

Peace! Be Still

The story of Jesus in a boat, in the storm with His disciples, is one of the greatest teaching moments found anywhere in the Gospels. For those who find the wind and the waves crashing down upon them, this account awakens us to a confident assurance that, just as Jesus is Lord over every disease and human brokenness, as well all the power of darkness, He stands as Lord over every event in our lives. Sometimes, God calms our storm in an instant; sometimes, in this life, our storms remain. Yet, we cling to this — God's power and purpose will prevail.

Mark 4:35-41

35 On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” **36** And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. **37** And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. **38** But 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?” **39** And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. **40** He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” **41** And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

I. Jesus leads us into the storm (vs 35-37)

We must see that Jesus told His disciples to get into the boat, knowing all along that a storm was waiting for them. Jesus was not surprised by the storm, He designed it. For the Christ-Follower, our prayer is not, “Lord, get me out of this storm ...and now!” Rather, it's to pray: “Lord help me to see that You have placed me in this storm for a purpose. Help me to learn from it what I need to learn!”

II. Jesus is present in the storm (v.38)

One of the interesting dimensions to this story is the fact that, in the storm, Jesus is asleep. While fatigued by much ministry interaction, Jesus' sleeping is by design, just as the storm was. Having revealed His power to the disciples in many different settings, Jesus now, gives them a chance to apply what they have learned. Will they trust in Him in the storm?

In our own lives, when the storm hits, God can seem absent, silent and unresponsive. The evil one wants us to think that we have been abandoned by God. Even when we don't understand God's ways or His timing, we continue to trust His heart for us and the assurance that He will never leave or forsake us.

III. Jesus controls the storm (vs 39-40)

With a word, Jesus quiets the storm and there is great calm. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, who came to bring us peace, longs for our souls to be at rest. Peace, be still. This journey begins when we humbly acknowledge that we are not able to control our lives. There really is a great big God in heaven ...and we're not Him! Whatever illusion you may have of being your own captain of the ship, let it go! God, who controls the storm, also controls every aspect of your life. Trust Him.

IV. Jesus uses our storms to reveal His glory (v.41)

There is a larger story being written in and through your life, and it's all about the glory of God. After the storm ceased, the disciples were filled with awe, with reverent fear as they asked each other, Who is this that the wind and sea obey Him? Jesus "used" the storm to bring glory to Himself. Remember, your life is the stage on which God is writing His story. Which is to say, your story is a much bigger story than you might think. It is to pray, "God use me and my life as a way to bring glory to Your great name ...whatever the cost." It's a dangerous prayer, but the right prayer. God also uses the storms of your life to prepare you for your future glory. (see 2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

Discussion Questions

1. Left on our own, why would we prefer storm avoidance to enduring in the storm?
2. Describe a storm that you have gone through in the past. What did you learn from it? Where did you see God at work in it?
3. When God seems silent, what helps you to continue to trust Him?
4. Living with the settled conviction that God controls all things in and around your life – how might this increase the peace quotient in your soul?

Going Deeper

Knowing that God designs all things for His glory, how does this reality impact the way you process the events of your life?

How does the hope of your future glory encourage you in the midst of your present storms?