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Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.

October 2016

“SPARED: A JOURNEY OF FAITH”

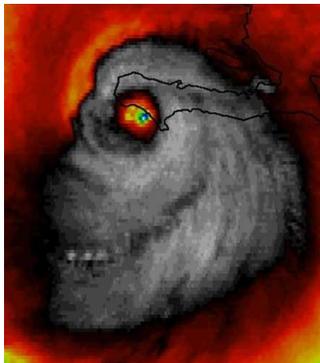
Hello to all of you! Here’s a story that needed to be told.

After Hurricane Wilma left devastation in her path in 2005, we came up with a “list” to pray regarding disasters. At first we were focused mainly on hurricanes and storms, floods and flooding, power outages, etc. Our family went 16 days two hours and 30 minutes without electricity after Wilma. Not good! We were not alone.

Over the years we have added to this “list,” thanks to suggestions of others and as personal experiences and the news reports have caused input. Mostly, storms have not even come close to our shores. And then came Matthew.

Matthew started out going west but then turned northward and moved past Haiti and then Cuba. It grew to Category 4. Then the path seemed to send it straight our way.

From the time there’s something on the map from NOAA and the National Hurricane Center, we start praying “the list.” But Matthew wasn’t cooperating. In fact it seemed to be making faces at everyone.



Here’s just one of the ghoulish pictures along the way. But this is about a journey of faith and God’s continued faithfulness to us.

We started preparing for Matthew on Monday, October 3rd. We didn’t want to be putting up shutters and running around to get water, get the gas tank for the car filled, etc. in the rain. The weather gave no hint of anything but beautiful and fair skies. I prayed that God would keep it that way right through the week.

We cancelled Wednesday night at Craighouse® because we needed to clear out the sanctuary/worship room in the event the windows didn’t hold. We believe in being prepared. At the end of our storm preparations, Pastor Jim and I

prayed that as we took care of God's business in protecting Craighouse®, He would take care of everyone connected to us.

Thursday came and it was sunshine and a drizzling rain now and then. The big stuff was supposed to begin at 2:00 p.m., and then 3:00 p.m. God was graciously giving people time. From time to time, honestly, it was difficult to hang on in our own faith as this monstrous storm was expected to hit as a Cat 4 with winds up to 145 m.p.h. But one thing I know: God is faithful, and He also will do it.

So, our daughter called from Maryland. They were praying "big." While talking with her, our son got in on the conversation. The three of us prayed against the storm while it was getting very close to Fort Lauderdale. The weather people measure Fort Lauderdale from the FLL international airport, about 24 miles south of us. The battle was on bigtime.

After that, I went into an area I call my "sanctuary room." After getting quiet before the LORD, I heard, "Touch not the Anointed and do the prophets of God no harm." (Psalm 105:15)

A note from <http://biblehub.com/kjv/psalms/105-14.htm>:

'He reprov'd kings for their sakes; 15. Saying, Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm.'--
PSALM cv. 14, 15. The original reference of these words is to the fathers of the Jewish people--the three wandering shepherds, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Psalmist transfers to them the great titles which properly belong to a later period of Jewish history. None of the three were ever in the literal sense of the word 'anointed,' but all the three had what anointing symbolised. ...
Alexander Maclaren—Expositions of Holy Scripture

So in my mind, I was thinking that Jesus Christ is The Anointed One and The Prophet and how that Jesus Christ lives in true believers everywhere.

Then I heard:

1 John 5:14, 15 And this is the confidence that we have before him: that whenever we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. (NET Bible) And whenever we know that He hears us, whatever whenever we might ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked from Him.
http://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_john/5-15.htm

Now these verses in 1 John 5:14, 15 speak in the context of eternal life in Christ. 1 John 5:13 says:

These things I have written to you that you might know [*“oída”* – know experientially with comprehension] that you have eternal life, to those believing (continually believing) on the name of the Son of God, and that you may believe on the name of the Son of God. 1 John 5:13

I understood what the LORD was bringing to me. If in fact we know [experientially with comprehension] that we have eternal life which comes by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation, then whenever we are believing, we have this confidence. The phrase in 1 John 5:14, "that we have before Him," has the word "*pros*" in it, relative to God. This speaks of a face-to-face relationship, a mental direction with words expressing a desire and emotion

toward God. Whenever we move toward God such that we have an audience with Him and whenever we might ask according to God's will (not His decreed will, but His desire, wish, "preferred will," then He "hears us." We are aligning to the will of the Father with the mind of Christ and the heart of the Holy Spirit. What we ask for at this point is what God also desires.

