

# STRENGTH FOR THE STRESSES

## “How Strength is Made Perfect in Weakness”

### Study Number Four – “Triumph in Suffering” – Mark 4:35-41 & John 11:1-44

Someone has said:

Human suffering transforms, matures, and instructs. Suffering increases our capacities of love and our ability to understand. All suffering makes us have something in common with any of those who suffer. It is the power of communion.

(source unknown)

The apostle Paul, when he's writing to the Philippian saints in Philippians 1 makes it clear to them that it is given to them in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.

We read the following in 1 Peter 4:

1 Peter 4:12, 13 & 16

Beloved do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that's coming upon you to test you as though something strange were happening to you. But inasmuch as you are sharing the

sufferings of Christ, be rejoicing in order that also at the revelation of His glory you might shout for joy. But if one is suffering as a Christian, let him not be ashamed but let him be glorifying God in this name.

Now one of the real problems that we face when we begin to suffer and when we face difficulty in our lives, is invariably we feel tremendous isolation.

Now many times we contribute to this. Any well-bred animal, when it's wounded, retreats to suffer alone. This is a human instinct too. We often withdraw, get away, and suffer in isolation.

But there's another reason for this. The reason often times human suffering becomes such a problem, especially to the saint, is because we only attribute it to three things. And we sort of feel that everybody else is attributing one of these three things to our suffering. So therefore we have to withdraw from human contact. They are the **THREE S's**. Everybody knows that suffering comes from:

1. SIN,
2. SELF, or
3. SATAN and nowhere else.

There's some sin in our life so we're suffering. We really deserve that. It comes from our own selfishness. Or Satan

really zapped us on that one.

And so we limit human suffering to these three things. And because that's the case, we cannot see human suffering as it is in the scripture as being something from God.

We almost hit the ceiling with the mere suggestion that God could permit suffering in our lives.

So many suffer severely and it's beautiful to see that they have been triumphant in it. God does permit suffering in our lives.

If He doesn't, God isn't sovereign. We're saying that this suffering snuck up on His blindside and got into our lives and He didn't permit it.

Now if God is sovereign and He created the universe, and if God has a master plan for the universe that started before time began, and it's going to end with the new heavens and the new earth, and if we believe the rest of the scripture that He has a plan for our lives from the day of our birth until our physical demise when we go to be with Him in glory, then every specific detail is permitted by Him in our live.

We have to say that. He created and He controls the universe. "And greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." (ref. 1 John 4:4)

So everything that has come into our life has been permitted

by a sovereign God.

Now let me make one more statement here at the outset of this discussion. God has the sovereign right to do whatever He deems necessary in our lives to make us more fruitful, and to conform us more to the image of His Son.

Suffering in the life of a Christian is designed to accomplish the FOUR T's:

1. Suffering is permitted in our lives to teach us to TRUST Him.

Invariably if we become comfortable, we tend to trust our riches. Or we tend to trust our wife, or we would tend to trust our husband, or we would tend to trust our children. But as God strips away these human props through physical suffering, He teaches us how to trust only in Him.

Proverbs 3:5, 6

Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and lean not unto your own understanding.

Psalms 37:5

Commit your way unto the Lord, trust also in Him and He will bring it to pass.

Invariably when we're going through suffering, the first thing

that the Lord asks is, “Can you trust Me in this circumstance?”

## 2. Then we have the T of the TEST.

We’re going to see this in two passages that we’re going to look at—one in Mark 4 and one in John 11.

We also see this in Genesis 22 as God did test Abraham. There was absolutely no reason given for what Abraham was about to do—and that was to sacrifice his son, his promised son.

Why does God allow the T of the TEST to come into our lives through human suffering? The reason He allows the test is He wants our profession to go from our LIPS to our LIVES in the laboratory of testing.

It’s one thing to talk a real good game, that the Lord is capable of handling our circumstances in meeting our needs. It’s quite another thing to take that off of our lips and put it into our life through the laboratory of experience. The Lord has a right to put us in the test tube, to see how well we’re doing with the truth that He’s been teaching us.

We can expect that as we have opportunities to take in truth, we’re also going to have an examination on it. There’s going to be a little test to see how well we’re progressing along the way.

