

ECHO CHURCH
No Games. No Gimmicks. Just God.

This Was Not My Idea

A 6-Day Devotional on Storms That Come While You Are Obeying God

Week of Monday, October 5, 2026

On Sunday we climbed into the boat with the disciples on a trip that was never their idea, and we watched a storm become the classroom where they finally saw who Jesus was. This week we take that boat into our own lives. Each morning give it a few honest minutes. Read the passage, sit with the reflection, then answer plainly. The goal is not calmer water. The goal is a bigger Jesus than you had when you got in the boat.

One line will follow us all week: If the crossing was His idea, the arrival is His responsibility.

It Was His Idea

The storm is not proof that you missed God.

Mark 4:35 NKJV

"On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, Let us cross over to the other side."

Crossing the lake was never the disciples' plan. It was Jesus' idea. He said, let us cross over to the other side, and they pushed off in obedience. That one detail quietly dismantles a theology a lot of us carry: the belief that obedience guarantees calm water. The disciples did not wander into the storm through disobedience. They entered it while doing exactly what Jesus said.

Scripture has always placed God's people in water they were told to cross. Israel did not stumble into the Red Sea; God led them there. He told Joshua to go over the Jordan. The word of crossing comes before the water rises. God never promised the absence of water. He promised His presence in it: when you pass through the waters, I will be with you.

So if you are in a storm you did not cause, reconsider what it means. The wind is not always a verdict on your obedience. Sometimes the storm is simply the weather between the assignment He gave and the arrival He promised. You did not get this wrong. You got in the boat because He said cross over.

Sometimes the storm arrives while you are doing exactly what God told you to do.

REFLECT

What storm have you been reading as proof that you missed God?

What did God actually say to you before the wind started? Write it down.

PRAY

Father, I have been treating this storm as evidence that I got it wrong. Remind me whose idea the crossing was. If You said cross over, then You are responsible for the other side. I trust You in the water. Amen.

DAY TWO | TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

When It Gets Inside the Boat

Your experience was never meant to be your savior.

Mark 4:37 NKJV

"And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling."

You can handle trouble at a distance. You can pray about the news, the economy, the problems on the other side of town. But something changes when the water gets inside. The diagnosis is in your body. The conflict is in your house. The shortage is in your account. The anxiety is in your mind at three in the morning. The place you trusted to keep you safe is taking on water.

Peter, Andrew, James, and John were professional fishermen who had worked this lake for years. Their fear was not the panic of beginners. When seasoned fishermen believe the boat is going down, the storm is real. And here is the honest truth: their experience could not save them here. Like them, you may have years of faith behind you and still find that what got you through before is not enough for this. That is not failure. That is the moment you discover your skill was never meant to be your savior.

Do not pretend the water is not there. Name it honestly before God. Faith does not require you to deny the storm. It only requires you to stop treating the storm as the final word. When your experience runs out, your Savior has not.

When your experience runs out, your Savior has not.

REFLECT

What has moved from outside your boat to inside it lately? Name it plainly.

Where have you been leaning on your own experience instead of on God?

PRAY

Lord, the water is inside the boat now, and what used to work is not working. I stop pretending. I name it honestly before You. You were always meant to be my Savior, not my skill. I lean on You. Amen.

DAY THREE | WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

His Silence Is Not His Absence

A quiet God is not a careless God.

Mark 4:38 NKJV

"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?"

The hardest part of many storms is not the wind. It is the quiet. You prayed, and nothing moved. You fasted, and the report did not change. You looked toward the stern, and Jesus seemed to be asleep. That is when the question rises in all of us: Lord, do You even care? Notice the disciples did not ask whether He knew what was happening. They asked whether it mattered to Him. They had His power figured out. It was His concern they doubted.

But sleep was not indifference. Jesus was exhausted from a full day of teaching, and His rest was also the rest of perfect trust. The body of Jesus slept, but the Keeper of Israel never slumbers. Think of Jonah, also asleep in a ship in a great storm. Jonah slept because he was running from God. Jesus slept because He was resting in God. Jonah's presence caused the storm. Jesus' presence was the answer to it.

You are allowed to ask the question. The psalmists asked it. The disciples asked it. But do not let the question become your conclusion. Jesus was not absent. He was in the same boat, on the same water, headed to the same shore He promised. The same Peter who asked do You not care would later write, cast all your care on Him, for He cares for you.

A quiet God is not a careless God. He is just not as worried as you are.

REFLECT

Where have you read God's silence as God's not caring?

What is the one specific care you need to cast on Him tonight, instead of a general prayer about everything?

PRAY

Father, Your silence has felt like absence, and I have doubted whether You care. Forgive me for reading quiet as indifference. You are in the boat with me. I cast this specific weight on You now, because You care for me. Amen.

DAY FOUR | THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

Which Voice Gets to Interpret

Faith is not denying the report. It is deciding which voice gets the last word.

