect their children, which is good.

It's good to want to protect your children. But their overprotection, as we're seeing in many of the generations that are now entering into adulthood and into college, and some even older, that their overprotection, their sheltered life has actually done more harm than it has good.

You know, for me, some of the best lessons that I ever learned from my father were lessons where I had to apply his instruction on my own. Whether it was dealing with a bully at school, you know, my dad didn't say, well, tell me his name. I'm going to go to his house. I'm going to punch him in the face for you, right? No. Say, this is how you handle it. This is how you deal with that. Whether it was quitting a job which I really didn't want to do, or getting hired for a job, or any other kind of moment of confrontation, he would tell me, or any kind of moment where I would feel stressed or pressured, he and my mother, they would tell me, this is what you should do. But then it was up to me to do it. [ 32 : 05 ] And it wasn't because they didn't love me. It wasn't because they didn't care about my protection. But I think they realized that one day, I would become an adult. One day, I would be a husband and a father. And they couldn't always be there to hold my hand through every little thing that I went through in life. Always there to listen, but again, giving me the opportunity to mature and grow up as a person. And I believe that that's terribly missing in our society today. Jesus wanted the faith of his disciples to grow. But he couldn't continue to just hold their hand and wait for it to happen.

These men were important. These men were going to lead his church. These men were going to be instrumental in spreading the gospel. They were going to face more intense trials, greater tests, greater tragedy, right? We know that all of them, most of them died a martyr's death for their faith in Christ. And so he was preparing them even back then for what he knew they would one day be and do for his church. He isn't uncaring when you go through these things. He knows what he's doing. And understand that as he is doing that and as you are enduring that, that he's always watching you. He's always watching you. Not like a helicopter parent, but he's watching. So know that whatever test or trial or tragedy you face, Jesus is watching you. He will not leave you. He will not forsake you in it.

Part of the purpose of such trials is that through them we learn that Jesus is always watching over us and is always aware of what it is we're going through. So he's always watching. Third, we see the third truth is that trials, tests, and tragedies are used by God to teach us that in our time of need, Jesus helps. Jesus helps. Verse 20, it said that Jesus now walking towards them on the water said to them, it is I, do not be afraid. Jesus watches us, but not because he gets enjoyment out of watching us squirm during hard times like some disturbed kid who fries insects with his magnifying glass.

He watches us in order to help us. He watches us in order to help us, and he does help. He helps us at all times, but particularly when we need him most. Just as muscles are built through applying pressure, so too there are times when the burden that we are trying to lift is just too heavy. And in that time, if you've ever listed weights, you know that when you're being tested, when you're testing that muscles in that way and that burden is too heavy, guess what you need? A spotter. You need somebody standing over there ready to grab the weight and help you to pull it up. Jesus operates in much the same way so that we are not ever crushed by the burdens or the trials or the tests that we have been called to experience. He will help us in our time of need. But sometimes, as we know

this, that Jesus will help, what we've got to understand too is that Jesus will help, but we've got to be patient as we wait for him to help. And patience is a virtue in our culture that we all greatly struggle with, isn't it? Man, I hate waiting. I hate waiting in lines. We live in the internet age where you can have access to information immediately, right? Whatever you want, you can have it within seconds or within minutes. And if we have to wait for longer than five minutes, we start to go a little bit crazy, don't we? At least, unfortunately, I feel like I do sometimes. And so when we're going through a trial or a test or a tragedy, sometimes we don't want to wait for Jesus to help. We think, I'll take matters into my own hands. I've got to do something about this. But we've got to wait sometimes for Jesus to help. Donald Gray Barnhouse once told the story of a man who owned a lumber factory. And one day as this man was walking through his factory, he lost his expensive timepiece in a pile of sawdust. He didn't know where he dropped it. He just knew that he lost it there.

[ 36 : 50 ] And so he sent word out to the town, I've lost this expensive timepiece. That means a lot to me. Excuse me. And I will pay you to come and search and find it, and there'll be a great reward for the one who is able to find my lost and treasured watch. And so people from the town came that morning, and they spent all day searching through these piles of sawdust and found nothing. It was lunchtime.

