

How to Find Rest in the Middle of a Storm

Luke 8:22-25

August 19, 2018

We are coming into a new section here in Luke, chapter 8, so you can turn there in your Bibles if you're not already there. We are coming into a section in Luke 8 that is all about the supernatural power of Jesus Christ. And you can turn in your Bibles as, if you're getting in there in Luke 8, go to verse 22. We're going to be looking there at the first of those narratives, on the supernatural power of Jesus, and the first narrative has to do with Jesus calming the storm. Jesus calming the storm. Jesus' power over the weather in Luke 8:22 to 25 is the first in a series of very powerful demonstrations.

The next narrative, following that one, is in verses 26 to 39 and Jesus demonstrates power again, as he has authority over a legion of demons. And then the final narrative in this chapter, verses 40 to 56, we see Jesus' power over disease and over death.



All three of those demonstrations of power are in the context of Jesus training his twelve disciples. Keep in mind that context, that Jesus has been preparing to send the disciples out on a mission. To bring his gospel to others, and that's going to happen in Luke, chapter 9, verse 1 to 6. But before he sends them out, they need proper preparation. Not just heads full of knowledge, they need hearts that understand and believe deeply. That's the preparation that they need.

So, Jesus started with lessons in biblical discernment, teaching his disciples to understand the things of the heart, things that they cannot see on the surface. Parable of the soils, verses 4 to 15, that taught them that it's the hidden condition of the heart that explains anyone's response to the Gospel.

And then the metaphor of the lamp, that followed that, verses 16 to 18, Jesus illustrated the privilege that it is of hearing God's word. True disciples, they see the light that God has lit. They listen to the word of God. They hear it.



True disciples obey the word of God and they keep on obeying the word of God. And they do that because they are born of God and they belong to God's family. We saw that at the end there, verses 19 to 21.

Now it's time for Jesus disciples to see and experience just how powerful the word of God is. The word that they are to hear and to obey. They need to understand how powerful that word is. It's time for them to trust God's word fully, implicitly, without hesitation, without question. They need to understand it. They need to really believe it, that they might obey it, and that they might proclaim it to other people.

So, when they proclaim that gospel to others, they will know those whom God has chosen, those whom God has called, by their response to the word, and that, that the response is the same as their own response. They'll see that in others.

That's actually how Paul identified true believers in Thessalonica. In First Thessalonians 2:13, he said, "We thank God constantly for this that when you received the word of God,

which you heard from us," so God's word, human instrument, human voices, "When you heard it, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers." That's the issue.

When I'm proclaiming the Scripture to you this morning, it's not me. You need to understand this is God's word we're dealing with. This isn't my authority. This isn't the authority of the elders. It's not the authority of this church. We all are underneath the authority of this bible, of this word from God.

So, to solidify the disciples' confidence in the word of God, which is what he'd been speaking to them, Jesus pulls back the veil a little bit. He reveals that resident within himself is the almighty power of the sovereign God. They need to see that.

When the disciples see that Jesus possesses divine power over natural forces, in verses 22 to 25, also over demonic spiritual forces, versus 26 to 39. Then over the forces of disease and death, all the way to the end of the chapter.

When they have experienced that for themselves, when they've seen that for themselves, when they've really embraced the reality of the power of Christ's Gospel, that it's imbued with power from on high. Well, those men become an unstoppable force. Confident, joyful, unrelenting missionaries whom God will use to turn the world, literally turn it upside down.

That's what we need to see as well, don't we? It's what we need to see, if we're going to be empowered, like Mark said, to take this Gospel out to our neighbors, to this city, to this region, we need to see that power as well. Nothing worse than a missionary who doesn't deeply believe his message, right?

We need to believe the word of God down to the very bone and marrow, down to the profoundest level of our hearts, and our preaching needs to come forth from the depths of our hearts that we truly believe. That's the context.

Let's get into the specifics of the passage before us this morning, which is Jesus calming the storm, Luke 8:22 to 25. "One day he," Jesus, "got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, 'Let us go across to the other side of the lake.' So, they set out, and as they sailed, he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. And they went and woke him," up, "saying Master, Master, we are perishing!' He awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. He said to them, 'Where is your faith?' And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, 'Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and water, and they obey him?'"

Pretty brief, right? I mean, we could have probably written a whole series of books based on this one miracle. But if there was ever an account that portrayed so clearly, poignantly, concisely, both the true humanity and the true deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, it's this passage here.

