

When I look out at the people that make up the assembly of the faithful where ever I worship, I realize that there are two types of people who seem to dominate the life of the church. These extremes I like to think of as Anchors and Storms.

The Storm is represented by the gossip that tries to destroy character, the educational director for whom it is "their way or the highway," or perhaps the shepherd who has let his love of power destroy others. In almost every congregation of the Lord's people there is one or more who try to "run the church." They use whatever structure they can seize to beat their doctrine into anyone who will submit. [ref: They are "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." (This is a quote from Shakespeare, not the Bible)]

But in contrast to these there are Anchors. If it were not for the Anchors we would be totally blown away by the storms. Anchors are the caring members who are strong enough to withstand the blasts of the others. They are those who understand the real meaning of grace and interpret properly the scripture, extracting what it really is that God wants from us. We must ensure that all, especially the weaker members, make contact with those strong enough to be anchors.

When I think of storms, I find that there are three things that they try to do. They try to drive us off-course, damage or destroy us, and intimidate us. Such it is with the Storms which exist in our church. Of course, God speaks very strongly against those who would dominate or disrupt our family. We must strive to be an anchor to which people can cling for survival.

Jesus struggled through various storms when he lived on this earth. I remember the control that He took of the storm on the lake, echoing the words of the Psalmist [ref Ps 107:29] with powerful action:

*Without warning, a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!" He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!" (Matthew 8:24-27)*

But the Pharisees and Sadducees tried their best to sweep Him aside and destroy Him as though in a great storm. They blustered and plotted and eventually crucified Him. But He proved to be the greatest anchor of all in the midst of that storm. He never wavered from his mission to save those of the human race who would follow Him. Thus He is a source of comfort for all of His followers.

The church should be a shelter for the weak and oppressed [ref gates], and we must work to fulfill that purpose. We must individually be the kind of person that can offer protection to those who are in need, like an anchor that holds our place no matter what. Isaiah speaks of God's model in this regard:

*You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm driving against a wall; (Isaiah 25:4 NIV)*

And in His kingdom that has already begun on earth each of us must contribute security in spite of strong spiritual storms:

*Each man will be like a shelter from the wind and a refuge from the storm, like streams of water in the desert and the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land. (Isa 32:2 NIV)*

We must ask ourselves the question, as we examine our actions in following Him, are we an anchor or a storm?

The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

(Psa 107:29 NIV) He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed.

Jonah's storm?

Paul's storm (and sea anchors)? (Acts 27:15 NIV)

(2 Pet 2:17 NIV) These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them.

Have you ever used someone as an anchor?

Image of being tied to the ship to keep from getting thrown or blown overboard