Mark 4:39 NKJV

"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."

Two voices were in that boat. One said, let us cross over to the other side. The other said, we are perishing. Both voices were describing the same trip. Only one of them was telling the truth. The disciples had let the loudest voice become the interpreter of their journey, and the loudest voice was fear.

You are hearing two voices too. One is the word God spoke over your life. The other is the report your circumstances keep giving you. Here is what faith is and is not. Faith is not pretending the report is not real. The boat really was filling. Faith is deciding which voice gets to interpret the journey. Jesus never told them there would be no storm. He asked why they had no faith in the middle of it. Biblical faith does not deny the storm; it refuses to let the storm have final authority over the story.

When Jesus spoke, the sea that had been roaring went silent. All through Scripture, only God rebukes the sea and it obeys. The One in your boat outranks the loudest voice you are hearing. So when the storm speaks, answer it with the Word. Speak back what God said at the shore. You are not trying to manipulate God. You are reminding your soul who outranks the weather.

The wind was loud. The waves were loud. But neither one was louder than Jesus.

REFLECT

What report has been interpreting your journey lately? Write the exact sentence it keeps saying.

What word from God will you speak back over it this week?

PRAY

God, I have let the loudest voice interpret my life, and it has been fear. Today I choose a different voice. Your word outranks the report. Quiet my soul and let me hear You say, Peace, be still. Amen.

DAY FIVE | FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

Not Yet Is Full of Grace

A rebuke that assumes a future is still an invitation.

Mark 4:40 NKJV

"But He said to them, Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?"

Jesus turns from the storm outside the boat to the storm inside the disciples. Why are you so fearful? And the earliest manuscripts record His next words as, do you not yet have faith? Do not rush past that small phrase. Not yet is full of grace. It is still a rebuke, but it assumes a future. Jesus is not writing them off. He is telling them they are still in process.

Mark could have softened the moment, the way Matthew's account gently calls them of little faith. But Mark lets the sting stand, because his Gospel is honest about how slowly the disciples came to understand. And that honesty is good news for you. The men in this boat will misunderstand Jesus again and again, and He will keep returning to the boat, keep teaching them, keep growing their vision of Him storm after storm. He is patient with disciples who learn slowly.

So if you have been afraid, hear the grace buried in the question. He did not say you have no future. He said not yet. He is not grading you out of the boat. He is growing you in it. Your slow progress is not disqualification. It is discipleship, and He is not finished with you.

Not yet means He is not finished with you.

REFLECT

Where have you assumed God was done with you because you are learning slowly?

What would change today if you believed His correction was an invitation, not a dismissal?

PRAY

Lord, thank You that You said not yet. You are not finished with me. Where I have been fearful and slow, be patient with me, and keep growing my faith right here in the boat. I am still in process, and You are still with me. Amen.

DAY SIX | SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

A Bigger Jesus Than You Had

Trade your question. Stop asking what the storm is doing and ask what it is showing you.

Mark 4:41 NKJV

"And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

The disciples walked into the storm asking, do You not care? They walked out asking, who can this be? That is the trade every storm is offering you. The question changed from what Jesus felt about them to who Jesus actually was. Their fear even changed its object. They stopped fearing the storm and started standing in awe of the One who silenced it. That is not a step backward. Scripture calls the fear of the Lord the beginning of wisdom.

Here is the quiet tragedy they avoided. Had there been no storm, they would have crossed the lake knowing exactly what they knew when they left. The calm water would have left them with the Jesus they already knew. The storm introduced them to the Jesus they needed, the One whom wind and sea obey. Demons had already obeyed Him. Now creation itself did. The list of what submits to His voice kept growing, and so did their understanding of Him.

So as the week closes, do not just come out of your storm relieved. Come out with a bigger Jesus than you had when you got in the boat. Stop asking the storm what it is doing to you, and start asking what it is showing you about Him. When this season is over, you should know something about Jesus you could not have learned in calm water.

Calm water would have left me with the Jesus I already knew. The storm introduced me to the Jesus I needed.

REFLECT

What has this storm already shown you about Jesus that calm water never could?

Who is the bigger Jesus you want to walk out of this season knowing?

PRAY

Lord, I do not just want out of the storm. I want more of You. Trade my question. Let me stop asking what the storm is doing to me and start seeing who You are. Give me a bigger Jesus than I had when I got in the boat. Amen.

ECHO CHURCH

A CLOSING WORD

Six days ago you got honest about a storm you did not choose. You have walked the whole crossing: it was His idea, the water got inside, His silence was not His absence, you chose which voice to believe, you heard the grace in not yet, and you traded your question for a bigger Jesus. The boat may still be rocking tonight. That is alright. The One in it already named the destination, and He will answer for the arrival.

It was not my idea to get in the boat. That is exactly why I know I am getting out on the other side.

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