



STORMS

Storms are hitting all across our world: earthquakes, tornados, and hurricanes. You may have heard news reports of the damages from 70 mph winds, waters that flooded entire regions, hail the size of golf balls, baseballs, or softballs. Homes and buildings and towns destroyed. Families and whole people groups destroyed or uprooted. Some storms are predicted, and we have some time to prepare and to take cover. Other storms just hit us when we least expect them.

But storms don't just come from "natural" disasters. Nowadays, we have storms of terrorism and war. Nations and people groups are waging hate and revenge wars against one another. And the storms are not always "out there". Many of the wars are being fought in our homes, in our communities, in our government, in our schools, and even among and within our churches. In fact, we've become so used to aggression, violence, killing, and wars that much of our television, movies, media, and video games are exploiting storms and making millions of dollars producing storm-like "entertainment".

It's easier to spot storms that are "out there" and find someone to blame for all the devastation. We like to blame another country, an extremist minority group, our President, people in leadership like our parents or our boss, or people we are intimidated by. But what do we do when the storm isn't "out there?" What do we do when the storm is "in here"? **Many people are walking storms waiting to hit.** We have so much stress built up that we are ready to pop. We've stuffed so many emotions and unresolved relationship conflicts or financial obligations under the rug that it doesn't take much for us to burst into flames, be flooded with overwhelming emotions, "lose it" on someone around us, or yell at someone in our workplace or someone at home that we care love.

- **Since we have all experienced storms in our lives, let's take some time to discuss some of the storms we have survived in our lives.**
- **If someone watched how you cope with storms in your life, they would probably notice that when storms come you...**
- **What's one storm you are experiencing right now in your life?**
- **What do you need right now from the people around you to help you as you are going through your storm?**

The Bible was written thousands of years ago as God inspired people to record what He placed on their hearts and minds. Some of these words recorded in the Bible are prophetic. In fact they tell us about all these storms we are encountering in our world. Jesus warned his followers to not be deceived or alarmed when storms come. (Matthew 24) Storms will take place before He returns to the earth to take with Him all who believe and follow Him.

Not only did God teach us that storms will come, He also taught us what to do when storms come. In Ephesians 6, we are taught to put on the whole armor of God and stand firm. In James 1, we are instructed to be joyful when our faith is being tested, our endurance is being developed, and our character is being strengthened. We're also invited to seek God for wisdom, and we are promised that God will gladly tell us what to do. We are also taught in Galatians 5 to help bear one another's storms, not to get tired of doing what is good, not to get discouraged, and not to give up, for we will be blessed in God's good time. **Becoming more familiar with God's Word and building supportive relationships are good ways to prepare for the storms of life.** They will come.

"Health Talks" are designed to help us learn to talk and deal with one another in ways that build understanding and a healthy, growing, supportive, Christian community.