Asleep in the boat during a fierce storm because of physical weariness. But when awakened, commanding the natural elements with the voice of divine power, he is man, and he is God, what comprises the mystery of the incarnation, humanity, and deity joined together in the one person of Jesus Christ. That is the reality that accomplishes our full salvation.

In his humanity, Jesus sympathizes with our weaknesses. In his humanity, he represents the human race. He completely fulfills the divine law. He dies on behalf of those who repent and believe. But it's in his deity, we find he has the power to do something about our weaknesses and about our sin. It's his full deity that it could absorb all of the sins of all who believe.

It's in his full deity that he could absorb the holy, eternal, infinite wrath of God. Both his humanity and his deity accomplish our full salvation. Our weaknesses and our frailties are always with us. And yet we often forget that, don't we?

We pretend sometimes, like we've got a handle on it. Until we face something, way too powerful for us. Like a hurricane, or an

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earthquake, or like the disciples here caught in the middle of a squaw at sea, tossed around in a small fishing vessel. Then we see our weakness. Then we see our frailty.

For many of us, it doesn't even take something that powerful and terrifying to reveal our weakness. Sometimes it's just a little petty conflict with a, with a family member, right? All of a sudden, we're sunk, we're in turmoil inside, what is wrong with us?

But the disciples here, capable strong men, some of them fishermen for a living on this very lake, they came to the end of themselves on this night.

Whenever I read this account, I'm reminded of a portion, one of my favorite Psalms, Psalm 107. It pictures the scene set before us. You can just jot it down, or turn there, if you're quick enough, but in Psalm 107:23 to 32, it says this, that "some went down to the sea in ships, doing business on the great waters; they saw the deeds of the LORD, his wondrous works in the deep. For he commanded and raised the stormy wind, which lifted up the

waves of the sea. They mounted up to heaven; and then they went down to the depths; their courage melted away in their evil plight; they reeled and staggered like drunken men and were at their wits end.

"And then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, he delivered them from their distress. He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed. And then they were glad that the waters were quiet, and he brought them to their desired haven. Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of men! Let them extol him in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders."

Those of us who, are thus humbled, coming face to face with our mortality, coming face to face with our weakness, our frailty, we know how to give thanks to the Lord for his steadfast love. For his wondrous works to the children of men. And here is where the incarnation of Christ came suddenly to these frightened disciples. As JC Ryle said it so well, he said, "As a man he slept. As God, he stilled the storm."

That's what I want you to see this morning. As we observe humanity and deity join together in this one person. I want you to see here this morning four truths about Christ. Four truths about Christ, truths that you need to understand, to believe, and to believe deeply, so that you can find rest in the middle of any storm. Any storm, be it small or big or anything in between.

First point, you'll find it there in the outline in your bulletin. First point, find rest in the Sovereign's providence. Find rest in the Sovereigns' providence. When I refer to the Sovereign, I'm referring to God himself. Jesus was following God's providence here. And he was resting in it, and we, because he is man, we can follow his example as a man. Let's start by looking at the setting there in verse 22, it says there, "One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them," Let's, "'let us go across to the other side of the lake.'"

Luke gets here right to the point. He sets the scene by telling us that Jesus and his disciples they got into a boat, he gave

orders, they set sail, doesn't tell us when this happened. But according to Mark's account, we know that this occurred the evening right after Jesus delivered his parables, which we've just studied. So, as you can imagine, Jesus is weary from a full day of teaching and for ministering to the, the crush of people who were constantly surrounding him.

Up to this point, we need to understand that Jesus and his disciples, they had been coming home to Capernaum after ministry trips, itinerant trips to rest and refresh. They traveled by foot from town to town. They went from village to village, to and from Capernaum, and they did all that travel on foot.

Capernaum was home base. That's where they could put their feet up and rest a while, refresh. No longer. Jesus' growing popularity had practical consequences, namely that there would be no more rest for him in Capernaum. Crowds began to gather around his home, even pressing into the home as we talked about last week. So many people, according to Mark 3:20, so many people were around him, they couldn't even eat meals in peace and quiet, let alone kick their feet up.

So, after returning from his last trip around the towns and the villages of Galilee, Jesus had not rested. He'd spent his time, his rest time preaching and teaching, delivering parables to train the twelve, ministering to people, acts of compassion, mercy, healing, all the rest. And now, without getting the needed rest, it's time to head out again.

So why did he, here, step into a boat? Probably several practical reasons. If you traveled by foot in a state of physical weariness and then accompanied by this throng of people, these crowds, he was likely to arrive at his destination rather exhausted, which would compromise his ability to teach the people, which is why he came. But if Jesus could travel by boat, if they could sail to their next ministry destination, well, then he could get his disciples where they all needed to go. And at the same time catch up on some much, needed rest.

