

PICK UP STICKS

This morning I want to talk about pursuing Jesus through the storm.

Storms are common

Storms are common to everyone... but especially after a decision is made for Christ.

Mark 4:14-15 - The sower sows the word. And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. (ESV)

Mark 4:16-17...They hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; ¹⁷and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.

Jeremiah 4:3 - ...break up your fallow ground, and do not sow among thorns. (NKJV)

God speaks in the middle of the storm

Acts 27:24-26 – Do not be afraid, Paul. **You must stand trial before Caesar**; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' ...²⁶Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island." (NIV)

Psalms 23:4 - Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me. (ESV)

2 Corinthians 11:24-29 – Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. ²⁶I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced

danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. ²⁷ I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm.

Satan always uses circumstances... Offenses, trials, deception, stress of life to get our focus off the Word.

2 Corinthians 4:17 – For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! (NLT)

Romans 8:37 – No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. (NLT)

Get Busy

Acts 28:1-5 – As **Paul gathered an armful of sticks and was laying them on the fire**, a poisonous snake, driven out by the heat, bit him on the hand... ⁵ **But Paul shook off the snake** into the fire and was unharmed. (NLT)

Matt 24:35 – Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. (NIV)

Matthew 20:26- If you want to be great in Gods kingdom become a servant of all

Philippians 2:7 ... (He) made Himself of **no reputation**, taking the form of a bond servant... (NKJV_

1 Corinthians 6:19-20...you are **not your own**?... 20 For you were bought at a price; (NKJV)

Galatians 2:20 – “...**I no longer live**, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God... (NIV)

TCC – The message today is... do not be distracted by the enemies plan to steal the word... serve where you are right now even in the middle of the storm... His word is still working in you!!