

Shasta felt the change at once. Now they were going all out.
The lion then badly wounds Aravis, before retreating unexpectedly.

Later, Shasta learns the full story. There was only one lion, not many. Aslan was “swift of foot.” Without the fears and the pain, Shasta and Aravis, Bree and Hwin, would have never met; their quest would have failed; the enemy would have been victorious; and Shasta would never have learned who he truly was. The pain wasn’t an afterthought on Aslan’s part, but a key element in his plan.

None of this implies that pain should be sought out. Pain is never the point of God’s plans, any more than it is the purpose of physical exercise. Never pushing ourselves to the point that it hurts means never improving our health. On the other hand, seeking pain is more likely to do harm than to aid our well-being.

In and of itself, pain is not good, but it is meaningful. Pain indicates that something is wrong and needs to be addressed. Without pain, we’d never know. In the same way, breaking bad habits of the past requires pushing beyond our comfort levels, through the pain, and onward on the path to full restoration.

Pain is sometimes required to reorient us. What else can turn one away from a debilitating addiction or insatiable sexual impulse? Without discomfort, would we ever give up on our preferred source of “safety” for the faithful and sometimes painful love of God? Whether through sickness or sacrifice, in ending a dream or enduring hostility, we must remember that God’s faithfulness is not determined by how well our lives are going. In fact, it is often known only in the hardest things of life.

To deny that God could or would use discomfort for our good is to deny that He is present in our pain. He is. Just as, in His quest to restore the glory of His creation, He did not shrink back from inflicting pain on His dear Son, His love for His people often includes a level of discomfort and pain. In the end, it is part of His work to restore His image-bearers to their intended dignity.

As Lewis wrote elsewhere, “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our consciences, but shouts in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”



November 7, 2021

10:30 A.M.

The Infinite Power of Jesus



“The Storm on the Sea of Galilee” by Rembrandt van Rijn

Order of Service

Announcements

Welcome

Preparation for Worship

Missions Report

-----**God's Greatness**-----

Call to Worship

Hymn of Proclamation: "All Creatures of our God and King"

..... St. Francis of Assisi/Baird/Draper

Prayer of Invocation

Affirmation of Faith: The Heidelberg Catechism*

Song of Praise: "This is My Father's World"

..... Purdy/Sheppard/Riddle/Babcock

Children are dismissed to Sunday School.

-----**God's Renewal**-----

Understanding Ourselves Rightly: Jeremiah 2:9, 11, 13

Public Confession

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon and Comfort: Romans 6:5-7

Song of Renewal: "Worthy is the Lamb". Darlene Zscheck

-----**God's Grace**-----

Scripture Reading: Mark 4:35-41(ESV)

Prayer

The Sermon

"The Infinite Power of Jesus"

Hymn: "Soon". Brooke Ligertwood

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Prayer of Approach

Scripture Reading: Mark 14:22-25 (Optional)

Holy Communion

-----**God's Blessing**-----

Parting Hymn: "Jesus Shall Reign". Watts/Hatton/Getty/Cash

Benediction

God's Gracious Provision 10/31/2021

Attendance: 40

Offering: \$1226.00

Your offering may be place in the box at the Welcome Table.

Aslan and the Path of Faithful Pain

John Stonestreet, Timothy D Padgett November 4, 2021

One of the most beloved and quotable scenes in The Chronicles of Narnia is from The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, when the children learn that Aslan is a lion, "the Lion, the great Lion."



"Ooh!" said Susan, "I'd thought he was a man. Is he – quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion."

"Safe?" said Mr. Beaver. . . "Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."

Though we love the idea that God is not "safe," we often live as if our safety or comfort marks the boundaries of our relationship with Him. Catechized by bad theology, captivated by our culture's enablement of self-centeredness, or weary of an angry and fractious age, many Christians cannot conceive that God's will for our lives could involve anything unpleasant or uncomfortable.

When it does and our expectations collapse, we wonder if God cares, having conflated God's faithfulness with a painless, placid life of blessing and provision. We are quick to assume that pain or discomfort means that God's will has been thwarted, or that His love and protection have been withdrawn. It's difficult to accept that, rather than a sign of God's absence, the presence of pain could be a sign of His sovereign care.

Throughout The Horse and His Boy, Aslan continually allows fear, hardship, and even physical pain for the main characters. When Shasta, one of the two main humans in the story, is fleeing from his abusive, adoptive father on the Narnian horse Bree, a lion chases them through the darkness. Fleeing from the danger, he encounters another rider fleeing from, it seems, another lion. Aravis is also escaping her home on a talking Narnian horse. Their shared fear and confusion bring them together for a journey neither of them could have made without the other.

Later, in the story, they're riding as fast as they can to head off a threat to Narnia. Just as Bree claims he can go no faster, a "new" lion closes in on them. Lewis writes,

"His eyes gleamed red and his ears lay back on his skull. And Bree now discovered that he had not really been going as fast – not quite as fast – as he could."

The Emotionally Distraught Disciples

Before Jesus calms the storm, they're so scared, but after Jesus calms the storm, of course, they're more scared! They're terrified! It gets worse!

If only You Loved Us

If you loved us, we wouldn't be going through storms.

Are we in Control?

We are at the mercy of the storm

Nature is going to wear us down.

We are at the mercy of Jesus

He lets things happen we don't understand. He doesn't do things according to our plan.

What's the difference between Jesus and the Storm?

The difference is all the difference in the world because Jesus' unmanageable power is filled with love for you.

"God is God and since he is God, he is worthy of my worship and my service. I will find rest nowhere else but in his will, and that will is necessarily infinitely, unspeakably beyond my largest notions of what he is up to." Elisabeth Elliot

The Power that Jesus has to calm storms cost Him His life.