But beyond those practical considerations, God had ordained a meeting that Jesus needed to keep. There was a poor demoniac on the other side of the lake, and this man had been enslaved by

demons. He was being tortured and so God is sending Jesus across the lake to deliver this poor soul. This, as it turns out, this elect man, from legions of demons and to grant him new life.

But along the way, God had ordained some lessons for Jesus disciples too. And the timing of their departure had to conform to God's sovereign, providential plans for this little group. As Hendrickson writes, "We must not forget the divine guidance was operative here. As always, Jesus must be on these waters in order by means of an astounding miracle to strengthen the faith of his disciples." That's why he's in the boat.

We can only imagine how Jesus, according to his human nature, was aware of God's guidance in the moment by moment. How it was with the Holy Spirit moved him from place to place, but he did know, he knew at the proper time, he knew when God was ready for him to know, and he trusted fully, he obeyed God perfectly.

So, Jesus, as it says there got into a boat with his disciples. He told them they were going to go and sail across to the other

side of the lake. Even though it was evening and darkness is falling on the land, the disciples obliged.

So, at the end of verse 22 they set out and verse 23, "As they sailed, he fell asleep." Not hard to imagine if we have the right picture in our minds of the setting, the circumstances, and all that. He was certainly tired enough to fall asleep in the boat, but the boat itself actually accommodated him falling asleep and taking a long nap while they went across the lake.

Back in 1986, there was a hull of a fishing boat that was pulled out of the mud, actually in the same area, it was on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, about five miles south of Capernaum. So right in this area. Interestingly, carbon-14 technology dated the wood of that boat squarely in the time frame of Jesus life between 120 BC, before Christ, and AD 40. That puts it right in the ballpark, doesn't it?

And they took measurements of this boat. It was 26 and a half feet long. Seven and a half feet wide and four and a half feet

high. And what is fascinating is that this boat corresponds exactly in its dimensions, in its design.

Corresponds exactly to mosaics from the first and the sixth centuries that are located about a mile from the discovery site. One source described the boat, said the hull of the recovered boat has a relatively deep stern. That's where Jesus was sleeping. A deep stern covered in both fore and aft sections with a deck, under which passengers might take shelter or sleep. The boat was propelled by two rowers per side, four total, and could carry up to fifteen persons. Maybe like the twelve and like Jesus.

So, there's Jesus, he's bone tired, but now he's asleep in the stern of the boat. According to Mark, we find out he's resting his head on a cushion. The gentle rocking of the boat as they start out, easily put him to sleep. He's resting peacefully. He's become oblivious to the conversation of the disciples, who were at work piloting the boat, rowing, sailing.

Jesus knows, that he doesn't just rest in their expertise, he knows that above those disciples, above the lake, above the very earth itself, Jesus rests here knowing that God is sovereignly captaining that small craft. And since it's God's sovereign will for them to get to the other side, God will bring them safely to destinations end. No sounder way to sleep.

Let me ask you a question. How well are you sleeping? It's a very practical question and often a very revealing question. Because those who trust well in God are very often those who sleep well. They're at rest, mind and body, spiritually and physically, because they work diligently during the day to be tired enough to sleep.

And then they rest continually, peacefully, under God's sovereign hand. They know that God is always near, that he's always watchful, that his providence directs all things, even changes of plans, even daily interruptions, even unanticipated disappointments, even relational challenges and conflicts.

God's providence directs all things according to the counsel of his will, to the fulfillment of his perfect plan. That's how the apostle Paul rested too. Knowing that his life and his plans, his moment by moment, his day by day, everything works out according to the providence of a good and wise, sovereign God. He was at complete peace.

He tells us the secret of that kind of peace in Philippians 4:5 to 7. Paul says, "The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." You wanna know how to sleep well? That's how you sleep well. That's how you find rest in the providence of a sovereign God.

Here's a second point. Another truth about Christ, you need to believe so you can find rest in the midst of any storm. Number two, find rest in the Master's omnipotence. Find rest in the Master's omnipotence. In his humanity, Jesus is resting peacefully. All the while God is busy brewing up a little trial.

Yes, God planned for Jesus to get to the other side of the lake and deliver the demoniac, but at the same time God is concerned at this moment to train the twelve to trust further in his Son. And they believe him so far. But do they believe him for everything?