So they decided, okay, you know, let's take a break, and we'll come back and get back at it after we have something to eat. Well, as they took their break, a little boy who knew about the reward crept into the factory and within three minutes came out with that lost watch. And everybody was astounded. And they wanted to know, how did you find the watch? And so the little boy told them simply that all he did was that he laid down in the sawdust and he listened for the clock ticking. And he was able to find it. How simple. How simple. But you see, so oftentimes we don't do the same when it comes to the Lord. We don't wait silently, listening, knowing that he will help us in our time of need. Dr. Barnhouse, after he shared that story, went on to say this to his congregation. He said, some of you have lost more than a watch. If you will be very still and listen quietly, the Lord will speak to you and show you just where you lost the power and victory which you so sorely miss. Do you realize that Jesus will help you? That his helping you during your trial, your test, and your tragedy will come. He sees you. He will help you. But part of seeking his help is waiting. And it's spending time with him in prayer and listening quietly and patiently. I remember in seminary, one of my favorite teachers was my Hebrew teacher. And he was a teacher that I loved because he desired that all of his students pass his class. And that was a really hard class, an easy class to fail. But he wanted us to pass. And so one thing that he would do every Friday was test day. And as we took our tests, he would walk around the class and he would look over our shoulders. And if he saw that we had overlooked some kind of grammatical mistake that we had made or something, he would whisper.

[ 39 : 41 ] And he'd kind of point and he'd tell us without giving us the answer, you know, something's wrong here. And then you'd fix it. He'd come back and maybe he'd pat you on the back. And I learned that on test day when he came around, instead of going like this, I just backed up and go, hey, take a look.

Take a look. You tell me, you know, I want to pass this test too. And so I share that story because I think Jesus operates in the same way. Listen, whatever test or trial you're going through, he wants you to pass. He wants you to pass it. He wants you to be more like him. He's not sitting back waiting with his red pen just ready to mark up your life. And when you get to heaven to show you, oh, look at all this failure. No, he wants to prepare you for that day. Now, by having you pass all of these tests to make you more like him, to prepare you for your eternity with him, which brings us to the final truth that we can cling to as we go through trials, tests, and tragedies, which are that trials, tests, and tragedies are used by God to demonstrate that Jesus will bring us home. He will bring us home. Verse 21, then they were glad to take him into the boat, no doubt.

And immediately it says the boat was at the land to which they were going. John here does not record Jesus or Peter's, I should say, getting out of the boat and walking on the water. That is a story for another time. But for us this morning, he does reveal that not only does Jesus help, but he's willing to get in our place. He's willing to get in the boat. He's willing to get involved directly with the struggle that we are facing. And then once he's there to deliver us safely to our destination, Jesus is able to get you where he wants you to be. Another verse that means a lot to me is Philippians 1.6 that I have to constantly be reminded by. There it says, and I am sure of this, that he

who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. What God has started in you the day of your salvation, he will bring it to completion. He will bring it to completion. The completion of that work will see you as a believer in heaven, glorified, and sinless forever with him. You can know that our Lord will bring you through every test, every trial, every tragedy that you face because he will ultimately bring you home to be with him. Where there, the Bible tells us, he will dry every eye. And even if you can't see the purpose now, you will then. At times, life seems like a storm. And the winds and the waves threaten to take your focus off of Jesus. The darkness of the trial prevents your ability to see. But you should know that even if that trial or that tragedy means that your life here on earth comes to an end, that when it does, as a believer, because of the tragedy that Christ endured on the cross for you, and the miracle of that glad morning when he rose from the dead, that even if that tragedy means the end of your life here, because of what Jesus has done and the salvation he's given you, you will see him face to face. And you will be with him forever. Your good shepherd will guide you through the test. Your savior who suffered the tragedy of the cross to purchase your salvation will one day bring your ship into port. And so we should take all of these things and we should apply them in this way. And I want to use scripture as our application this morning. Psalm 37, 5 through 9. It says there, commit your way to the Lord. Trust in him and he will act.

[ 44 : 09 ] Not he might act, he will act. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your justice as the noonday. Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him. Fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices. Refrain from anger and forsake wrath. Fret not yourself. It tends only to evil. For the evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land. We can learn to kiss the wave because Christ is near to us and supreme over all things. Because he died and he rose again to vanquish evil forever. Christ is to us wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. And you can't get any better than that.

As we've sung, all we need is Christ. If all you have is Christ, you have everything. When there's nothing in heaven or on earth or under the earth that can separate you from him, from his love, then you know that the waves of trials can only throw you back up against the rock of ages. And resting on that rock is where I'd like to be. It's where I hope you want to be. Where we hope to stay forever. And may the Lord bless us. May the Lord bless you if you're going through that today as he uses those waves, those trials, those tests, those tragedies to remind you that he is the rock of ages.