Jesus can only save us because when he was on the cross, he was thrown into the ultimate storm, the only storm that can destroy you and me.

Where is your faith?

Your answer:

¹Keller, T. J. (2013). *The Timothy Keller Sermon Archive*. New York City: Redeemer Presbyterian Church.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, November 7 6:30-8:00 P.M. Young Adult Bible Study at the home of the Deicherts. This 5-week study is based on R.C. Sproul's book, "Choosing My Religion".

Monday, November 8 7:00 P.M.

Men's Small Group: Kingdom Heroes

Location: Home of Dave and Lisa Frame

643 Sylvan Dr. Stowe, PA 19464

Tuesday, November 9 6:30-8 P.M. Youth Group will meet at the home of the Deicherts.

Sunday, November 14 6:15-7:15 P.M. House of Prayer

GCC Prayer Gathering for youth and adults

1300 High Street, Pottstown, PA

Saturday, November 20 8:00 A.M.

Men's Breakfast at the home of Pastor Rick

Ladies Night Out

Sunday, November 21 ~ speaker: Lulu Bocci ~ at the home of Lisa Frame

Sunday, December 12 ~ speaker: TBA ~ at the home of Barb Knarr

Time: 5:00 P.M. A light supper will be served at all gatherings.

Everyone is invited to join with the elders in prayer every Sunday from 9:30-10:00 in the back of the gym.

CCI~David and Mindy Nelson

MEXICO

Pray for Keith and Jenny Arnold. They are getting adjusted to their two-room apartment in their host family's home in Oaxaca, Mexico. They have started Spanish language class and are using the Spanish language each day as they interact with the local community outside of their class time. Pray for good retention of the vocabulary words and pronunciation with the proper inflections.



TURKEY

Pray for David Nelson and the team as they meet with pastors and share the CCI ministry. Ask God to open doors to connect him with key pastors who will be eager to start the training and help lead other pastors to join. Pray for God to raise up some churches in the U.S. to partner with CCI and these churches in Turkey. We would like to see the ministry of Gospel spread and many new believers come to faith in Jesus Christ.

Prayer/Praise.November 7, 2021

- Pray for the wife of Eric Yensan's cousin, Ryan, and their new baby, Aubrey, who is in ICU with low oxygen levels and fluid in her lungs. Pray for salvation through Jesus Christ for this family.
- Praise God that Lisa Frame started a new job on 11/1/2021, at PMSI, Pottstown Medical Specials at the Infusion Center.
- Pray for Deana Deichert's mom, who moved into their home. Pray that the Holy Spirit will give her peace and for Deana and her family as they care for her mom.
- Pray for Ashley Adams, who dislocated her knee and is due to have surgery soon and more PT. Pray for relief from pain and healing for Ashley.
- Praise that Rindy Lee has found a job as a Nursing Home Transition Coordinator but for a new agency. Please continue to pray as she will travel to Philadelphia several days per week initially for training and as Noah and Rindy readjust to her working from home and in the community.
- Praise that Donna Jenkins' Covid test came back negative. She still must quarantine, since she is experiencing Covid-like symptoms. Pray for a quick recovery for Donna.
- Pray for Donna Jenkins' cousin Theresa's husband, who still is not doing well. Pray for his healing and God's guidance for Theresa's grandchildren.
- Pray for Donna Jenkins' friend, Debbie Breyer, who is back in the hospital. She has congestive heart failure.
- Pray for Donna Jenkins' nephew, Evan James, who has a very rare disease, CDA. Pray for healing for Evan and wisdom for his doctors.
- Praise that Jill Aument's cousin, Craig, is doing much better! Greg Aument is spending time with Craig, which is a great help for Craig.
- Praise that Austin, stepson of Lorraine Blanski's niece, is scheduled to leave Shriner's rehab on November 9th. Pray for God's timing that the nurses found are suited to Austin's needs. Pray for emotional strength for Austin as he awaits release from Shriner's.
- Pray for Lorraine Blanski's sister-in-law Kathy, Austin's step-grandmother. Praise that Kathy is home from the hospital. Pray for God's healing and wisdom for her doctors as to why she is still barely eating any food.
- Pray for Denny Bartchak, friend of Barb Knarr. Denny completed all his treatments for bladder cancer and is waiting for surgery.
- Pray for Justine Schumaker, mother of Renee Schumaker. Pray for healing for Justine through her chemotherapy treatment.

Message

The Infinite Power of Jesus

Mark 4:35–41 (ESV)

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side."³⁶And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. ³⁷And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. ³⁸But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" ³⁹And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" ⁴¹And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

The Storm

The Sea of Galilee is 700 feet below sea level and just 30 miles to the north is Mount Hermon, 9,200 feet high. Within 30 miles there is a difference of 10,000 feet high, down to below sea level. That creates a constant clashing of the cold air from the mountains and the warm air coming up from the Sea of Galilee, and as a result, the Sea of Galilee was a place with lots of storms, lots of squalls, lots of rough seas. Of course, anyone who was a fisherman, like the disciples, who were professional fishermen on the Sea of Galilee would have experienced many of these storms.

"We're gonna Die!" said the disciples

The disciples don't say, "Master, we might die," do they? "Master, we are dying. We are drowning. It's happening."

Jesus says, "Be quiet and stay quiet."

Then the wind died down . . ." But that's not all. ". . . and it was completely calm."

This is incomparable power, and the reason it's incomparable is, if there's one thing all the ancient cultures believed together, if there was one consensus point amongst all ancient cultures, it was the sea was uncontrollable to any power but God. The sea was *the* ultimate symbol in ancient cultures and in legends and in literature of uncontrollable destruction.¹

The unmanageable power of Jesus

Jesus exercising the power only God has. Only God has this power, and here's Jesus exercising it.