So, he sends him the perfect trial, suited just for them. Brews up a little storm at sea. Look at verse 23 again. Jesus is sleeping, "and a windstorm came down on the lake and they were filling with water and were in danger." When Luke tells us here the wind storm came down on the lake, it's the verb *katabaino*, to descend upon.

And it describes the topographical situation on the Sea of Galilee, very accurately. The Sea of Galilee, which is actually a lake. It's at the north end of the Jordan valley. The Jordan river runs from it, goes down into the Dead Sea, which is the very deepest depression on Earth.

But the lake surface up in the Sea of Galilee in the north is still way below sea level, at 700 feet below sea level. And the

depth of that depression, the lake surface, it's 700 feet. Think of it just a little bit, to the west is the Mediterranean Sea, 700 feet below the Mediterranean Sea. And the depth of this lake is accentuated, actually by the surrounding hills around the lake, especially on the east side with its high cliffs. You've got cold air descending on the lake, and especially coming down from Mount Hermon, which sits up at 9200 feet above sea level.

So those cold air currents quite literally come down, descending upon the Sea of Galilee, just as Luke has described it here. Air currents coming down upon the lake and they come with force.

They are accelerated as they shoot through the narrow passages between steep hills and ravines, and they rush headlong into the heated air above the surface of the lake.

So, you've got high velocity winds, cold and warm air currents colliding, I know there are a few pilots in our midst, what do we call that? Turbulence. They don't like to fly through it, they're passengers don't like to fly through it. Well, when turbulence, comes down on the surface of a lake, you know what it creates? Bitter weather.

ESV translators call it a windstorm on the lake. I think that's a little too mild, actually. The expression Luke uses is *lailaps* of wind, *lailaps*, a, a violent windstorm. A *lailaps* of wind on the land creates whirl winds and tornadoes. A gale on the surface of the water, though a *lailaps* causes perilous squalls, that destroy ships, terrifying hurricanes that sink vessels.

So, at the surface of the water, all this air turbulence creates high waves. No wonder in verse 23 they're filling with water and they're in danger. Massive swells, and in this, 700 foot below sea level, lake basin, the waves are coming at them from all directions. It's like stirring up the bath water with a little toy boat in it.

There are 26 by 7, foot fishing boat with gunnels only about four and a half feet high. No wonder the boats being swamped, and that's the term Luke uses here, *sympleroo* which is a nautical, technical, nautical term for swamping any seagoing vessel. That's what's going on here.

Now, several of these men are fishermen and they fish on this very body of water. They know the kind of storm that's overpowering them, and no doubt while Jesus is peacefully sleeping, they're bailing. They are bailing water, but they cannot bail fast enough.

So, they've come to Jesus, verse 24, "They went and woke him up saying, 'Master, Master, we are perishing!'" Isn't that something? That they actually had to wake Jesus up. And that not only shows how tired he was, but it also shows how, how peacefully he slept under the watchful care of God, 'cause Jesus is sleeping right through the pitching and the rolling of the boat.

The sloshing around of water, he's not awakened here by howling wind, and crashing waves, and frantic voices above him, of his disciples calling out to one another, bailing water, dealing with this dangerous predicament. But here they come to their wits end. They come to the end of their strength; their arms are rubber from bailing water.

They say, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" We are being destroyed. No question in their minds they're dying tonight. That's not all they said in their panic state. Matthew 8:25 tells us that they prayed simply. "Lord save us." Over in Mark 4, 4:38, they go further, they become irrational.

Contrary to all evidence, they actually charge Jesus, in Mark 4:38 with indifference. "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" What happened to that friendship they've been enjoying with Jesus all this time? Well, he doesn't care. Where did the theology go?

Some of you may have had that feeling before. That feeling of mortal danger, that you know you are about to die. It's a feeling of, can be of sheer terror, that grips you. It paralyzes you. It's as if you come to the terrifying realization that this is it. And you really don't know what to think in that moment, so you just freeze.

Disciples felt that here. But then crossing the paralysis barrier, they came to their judgment and they woke Jesus to the

danger that they faced. And Luke here doesn't record the prayer, "Lord save us." He doesn't record the irrational accusation, you don't care for us, which is a slander against him, by the way. Luke just records their final judgment. "Master, Master, we are perishing!"

The repetition of the title, master, master, portrays the panic, that's in their hearts. The word for master is *epistates*, which refers to the man in command, to the one that they acknowledge is the true captain of their, not just their vessel, but their group. So, they've come to their captain, their *epistates*, to deliver this bad news.

But here the tense of the verb reveals their state of mind, that they have come to this foregone conclusion, death is imminent, we are perishing, we are all going to die now. Oh, really?