For example, with Hurricane Matthew, I knew that my relationship with the Living and True God is not based on any righteousness in myself, but only on the righteousness of Jesus Christ, God the Son. I have experienced being "born again." This was/is a work of grace, a work of the Holy Spirit; apart from Christ I can do nothing. I knew that I needed to make my appeal to God and the Divine Council and needed to approach God through Jesus Christ, in His Name. I knew/know that my appeal is made to my Heavenly Father, the One Jesus called "Holy Father." I am heard only because of the Body and Blood Sacrifice of Jesus Christ on my behalf. The faith of Jesus Christ prevails, even when mine goes on a journey with wiggles and turns and faltering and disappointment. I knew/know that Satan may have his day, but at some point, Jesus Christ shows up, shines forth, shoots down the enemy, and strengthens our faith.

Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of darkness. The Son glorifies the Father. The Father glorifies the Son. Nothing is too hard for the LORD. Etc.

Soon I knew that we had been "heard." But little did I know how God would choose to answer and show Himself faithful for the 11th year.

Very shortly after, and maybe even before all this, Hurricane Matthew began a process of eye wall replacement. The eye decreased to 25 miles from the center, meaning the storm winds would be greatly decreased. For a while, it was sunny with a few clouds outside with slight rain and not too much wind. The Directv satellite stayed up and the T.V. stayed on, a first for us during a storm. Throughout the storm, we only had drizzly rain and minor winds, no lightning or thunder.

The weather reporters began reporting how the storm was taking a turn to the East. Then it just began to go north. Soon they reported that our county, Broward, was no longer under a Tropical Storm warning; the storm was passing us and staying well off shore. Only after it passed Broward did the storm begin to turn back west and begin a track that took it closer off shore. Hurricane Matthew did not make landfall anywhere on the Florida coastline. We were spared.

Here's the path:



Sunday, Pastor Jim suspended the sermon; all who were there shared their stories of God's faithfulness and how they were spared through the time of the storm.

The Living God not only demonstrated that He is the Shelter in the Storm but that He makes the storm calm.

Jesus stilled the storm on the Sea of Galilee. He “muzzled” its mouth; He silenced it. (Mark 4:35-41) Likewise, Peter was walking on the water so long as he kept his eyes on Jesus, but when he saw the winds boisterous, he began to sink. Jesus immediately stretched forth His hand and caught Peter. Jesus calmed the raging sea with just a word. (Matthew 14:22-46) Jesus has power over nature. Do we believe it?

And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defense. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from the storm, and from rain. Isaiah 4:5, 6

And He said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid, and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O you of little faith, wherefore did you doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. (Matthew 14:29-32)

Personally, I think we move in and out of believing it. It’s more like, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief.” The faith of Jesus Christ carries us through. For Him, it’s a day in the Life.

In 11 years, since we began praying “the list,” this is the closest we have come to God not showing Himself faithful. Lots of things go through the mind, but God did indeed show Himself faithful. We were spared. South Florida was spared. Many places up the eastern coastline were spared. Though places had damage, it could have been far worse, according to what had been projected.

Our journey of faith is in His capable hands. God is the faithful God. Rejoice in Him.

Share your stories. Give God the glory. Thank and praise Him for all that He is. Praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Don’t stop there, though. Disasters portend a time when all will be judged. It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this, the judgment. (Hebrews 9:27) Jesus is coming in His glory. All nations will be gathered before Him. There will be a separation. Some are the blessed of the Father to inherit the Kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. Others will depart from Jesus, cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (fallen). Some will be spared, namely, the righteous, into life eternal; others will go away into everlasting punishment. (Matthew 25:31-46)

Those who have true faith in Christ, believing Jesus and believing what Jesus believes, are spared. Are you among them? If in fact you are, then you, like me, are on this journey of faith. Rejoice in these times when the LORD spares from natural and manmade disasters; but the greater rejoicing is that our names are written in heaven, in the Lamb’s Book of Life. (Luke 10:20; Revelation 20) Jesus is that Life. The Holy Spirit is the Life Producer. Eternal life is a gift, of grace, received when one repents of sin (and all people sin), asking forgiveness for sin, and turns to trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. We follow Jesus. He has no fear, so hold on!

Just the Messenger,

Mary Craig

Mary Craig, D. Min.

I will praise You with my whole heart;
Before the gods will I sing praise unto You.
I will worship toward Your holy temple, and praise Your Name
For Your lovingkindness and for Your truth; for You have magnified
Your Word above all Your Name.
In the day when I cried You answered me, and strengthened me
With strength in my soul...
Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will preserve alive (You will revive me);
You shall stretch forth Your hand against the wrath of my enemies,
And Your right hand shall save me.
From Psalm 138

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