## 3. We then have the T to TURN.

Oftentimes when we're left to our own resources, we have a tendency to turn out of the Lord's path and to go our own way. He allows suffering lots of times to turn us back onto His path, into going His direction.

The psalmist said, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray. It was good for me that I'd been afflicted that I might learn your statutes." (ref Psalm 119:67, 71)

And then the writer to the book of Hebrews says the same thing about this turning or chastening:

### Hebrews 12:5-9

And have you quite forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his child? He said, "My son, don't be angry when the Lord punishes you. Don't be discouraged when he has to show you where you are wrong. For when he punishes you, it proves that he loves you. When he whips you it proves you are really his child. Let God train you, for he is doing what any loving father does for his children. Whoever heard of a son who was never corrected? If God doesn't punish you when you need it, as your fathers punish their sons, then it means that you aren't really God's son at all—that you don't really belong in his family. Since we respect our fathers here on earth, though they punish us, should we not all the more cheerfully submit to God's training so that we can begin to really live?

4. Next we see the T of TRIUMPH.

1. To TRUST,

2. To TEST US,

3. To TURN US, and

4. To TRIUMPH.

Many times we are put into suffering so we can be a witness to the world of His ability to triumph in impossible circumstances.

We see this beautifully in 2 Corinthians 2:

2 Corinthians 2:14

Now thanks be unto God who always leads us in triumph.

First Corinthians 15 says the same thing:

1 Corinthians 15:57

Thanks be unto God for the victory which is ours in Jesus Christ.

We see it in the suffering of Christ on the cross when He cries out “Tetelestai! It is finished!” It’s a cry of triumph. It’s a cry of great victory. But it’s at the highest point in His physical

suffering. He's just giving up His physical life. It is a moment of great victory.

We'll be looking at Mark 4:35-41 and then we'll look at John 11:1-44.

### Mark 4:35-41 (TLB)

As evening fell, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's cross to the other side of the lake." So they took him just as he was and started out, leaving the crowds behind (though other boats followed). But soon a terrible storm arose. High waves began to break into the boat until it was nearly full of water and about to sink. Jesus was asleep at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. Frantically they wakened him, shouting, "Teacher, don't you even care that we are all about to drown?" Then he rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Quiet down!" And the wind fell, and there was a great calm! And he asked them, "Why were you so fearful? Don't you even yet have confidence in me?" And they were filled with awe and said among themselves, "Who is this man, that even the winds and seas obey him?"

### John 11:1-44 (TLB)

Do you remember Mary, who poured the costly perfume on Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair? Well, her brother Lazarus, who lived in Bethany with Mary and her sister Martha, was sick. So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Sir, your good friend is very, very sick." But when

Jesus heard about it he said, “The purpose of his illness is not death, but for the glory of God. I, the Son of God, will receive glory from this situation.” Although Jesus was very fond of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days and made no move to go to them. Finally, after the two days, he said to his disciples, “Let’s go to Judea.” But his disciples objected. “Master,” they said, “only a few days ago the Jewish leaders in Judea were trying to kill you. Are you going there again?” Jesus replied, “There are twelve hours of daylight every day, and during every hour of it a man can walk safely and not stumble. Only at night is there danger of a wrong step, because of the dark.” Then he said, “Our friend Lazarus has gone to sleep, but now I will go and waken him!” The disciples, thinking Jesus meant Lazarus was having a good night’s rest, said, “That means he is getting better!” But Jesus meant Lazarus had died. Then he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. And for your sake, I am glad I wasn’t there, for this will give you another opportunity to believe in me. Come, let’s go to him.” Thomas, nicknamed “The Twin,” said to his fellow disciples, “Let’s go too—and die with him.” When they arrived at Bethany, they were told that Lazarus had already been in his tomb for four days. Bethany was only a couple of miles down the road from Jerusalem, and many of the Jewish leaders had come to pay their respects and to console Martha and Mary on their loss. When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, “Sir, if you had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died. And even now it’s not too late, for I know that God will bring my brother back to life again, if you will only ask him to.” Jesus told her, “Your