Jesus gets up. He clears the cobwebs out of his head. He assesses the situation. Hmm. God is still sovereign over the universe, including every part of the universe, in every place, including this pipsqueak little lake. Last he checked, yeah, God

still controls the weather. Nothing's changed in reality. So according to the immediate plan, he knows they had to get to the other side of the lake. According to God's ultimate plan for his life and ministry, Jesus had to get to the cross. Therefore, he comes to the conclusion no one is dying tonight.

The disciples are not here reasoning from faith. Their reasoning, from what their perception is telling them. From what their fear, that's taken over their hearts, is telling them. Again, can you understand this a little bit? I can. That sometimes what our eyes perceive, what our senses tell us becomes more powerful than the truth of God's word.

We have no way of knowing what prompted Jesus to take action here, all that went on in his mind, but we know that he was acutely attuned to his father's will. He knew what he would do. In John 6:38 to 39, he said, "I've come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day." He knows that for certain.

Jesus had not yet made provision for that promise to be fulfilled. In order that, by his atoning death on the cross, that their sins would be forgiven. So that he would be able to raise them up on the last day. Presenting them to his father without spot or wrinkle or blemish or any such thing. He knew that hadn't happened yet. So assured by Scripture, confident in his father's will, no doubt directed here by the Holy Spirit, Jesus awoke and he arose, and he took action.

Look at the rest of verse, 24, "He awoke, rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm." Generally speaking, when winds died down, which they can even die down suddenly, it takes some time before the stirred-up waves can settle and before waters can become peaceful. Waves don't cease immediately.

This is evidence here that Jesus has used supernatural power. He not only shut down the winds that were falling from Mount Hermon, and through the passes, and through the canyons, shooting through with high velocity onto the surface of the

lake, he not only turned off that faucet, turned off that valve at the same time, he also stopped the motion of the waves. The physics of this miracle boggles the mind. How does that happen, except by supernatural power?

By his word, by his speaking, Jesus has turned these violently raging seas into a placid sea of glass. Surface of the lake becomes as smooth as a mirror. And since it's a night sky above them, it's reflecting like a mirror. These still waters reflecting a starlit sky above. Total calm. He's done here what only God can do, defying physics, controlling the weather, which means that this Jesus is equal with God. He didn't pray first, he didn't ask God to still the wind and the waves, he just acted with full prerogative and power of deity, he spoke, and it happened. Clear evidence of the deity of Christ, and so the disciples, they're coming to see that this one that they called Master, the *epistates*, he's not just the captain of their little boat. This Master is none other than the omnipotent God.

It's in Psalm 89:6 to 9 that we read, "Who in the skies can be compared to the LORD? Who among the heavenly beings is like the

LORD, a God greatly to be feared in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all who are around him? O LORD God of hosts, who is mighty as you are, O LORD, with your faithfulness all around you? You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them."

It's because of who this God is, and because of who this Christ really is, that these disciples are coming to discover right now. It's because of who he is that we can rest in his almighty power.

And so, we read as well in Psalm 65:5 through 8, "By awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness, O God of our salvation, the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas; the one who by his strength" among other things, "stills the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves" says, "that those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe at your signs."

I'm in awe. From their perspective, here we are at the ends of the earth. From the perspective of Palestine, here we are at the

ends of the earth, off the edge of the map. But we are in awe at these signs. By the strength of the omnipotent God, residing in Jesus Christ, he turns the roaring, raging, waters of this ultra, violent storm into a peaceful calm.

This takes us to a third Point, because it's in the presence of this kind of Savior that we find rest. There's no other savior we find rest like this, but in the presence of this Savior we find rest. We don't find rest in money, we don't find rest in our bank account, we don't find rest in our, our portfolio, don't find rest in our stocks. We do find rest in this kind of savior. We find rest in the Sovereigns' providence. We find rest in the Master's omnipotence, and thirdly, we find rest in the Savior's presence. Rest in the Savior's presence. We're only gonna find rest though, when we trust in him.

And that's what the disciples failed to do on this, this occasion, which is why Jesus asked a question, which is it's a general question, but it's a clear and obvious rebuke. First part of verse 25. "He said to them, 'Where is your faith?'" He's

speaking to all of them here. Where's the faith of you all? It's plural. "Where is your faith?"

So, they've come into, through, and then out of a trial. They've come through, into, out, of a test. Now they're getting their grades. And Jesus says boys, you've all earned an F. Why is that? Because they ought to have believed in him here. And they ought to have found rest. And instead of coming to a false and panicked conclusion that they are going to die tonight, they should have trusted, they should have rested.

