

This evening I would like for you to consider that a good pilot knows how to get you through a storm. If you have even been in a storm 30,000 ft. in the air, it can be scary and at times turbulent... in those times, the flight attendant comes over the loud speaker and invites you to find your seat and buckle up. On one occasion I can remember people on the plane getting uncomfortable and roughly and not listening to the directions. And so the flight attendant came over the loud speaker again and said, “ladies and gentlemen, for your own safety sit down and buckle up”. Believe it or not, they did not listen. Finally, the pilot came over the loud speaker in a booming voice reminding us all, it is his responsibility to get us through this storm... it is your responsibility to sit down and buckle up and listen to directions...

All things considered, I would go as far as to suggest that is also true with God... that God is the pilot and he will safely get us through the storm... therefore, sit down and buckle up and listen to direction.

If you don't believe me, time and time again this has proved to be true. For Abraham and Sarah it was a storm called infertility. For Moses it was a storm call slavery which lead into another storm called 40 years in the wilderness. For David it was Mr. Storm himself, Goliath. For the disciples out on the Sea of Galilee it was literally a storm and Jesus got them through it. For Job it was bandits, an army, and a category 5 tornado and he lost everything. What is your storm?

By now we have been in the Book of Job long enough to realize that throughout the book God has not said a word to Job. Is that odd? That for 35 chapters, Job has been crying out to God for help and God's response is what? Nothing... dead silence.

In contrast, Job's so called friends seem to have a lot to say. Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad: one might say, they had way too much to say, and they were like the blind leading the blind... not a lot of help. All awhile God, who could have helped, said nothing... it is not until Chapter 38 verse 1 when finally God shows up and what do we learn? It said, “the

LORD spoke to Job out of the storm.” We learn God is present in the storm. We learn that God is always in control, that He is a good pilot, and he is going to lead Job through the storm and all the way home.

But for thirty-five chapters God has been silent, and Job has been consumed with all kinds of questions. Where is God? Why is this happening to me? When will this end? How could God do this? Maybe it might be important to remind ourselves the most important question is not when, why, what, or how but who. Who is the God behind all of this? And who is the question that is answered in Job 38. Who? Yahweh.

If you recall our conversation several weeks ago on the names of God found in the Book of Job, the name Yahweh has gone unused since Chapter 3, 35 chapters ago. It is not until now that Job is about to receive a revelation from Yahweh himself as He shows up in Job’s storm. And guess what, this is very good news for us today. Why? Because we are all in some way caught up in a storm.

So what is yours? Are you raising teenagers... I’m raising toddlers. Maybe you are a teenager... that’s a storm. Maybe it’s a break up... maybe a death. Maybe your finances are tight. How about your health? Has your age gotten the best of you? We all know storms...

For 38 chapters Job felt like God owed him an explanation. Have you ever felt like that? You’ve disappointed me, you’ve disjointed me... now you owe me. It is finally in Chapter 38 Verse 1 that God shows up and answered Job. BRACE yourself because the silent treatment has ended and God now speaks ironically “in” a storm.

Let me first say there is a lot to be said about a preposition... this one is “in”. God is not above the storm. Not below the storm, God is not sidestepping the storm. No, God is in the storm. God has been with job the whole time... he has not talked, but that does not mean we was absent. MORAL of the story: Job is not alone and neither are you!

Brace yourself because for the next 4 chapters God is going to speak. In Chapter 38 God expresses his absolute control over the universe. In Chapter 39 God expresses his absolute control over the wild animals. In Chapters 40 and 41 he even expresses absolute control over the evil chaos monsters named Behamote and Leviathan. Who are they? Stay tuned... that's next weeks discussion.

Throughout these 4 chapters it is as though God is saying to Job "Let's understand our responsibilities". My job is to get you through the storm and your job is to sit down and buckle up and listen to directions.

Did you know in these 4 chapters God asks Job 70 questions? Can you guess how many questions Job answers right? You guessed it. Zero, nadda, goose egg. The point being, God is in control of everything and Job is in control of nothing... Job needs to let God be God and go from there.

In these chapters God is going to take Job on the tour of the Universe with a series of 70 pointed questions. Let the questions roll:

"Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge?" (Job 38:2). Job doesn't respond. "Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me" (Job 38:3). Job keeps quiet. "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me, if you know so much" (Job 38:4). "Do you know how its dimensions were determined and who did the surveying? What supports its foundations, and who laid its cornerstone, as the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?" (Job 38:5-7).

One after another, God asked 70 questions. (Just as a reminder from last week's text, Job wanted to question God, Job wanted God to be on trial. But now the roles have changed.)

Just to underscore this point, God repeatedly points out that the universe is vast and infinitely complex! For example, the diameter of the sun is 109 times larger than the earth. Its volume could contain 1,000,000

earths and that's nothing because God created the Milky Way, which alone measures 104,000 light-years across. It contains over 100 billion stars. And according to information from the Hubble Space Telescope there are hundreds of billions of galaxies in the universe! In the words of Carl Sagan... there are billions and billions of them.

“Can you see it, Job?” God asks. “Can you rejoice in it all as I do? The morning stars (the sun) sings for joy because of who I am and what I do—can you rejoice in it too? Can you see how carefully I’ve put it all together? Can you grasp the immensity of what I’ve created? Can you be my equal? Can you match my power, my ability to watch over and care for all this? What do you say, Job? Can you orchestrate and control this vast universe?” “Job can you fly this plane?” What say you Job?

Only two times does Job talk during the speech. Job answered to the Lord, ‘I am unworthy—how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. I spoke once, but I have no answer— twice, but I will say no more’” (Job 40:3–5). “Then Job replied to the Lord: ‘I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted’” (Job 42:1–2).

Job finally gets it. He has been the water boy telling LeBron James how to dribble a basketball. Job has been the bat boy telling Babe Ruth how to hit a baseball. Job has been the caddie telling Tiger Woods how to use a nine iron. Not even... Job finally realizes he is the clay, telling the Potter what to do.

Finally, Job surrenders. He stops pressing for an explanation from God and instead sits down and buckles up and listens.

A few weeks ago I saw a bumper sticker that said, God is my co-pilot. I thought really? That's what Job had on his car until Chapter 38. You need God... but God does not need you. In Chapter 38 Job took that bumper stick off his car because he realized he was not God's co-pilot. (we are not even God's flight attendant.)

And don't even pretend that you play a part in your salvation. For it was Jesus who entered our storm and became like us in every way. You are broken, and he chose to be for you. You are hurting, and he chose to be for you. You cry out, and he chose to cry for you. The only difference is, he saved you when you could not save yourself.

Paul said, "God was in Christ (there's our preposition in again) reconciling the world to himself." What does that look like? It looks like Jesus showing up in your storm and listen can you hear what he says? He says, "Father forgive them."

Ultimately, you have a couple of choices. In your storms, You can give up on God. You can say God is a fake and a phony and a fraud. You could say he is malicious and he hates you. Or you can sit down, buckle up, and stop insisting on an explanation. When I surrender, like Job, I declare my declaration of dependence. And what does that look like? Jesus gives us the words. "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

I dare to pray these words because relying on God beats any explanation I could make, every time.

In the grace of God, which surpasses all understanding, trust your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, Amen.