Copyright © 2026 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations particularly reside within the realm of fair use. It is the nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citation is unintentional. Teacher notes have been compiled by Genevieve Martin.

brother will come back to life again.” “Yes,” Martha said, “when everyone else does, on Resurrection Day.” Jesus told her, “I am the one who raises the dead and gives them life again. Anyone who believes in me, even though he dies like anyone else, shall live again. He is given eternal life for believing in me and shall never perish. Do you believe this, Martha?” “Yes, Master,” she told him. “I believe you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one we have so long awaited.” Then she left him and returned to Mary and, calling her aside from the mourners, told her, “He is here and wants to see you.” So Mary went to him at once. Now Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him. When the Jewish leaders who were at the house trying to console Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus’ tomb to weep; so they followed her. When Mary arrived where Jesus was, she fell down at his feet, saying, “Sir, if you had been here, my brother would still be alive.” When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jewish leaders wailing with her, he was moved with indignation and deeply troubled. “Where is he buried?” he asked them. They told him, “Come and see.” Tears came to Jesus’ eyes. “They were close friends,” the Jewish leaders said. “See how much he loved him.” But some said, “This fellow healed a blind man—why couldn’t he keep Lazarus from dying?” And again Jesus was moved with deep anger. Then they came to the tomb. It was a cave with a heavy stone rolled across its door. “Roll the stone aside,” Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man’s sister, said, “By now the smell will be terrible, for he has been dead four days.” “But didn’t I tell you that you will see a wonderful miracle from God if you believe?” Jesus asked her. So they rolled the

stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me. (You always hear me, of course, but I said it because of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me.)” Then he shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” And Lazarus came—bound up in the gravecloth, his face muffled in a head swath. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!”

We’re going to use these two passages just to point out three principles that would have made it possible for these individuals involved in both of these stories to have triumphed in suffering.

The whole approach would have been different if they would have been aware of **THREE THINGS**:

1. If there had been awareness of His **POWER**, things would have been different.

In both of these stories we see a fabulous manifestation of His power. What does He speak in the first experience? “Peace be still.”

They come off of this great big high wave onto a glassy sea. The winds and the waves obey His voice.

What do we see in the second story? “Lazarus, come forth!”

It’s a good thing he said Lazarus, because if he’d have just said “Come forth,” He would have emptied the whole

graveyard.

This power speaks and the dead hear the voice and respond in resurrection and in life.

Now one of the greatest difficulties that we face as Christians is at the time of our difficulty, God seems pretty small. He seems pretty distant. He seems pretty unconcerned about our crisis.

And really, when we're honest as a Christian, it seems as though God isn't doing anything and that the enemy is now one-up on Him.

Thoughts of being creatures of fate flood our minds and our own destiny is at stake in all of this.

We kind of express it this way:

The heavens are silent and I'm suffering.  
Silence in heaven and suffering on earth.

We read in 1 Samuel:

1 Samuel 17:45-47

David shouted in reply, "You come to me with a sword and a spear, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of the armies of heaven and of Israel—the very God whom you have defied. Today the Lord will conquer you and I will kill you and cut off

your head; and then I will give the dead bodies of your men to the birds and wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. And Israel will learn that the Lord does not depend on weapons to fulfill his plans—he works without regard to human means. He will give you to us.

This is said by David as he was confronted with Goliath making fun of him.

The battle is the Lord's and we need to be aware of the fact that He's fully capable, if He permits it, also to deliver us in His own time from the experience.

### 2 Chronicles 32:7-8

Be strong, be brave, and do not be afraid of the king of Assyria or his mighty army, for there is someone with us who is far greater than he is. He has a great army, but they are all mere men, while we have the Lord our God to fight our battles for us. This greatly encouraged them.

Isaiah the prophet says the same thing:

### Isaiah 59:19

When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.

Remember Gamaliel as he's giving advice to the religious leaders over the uprising of the early church? And these

Christians who are wreaking havoc because miracles are taking place and God is working in a mighty way in their midst?

Gamaliel says in Acts 5:

Acts 5:38, 39

And so my advice is leave these men alone. If what they teach and do is merely on their own, it will soon be overthrown. But if it is of God, you will not be able to stop them, lest you find yourselves fighting even against God.