It's implicit in Jesus' question here, where is your faith? It's even clearer when you compare this with the other gospels. In Matthew, Jesus tells them they have little faith, which is a one, word moniker, it's kind of like a nickname that he gives them. *A, olia, oligopistos*, it comes from *oligos*, which means tiny or puny or little.

And then the word *pistos*, faith. Little faith people. And we also read in the parallel accounts of Jesus, asked questions about their courage. He asked them, why are you so afraid?

Matthew and Mark. It's a *deilos* which means timid, cowardly, why are you so timid and cowardly? In fact, he's saying, hey puny, faith boys, why the cowardice here? Come on.

He doesn't let him off the hook. In other words, he's telling them, Jesus' telling them here, there's no footnote in the Bible that says, Note: in times, when you think you were in great peril, or have cause to worry, you are hereby authorized to stop believing. You're free to lose your mind. Accuse God of indifference. Enter into a state of panic, and *ruepa*, pursue any irrational course of anger, worry, fretting, or a binge of self-indulgent sin. No footnote in the bible that says that. You're not gonna find it in anything Jesus says, that you're off the hook for trusting in him. You know why? Because that would be utterly, unloving of him, to allow you to unshackle your faith in him, no matter what trial, or provocation, or anxiety, or relational issue, or mortal grave danger.

But so many of us Christians do just that, don't we? And listen, we do face some perplexing trials. Ones that bring us to the end of ourselves, to the end of our resources. Take these disciples

as a, as an example. I would never look at Peter and call him a coward. He'd pummel me. These guys are not sissies. They're hard and strong men. They're not given to fits of cowardice about going out to sea. They're strong, able-bodied fishermen. They know their business. They know this lake.

They had experienced sudden storms on Galilee before. They knew the peril when they saw it. They also knew what to do when storms came. They knew when to take down sails. They knew when to start rowing, like mad for shore, they knew how to bail, they knew how to bail efficiently and furiously. They also knew when it was time to stop bailing, hold on and pray for help and eventually maybe having to abandon ship.

But the violence of this storm brought these strong, able-bodied, self-sufficient men to the end of themselves. That's exactly where God wanted them to be. That's why he directed them onto the lake in the first place, and in exactly this time, for precisely this lesson. Listen, write this down. There is no time that it's okay to stop believing. There's no time that it's okay

to stop believing, and especially when they're in the presence, the very presence of the Savior himself.

So, Jesus' question, "Where is your faith?" It affirms that they do still have faith, but that they've lost it, misplaced it, put their faith in the wrong place. Where is your faith, is like asking, in what have you placed your faith? He's not asking here about the existence of faith. He's asking here, about the object of their faith. Because they clearly had not been believing in the almighty God, they had not been believing in his Son Jesus Christ, because if they had, they would have reacted in a sensible, calm, and rational way.

No, these disciples here, like so many of us during times of difficulty, they put their faith in something other than God. You can imagine what they trusted in, their own experience, their expertise, their strength, their knowledge of the lake, their ability to react well when storms arose in the past.

So, God designed a trial to take them way past their limits, to expose the fact that the object of their faith, whatever it was,

could not sustain them. Jesus wants them to learn the lesson,
where is your faith?

You know a wise man once told me, that a wise man learns from
other people's trials. Can we just not, you know, have to go
through the full extent, for God to break us and bring us to the
end of ourselves? Can we just learn from what it says in
Scripture? Okay, these guys, were brought to the end of
themselves, are very capable, very strong, very powerful,
brought to themselves and they had to be taught. No, their faith
was misplaced, it was misdirected. They're looking at the wrong
object. They're trusting in something else other than God.

Can we just learn that? Now, in some cases I think, yes, in
other cases, Nah. I'm just stubborn, hard headed, God is gonna
have to bring me to the end of myself. I'm gonna have to feel
it, all the pain, but it's good, as my wife likes to say, a
former gymnast, she says, "It hurts good." Where is your faith?
Jesus wants them to learn this lesson.

JC Ryle points out, He says, "They forgot for a moment, their Master's never, failing care for them in the past. They forgot that with him they must be safe. Whatever happened, they forgot everything but the sight and the sense of present danger." And then Ryle makes this insightful comment, quote, "It is only too true that sight and sense and feeling make men very poor theologians." End Quote. That is exactly right. Amazing how poor reaction to trials, or tragedy, or pressure, or stress, or anxiety, or fear, exposes, really, what is a heart of unbelief, or some inconsistency in believing and it leads to bad theology and unfaithful practice.

