



In May of 2003, accompanied by my brother and several friends, I sailed my boat from the Caribbean to Maine, stopping only at the island of Bermuda, a distance of approximately 2000 miles across open ocean. We were well prepared for the trip, with a life raft, safety gear, a satellite phone, and even a weather forecaster I had hired to predict the weather conditions during the voyage. We had very calm conditions during the first leg of the trip to Bermuda, but conditions were much different as we left the island, with gale force winds and high waves. Crossing the Gulf Stream on the third night after leaving the island, conditions still had not improved. We were attempting to reach the western edge of Georges Bank, approximately 60 miles east of Cape Cod, to avoid crossing the shallow waters of Georges Bank. We were already dealing with big waves, - on Georges Bank they might be even bigger. The strong west winds were pushing us off course towards Nova Scotia, and we were beginning to discuss going around the east side of Georges Bank, adding several hundred miles to the trip. We were cold, wet, and miserable. After 80 hours in storm force winds and waves of 12-15 feet, at 10am on the morning of May 14, 2003, I called the weather forecaster on the satellite phone to ask her when the weather conditions would change. Her answer "When you reach 40 degrees North latitude tonight, the wind will stop," was very surprising. At the time we were 35 miles south of this latitude, and she was telling us that the wind would stop in just a few miles. Not just improve, not diminish, the weather forecaster said that the wind would stop. Honestly, we just didn't believe her. Why should we? Our whole first week of sailing from the BVI to Bermuda had been in fair weather and calm seas. We had never been in a storm where we were depending on her weather forecasts to see us through. Isn't that a great analogy for our faith in God? We don't grow to spiritual maturity sailing in calm seas. God uses the trials, stresses, and storms of our lives to mold, shape, and grow our faith. We see this principle in Mark Chapter 4, in the account of the storm on the Sea of Galilee. God grows our faith in the storms of life. To be continued next week..

Comments on the picture: This picture was taken on May 15th, the morning after the storm was over, at the conclusion of the 4-6am watch. At this time we were about 50 miles east of Cape Cod.