And just because we're suffering doesn't mean that the Lord has forsaken us. The secret to being triumphant is to realize that He's still the same God who made these promises to David, the same God who spoke the promises which Hezekiah gave to the people facing the battle of Assyria, and the same God who was motivating these men in the book of Acts.

Romans 4 tells us:

Romans 4:20, 21

Abraham never doubted, he believed God. His faith and trust grew ever stronger, and he praised God for His blessing even before it happened. He was completely sure that God was well able to do anything that He promised.

We read in Ephesians 3:

## Ephesians 3:20, 21

Now glory be to God who by his mighty power at work within us is able to do far more than we would ever dare to as or dream of—infinately beyond our highest powers, desires, thoughts or hopes. May He be given glory forever and ever through endless ages because of his master plan of salvation for the church through Jesus Christ.

So what we're saying is that one of the ways to triumph in suffering is to be aware of the fact that His power is still there and there is power adequate for us to triumph in the suffering.

God is willing to do for us all that His grace and power will allow Him to do. And as we become submissive to this experience that we're facing, and we quit struggling, we discover that His power begins to take over.

Remember the THREE A's:

1. He's ALIVE,
2. He's ADEQUATE, and
3. He ALLOWED IT.

And we'll be aware of His power.

Now the second thing for us to note is not only an awareness

of His POWER, but:

## 2. being attuned to His PURPOSE.

Notice that none of these individuals involved in these two crisis experiences that we read in Mark 4 and in John 11 were attuned to His purpose.

In Mark 4 when they asked Him, “Why were you so fearful? Don’t you even believe that you have confidence in Me?” And they were filled with awe and said among themselves, “Who is this man that even the winds and the seas obey him?”

Right there they got a big “F” on the exam. They really blew it. They were not aware of His power or attuned to His purpose in permitting this experience in their lives.

Now what about John 11? The Lord said to them that this experience was happening to them that He might be glorified. But they never got the message. They never looked on this experience as something for which God could get the glory.

Martha fought Him the whole way. She came truckin’ out of the city before He even got to town and said, “If you’d have been here my brother wouldn’t have died! Yeah, I know he’s going to be raised on the last day. Boy, that sure is a lot of comfort. He’s gone now! You’re too late!”

And even when they get out there by the tomb, Martha says, “You’re not going to roll the stone away, are you? He stinks by

now! He's been dead for four days!" She still hasn't gotten the message. She sees nothing of His purpose.

Many times we spend hours and hours of untold grief and agony because we don't know what the Father is doing by the fact that He permitted this to come into our lives. We try to find some other excuse or some other reason.

Now if we can get it into our minds that His one supreme purpose for us as His children is to bless us and to prosper us and to never forget that, going to be way down the road.

Now hang onto that. When the going gets tough the tough will get going because we're aware of the fact that whatever happens is consistent with the fact that His primary objective in our life is to bless and prosper us because He loves us.

All He is doing by permitting what's going on in our life is to put us into a position of greater blessing and prosperity. We can see countless experiences in our own lives by the fact that we often go through the lowest point in life to come to a point of blessing and prosperity. Greater blessing and prosperity we have never experienced.

Now when our life lines up and coincides better to His plan, we experience this blessing and prosperity.

Joshua 1:8

This book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth but

you shall meditate therein day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you have good success

Someone has said that:

Success is something that God sends our way when we obey His Word.  
(source unknown)

And the more obedient we are to His Word, the more submissive we are to His plan, the more attuned we are to His purpose for permitting this in our lives, the more capable we are of being triumphant.

We often think that COMFORT and CALM equals SPIRITUALITY. Ridiculous.

COMFORT and CALM equal CARNALITY.

STORMS,

STRIFE,

STRUGGLES,

SUFFERING, and

SACRIFICE equals SPIRITUALITY.

There is a principle that we have to get across and that is:

There's SUFFERING NOW and GLORY LATER.

We can plan on it in our life as an individual, but it just keeps getting better and better in the Christian life. And we're going to suffer now, but it's going to be glory later.

The pagan is just reversed. He's got it around on the other side—"I've got to get all the glory now because I'm going to suffer later." That's exactly the truth. His world keeps falling apart and he continues to suffer.