I've seen this over and over and over again in pastoral ministry and in wider exposure to theological trends. People come up with really bad advice for other people, or they concoct some unbiblical justification for their fear, or they create a twisted doctrine to suit their unbiblical practices and suit their desires. And it's all because that the trial in the moment, to them, do their limited human perception, seems insurmountable. The pressures are too great. The potential for danger, to fearsome, the consequences too significant.

What is that but a heart of unbelief? What is that but an inconsistency between the God that we say we believe, but we think he can't handle this. All it takes to reveal our weakness in believing is the right trial, at the right time. So, we all pray, we pray this together, we say I do believe, O Lord, but help my unbelief. Oh, direct my believing to the right object, namely my Lord and my God, my Christ, and my Savior, because when we believe him, we find rest.

Just as a footnote, it's the only place in Scripture where we read of Jesus sleeping, the circumstances of his sleeping are in the worst place possible, actually. I can't think of any worse place to go and take a nap than in the heart of a violent and deadly storm in a wooden boat. But he's able to rest. Finding perfect peace in the good providence of the sovereign God.

Isaiah wrote, Isaiah 26:3 to 4, "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Trust in the LORD forever. For the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock." That was Jesus. His mind was stayed upon, fixed upon, the good



providence of the sovereign God, and God kept him in perfect peace.

That's what we're to learn here. That our faith is to be fixed upon God, fixed upon Christ. And what Jesus practiced, we too are to practice. God will keep us in perfect peace when our minds are stayed upon him, meditating upon his word, trusting in him.

Let's get to our fourth point. We rest in the Sovereign's providence, in the Master's omniscience, in the Savior's presence, and fourthly, we find rest in the Lord's prudence. We find less, rest in the Lord's prudence. Could have said wisdom, but it doesn't rhyme with the other points, so prudence it is.

Imagine being in the boat that night. You're terrified at the power that threatens to crush your boat like a kindling wood, balsa wood boat in a bathtub. Threatens to take your life. And then it suddenly dawns upon you that there is an even greater power than nature standing no more than arm's length away from you. Oh no, who's this?

Again, in verse 25, "They were afraid," no wonder. "And they marveled, saying to one another, 'Who then is this that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?'" They're reacting here like saints of old who encountered a theophany, a visible manifestation of God almighty. Because that's what they're seeing. A visible manifestation of God almighty in Jesus Christ. And they react here, appropriately with fear and awe and wonder.

The veil has been removed. They see who they're dealing with, who they're reckoning with. And what they were afraid of, that is the power of the storm, it's dwarfed here by the one in their midst, sitting in their boat, rebuking them for not believing.

While their boat rests gently now, upon the calm surface of the lake, which this person just commanded, that storm that had been outside of their boat, has moved inside, into their hearts. Causing for them what must have been an existential crisis. Who is this?

They thought they'd known him. They knew of physicians who could heal the sick though. They were familiar with exorcists, Jewish exorcists, who purportedly cast out demons but, only God can control the weather. That's what their minds are here grappling with. That's what they're trying to process here. They're, and they're figuring it out.

That this Jesus here is God. And this God man, he just spoke to these impersonal forces. He commanded the forces of nature. He spoke to the wind and the water, or as we read in verse 24, "He rebuked them," which is the word, *epitimao*. To repute, reprove, or admonish, or even to censure in silence.

Why did Jesus speak to inanimate forces of nature? You ever wondered that? He spoke to, remember when Peter's mother-in-law was sick and in bed, and he, he rebuked the fever? And do fevers have minds? But it's, we start to, need to start to believe in animism? Is that what Jesus believes? No, no, he doesn't believe that. But if you ever wondered why he spoke to these inanimate, animate, forces more than that, how did the forces of nature listen to him?

Jesus here could have simply thought the thought, or he could have passed his hand over the waters, or he could have put up his hand in a stop sign motion to the wind. Instead, he spoke. He used words. And the reason he used words is to teach his disciples a lesson about the power of his words.

What's the lesson? The howling and violent winds, turbulent and troubled waters, they became completely calm, perfectly at peace, at Jesus' command, right? That's what the disciples saw for themselves. Jesus commands, verse 25, "They obey him." The result is a cessation of the storm and it's replaced by a gentle calm.

Look back at what preceded this narrative. Verses 19 to 21 before Jesus calmed the storm, Luke 8:21, "my mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it." He says in other places, "Blessed are those who hear and obey the word." Listen, if obedience to the word of God, results in a peaceful calm for impersonal forces of nature, what will the blessing be



for Jesus' family members, who likewise hear the word of God and do it? Here we see, calm.