It is never meant, when we became a Christian, that God was going to make us comfortable. His one primary objective is to conform us to the image of His Son. Where have we heard that before?

He wants to conform us to the image of His Son and that involves change. In order to do that, He's got to teach us a lot of things.

Remember when we were children? Maybe some of us were such pious children we never had this experience. We might have said something like, "Boy, I'll be glad when I'm 18 because I'm getting out of this place and I'm going to do what I want! Because you sure do make life rough for me."

And in essence as a grown up individual in our relationship in

the family of God and our relationship to our heavenly Father, we realize that a lot of times we say the same thing.

“Father, You’re really rough on Your children! You’re zapping me and putting me through a whole of an experience every time I turn around. Every time I commit myself to You more fully it gets rougher! I don’t understand it.”

When really if we’ll just humbly wait in submission and say, “Lord, I trust You. Why this has been permitted I don’t know, but I know that if You don’t tell me now, when I check in You’re going to show me later. You love me and what has been coming into my life has been permitted by You so therefore I thank You.”

Now there are a number of other references that speak about this suffering and about our attitude in suffering.

In reality as a child we were rebelling against parents who had one primary objective and that was to bless and prosper us and to bring us to a point of maturity in adulthood so that we could have a wonderful life. That’s the only purpose they had in mind. And the same is true of our Father in heaven.

We see the very same thing in these passages:

1 Thessalonians 3:3, 4

But of course you know that such troubles are a part of God’s plan for us Christians. Even while we were still with you we

warned you ahead of time that suffering would soon come and it did.

### Romans 8:17, 18 and 28

But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering. Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory you will give us later. And we know that all that happens to us is working for our good if we love God and we are fitting into his plans.

### Hebrews 12:2

Keep your eyes on Jesus, our leader and instructor. He was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy he knew would be his afterwards; and now he sits in the place of honor by the throne of God.

Remember the story of the old man and the sea told by Ernest Hemingway? The story about the old fisherman who made it his one ambition in life to catch a huge gamefish. And this huge gamefish had alluded the hooks of all the eager anglers in the harbor.

After a long and anxious search, a frantic and bitter struggle, the star of our story—the old man—catches the trophy fish. Imagine the sheer frustration and frenzy as helplessly he towed his trophy back to harbor to find it being attacked by the sharks. All that he has to show when he gets to the harbor is the skeleton of his trophy.

That describes the picture of a lot of people getting to glory. They're going to be there with just a skeleton to show for the lives which they've lived.

And yet it is part of God's plan to permit snapping sharks in our lives so He can get to the heart of the matter. And with a skeleton He'll make something that'll shake the world.

Don't minimize God's ability to use our nothing when He gets us stripped down. Just remember what He did with the jawbone of the ass in the hand of Samson. Remember what He did when He brought Moses to the old burning bush.

It's the same old principle. It's not our ABILITIES, it's our AVAILABILITY.

Peter, it's not the PLACE, it's the PERSON. Any old bush will do as long as God is in it.

As we walk with the Lord Jesus and try to explain human suffering, God's purpose is to have an instrument stripped of everything but Himself.

And so as a result, we must come to the cross and say, "Take me, break me, mold me to the pattern You have planned. Make me an instrument of blessing."

That's exactly what happened in the life of Jacob. He lived for so many years being a shyster, a crafty individual. Finally

through a confrontation with the Lord in a wrestling match all night, he discovers the secret when he submits rather than struggles.

God touched him in the thigh and he never walked the same after that experience. But he quit struggling and he became submissive.

When we quit struggling with God's purpose and we become submissive to it, we begin to discover prosperity and blessing in our lives that we've never seen before. We see Him take a totally impossible set of circumstances and make it into something beautiful. And He waits to do that for His own glory.

1. We need to be aware of His POWER.
2. We need to be attune to His PLAN or His PURPOSE.
3. We can be assured of His PRESENCE.

We realize in both of these accounts, He really had promised His presence. He didn't have to be there in a physical form to be present with Mary and Martha. He knew that Lazarus had already died.

In His Word He promises us that He will never leave us nor forsake us. With the disciples it did look like He was awfully unconcerned, but He was there with them in that storm.

We read in the book of Daniel that great passage of the young men going through the fiery furnace:

### Daniel 3:24-26

But suddenly as he was watching, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement and exclaimed to his advisors, “Didn’t we throw three men into that furnace?” “Yes,” they said, “we did indeed your majesty.” “Well look,” Nebuchadnezzar shouted, “I see four men unbound, walking around in the fire and they aren’t even hurt by the flame! And the fourth looks like a god!” And Nebuchadnezzar came as close as he could to the open door of the flaming furnace and yelled, “Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the most high God, come out! Come here!” So they stepped out of the fire.

We have a PROMISE here that the Lord is going to be with us in every circumstance. And the thing that is so great is that when we see Jesus coming to this moment of bereavement and He sees Mary and Martha weeping and suffering, He weeps too. He does care. He is concerned and He’s there. And whatever touches us is a concern to Him because of His love.

We must hang onto that.

### Psalms 23:4

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for you are with me...

## Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not for I am with thee...

## Isaiah 43:2

When you pass through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.

It's just so great to know that He's there and we can count on His presence when we're going through suffering.

If someone is living without Christ, they're probably suffering because they're without Him. They don't have the life that could be theirs if they did.

Maybe if someone has accepted the Lord as Savior, there is possibly bitterness in their heart toward God for all that He's permitted to go on in their life.

Seriously consider recognizing the fact that rejecting the Savior means suffering for eternity. And then if we are Christians, as a suffering saint from snapping sharks, just remember that when He's nipping at our branches, He's pruning us to prepare us for more fruit.

And call on these FOUR T's that we looked at in the beginning. Realize that He wants us to look into His face, and as we submit to trust Him, learn the lesson from the test. If we're out of the way and out of fellowship, He's doing this to

turn us back.

He wants to show us what He can do, how He can triumph in an impossible set of circumstances. So thank Him for the good work that's going on, although we don't understand it. Then we'll begin to experience Romans 8:17 and 18.

If we are to share His glory, we must also share His suffering. Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory He will give us later. And we know that all things happen to us and are working for our good, if we love God and are fitting in His plan.

Father, fill us with the awareness of Your power. Fill us with the ability to be attuned to Your purpose. And Father, give us the excitement of knowing that You're right there with an awareness of Your presence and that You're meeting every need if we're just willing to be submissive to what You're doing in our lives. We love You and thank You that we do have a way whereby we can triumph in suffering to be a witness to the world. We pray that You'll meet the needs of each heart. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Copyright © 2026 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations particularly reside within the realm of fair use. It is the nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citation is unintentional. Teacher notes have been compiled by Genevieve Martin.

# STRENGTH FOR THE STRESSES

## “How Strength is Made Perfect in Weakness”

### Study Number Four – “Triumph in Suffering” – Mark 4:35-41 & John 11:1-44

#### Notes

#### Mark 4:35-41

v. 35 As evening fell, Jesus said to his disciples, “Let’s cross to the other side of the lake.”

v. 36 So they took him just as he was and started out, leaving the crowds behind (though other boats followed).

v. 37 But soon a terrible storm arose. High waves began to break into the boat until it was nearly full of water and about to sink.

v. 38 Jesus was asleep at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. Frantically they wakened him, shouting, “Teacher, don’t you even care that we are all about to drown?”

v. 39 Then he rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Quiet down!” And the wind fell, and there was a great calm!

v. 40 And he asked them, “Why were you so fearful? Don’t you even yet have confidence in me?”

v. 41 And they were filled with awe and said among themselves, “Who is this man, that even the winds and seas obey him?”

#### John 11:1-44

v. 1 Do you remember Mary, who poured the costly perfume on Jesus’ feet and wiped them with her hair?

v. 2 Well, her brother Lazarus, who lived in Bethany with Mary and her sister Martha, was sick.

v. 3 So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, “Sir, your good friend is very, very sick.”

## Notes

v. 4 But when Jesus heard about it he said, “The purpose of his illness is not death, but for the glory of God. I, the Son of God, will receive glory from this situation.”

v. 5 Although Jesus was very fond of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus,

v. 6 he stayed where he was for the next two days and made no move to go to them.

v. 7 Finally, after the two days, he said to his disciples, “Let’s go to Judea.”

v. 8 But his disciples objected. “Master,” they said, “only a few days ago the Jewish leaders in Judea were trying to kill you. Are you going there again?”

v. 9 Jesus replied, “There are twelve hours of daylight every day, and during every hour of it a man can walk safely and not stumble.

v. 10 Only at night is there danger of a wrong step, because of the dark.”

v. 11 Then he said, “Our friend Lazarus has gone to sleep, but now I will go and waken him!”

v. 12 The disciples, thinking Jesus meant Lazarus was having a good night’s rest, said, “That means he is getting better!”

v. 13 But Jesus meant Lazarus had died.

v. 14 Then he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.

v. 15 And for your sake, I am glad I wasn’t there, for this will give you another opportunity to believe in me. Come, let’s go to him.”

v. 16 Thomas, nicknamed “The Twin,” said to his fellow disciples, “Let’s go too—and die with him.”

v. 17 When they arrived at Bethany, they were told that Lazarus had already been in his tomb for four days.

v. 18 Bethany was only a couple of miles down the road from Jerusalem,

v. 19 and many of the Jewish leaders had come to pay their respects and to console Martha and Mary on their loss.

v. 20 When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed at home.

v. 21 Martha said to Jesus, “Sir, if you had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died.

## Notes

v. 22 And even now it's not too late, for I know that God will bring my brother back to life again, if you will only ask him to."

v. 23 Jesus told her, "Your brother will come back to life again."

v. 24 "Yes," Martha said, "when everyone else does, on Resurrection Day."

v. 25 Jesus told her, "I am the one who raises the dead and gives them life again. Anyone who believes in me, even though he dies like anyone else, shall live again."

v. 26 He is given eternal life for believing in me and shall never perish. Do you believe this, Martha?" "

v. 27 Yes, Master," she told him. "I believe you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one we have so long awaited."

v. 28 Then she left him and returned to Mary and, calling her aside from the mourners, told her, "He is here and wants to see you."

v. 29 So Mary went to him at once.

v. 30 Now Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him.

v. 31 When the Jewish leaders who were at the house trying to console Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus' tomb to weep; so they followed her.

v. 32 When Mary arrived where Jesus was, she fell down at his feet, saying, "Sir, if you had been here, my brother would still be alive."

v. 33 When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jewish leaders wailing with her, he was moved with indignation and deeply troubled.

v. 34 "Where is he buried?" he asked them. They told him, "Come and see."

v. 35 Tears came to Jesus' eyes.

v. 36 "They were close friends," the Jewish leaders said. "See how much he loved him."

v. 37 But some said, "This fellow healed a blind man—why couldn't he keep Lazarus from dying?"

v. 38 And again Jesus was moved with deep anger. Then they came to the tomb. It was a cave with a heavy stone rolled across its door.

## Notes

v. 39 “Roll the stone aside,” Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man’s sister, said, “By now the smell will be terrible, for he has been dead four days.”

v. 40 “But didn’t I tell you that you will see a wonderful miracle from God if you believe?” Jesus asked her.

v. 41 So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me.

v. 42 (You always hear me, of course, but I said it because of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me.)”

v. 43 Then he shouted, “Lazarus, come out!”

v. 44 And Lazarus came—bound up in the gravecloth, his face muffled in a head swath. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!”

## LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

LESSON #1: Rejecting the Savior means suffering for eternity.

LESSON #2: When the Lord is nipping at our branches, He’s pruning us to prepare us for more fruit.

LESSON #3: Suffering in the life of a Christian is designed to accomplish four things: (1) teach us to trust Him; (2) learn through the test; (3) turn toward Him; and (4) see the triumph.

LESSON #4: If we are to share His glory, we must also share His suffering. What we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory He will give us later.

## LESSON #5: All things happen to us and are working for our good, if we love God and are fitting in His plan.

Copyright © 2026 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations particularly reside within the realm of fair use. It is the nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citation is unintentional. Teacher notes have been compiled by Genevieve Martin.