Our outline points are about finding rest, God's providence, omnipotence, presence, finding Lord's prudence. What is prudence? By prudence we're talking about wisdom. And when we say wisdom, biblically speaking, we're talking about knowledge rightly applied to the glory of God. Knowledge rightly or righteously applied to the glory of God. That's wisdom.

And whenever Jesus speaks, whenever he rebukes, or commands, or instructs, you know what comes out of his mouth? Wisdom. He's telling us wisdom. Knowledge rightly applied to the glory of God. It's wisdom, it's prudence, and his commands, are all joy producing, fruit producing, rest producing, commands that come forth from his lips.

And just as the wind and the waves obeyed and calm resulted, so also when we obey his wise commands, a calm will set over our hearts. Obedience to our Lord's wisdom brings cessation of turmoil in our hearts, which is replaced by peace and calm. In

obedience to his word, we find rest, rest, as we trust in God's providence, as we're safe beneath his omnipotent care. Rest as we commune with Christ as we come into his spiritual presence. Rest in the wisdom of all his words of instruction and command.

But rest from what? Up to this point, we haven't really defined that fully, have we? Just, it's been self-defined. What do we need rest from? Perhaps you've been thinking about that in your own thoughts.

You're saying, you know, I could really use some rest from my job. It's really taken it out of me. You, you really use rest from this relational drama and conflict. I am tired of this and I can't do anything about the other person's will. I could really use rest, you know, from parenting toddlers. I'm losing hair over this. I can lose, use rest from financial worry or whatever it is. Hosts of things that trouble us and disturb our peace, rob us of mental tranquility and prevent all rest.

For disciples that night, rest is easy to define, isn't it? They wanted to not die, that's rest. They can't reason with the

weather. They can't calm the storm at sea; natural forces in a fallen world are prone to kill and destroy. They have no feelings, no remorse, no regret. These disciples are facing a power that they can't reckon with or overcome on their own. They're utterly hopeless apart from divine power. But learn the lesson here and let it go down deep. A great, calm results when God exercises his power to save those who are perishing. By Jesus' command, by the exercise of these omnipotent power, a great, calm results bringing salvation to men. And in the grip of God salvation, like we see in Jesus' calm behavior in the midst of the storm, while the winds and the waves are still raging, he remained at perfect peace and rest.

Those who know God's full salvation, deliverance from sin, deliverance from divine judgement, from divine wrath, from eternal death, they know perfect peace in the midst of any storm.

No need to get out of the trouble on the job. No need to escape the relational drama and the human conflict. No, no need to escape, toddlers, kids, parenting drama, no need to escape the

pressures of finance. Like Jesus asleep in the boat, there's a deeper rest for those who are rightly related to God. That's what the disciples instinctively realized this night, and not during the storm. In the calm after the storm their hearts are suddenly gripped with an even greater fear, as they marveled and feared, and said to one another. Who then is this? They instinctively sensed the need to be in right relation to the greatest power in the universe, the power of almighty God.

They knew him, yeah. Clearly, they didn't know him fully. Yeah, they'd walked with him, and ate with him, and talked and laughed with him. They'd watched him as he performed miracles and compassion, demonstrating power over demons and disease and death. They listened to his teaching; they observed how deftly he handled his opponents and yet they ask in this moment. "Who then is this?" Incomplete knowledge means imperfect trust, weakness of faith.

Ah, but to know him is to trust him. And to trust him, that is, to trust him fully, and consistently, and completely, is to

never be afraid again. Why? Because he came to put death to death. By the power of God in Christ, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. The greatest power of the universe, power beyond natural forces, greater than the demonic realm, greater than disease and even death, power to overcome the curse and give eternal life. That power resides in the almighty God.

And if that power is no longer oriented against you, then you have nothing to fear, nothing; not tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger or sword, "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation. Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ, Christ Jesus our Lord."

Having been justified by faith, we have peace with God, not enmity. We have peace with God, no longer war with him. We have peace, not hostility. That means we're save from his wrath. A wrath that's mightier than the fiercest storm, more terrifying than the most destructive forces on earth, a wrath that doesn't

merely destroy the body, but is able to destroy both, body and soul in hell. Salvation from that power. Salvation from that destructive force of wrath, well, that is salvation indeed.

Listen, if you're at peace with God, then you know how to find rest in the middle of any storm, right? You just need to believe consistently. Right, really, rightly related to God because you put your faith in the atoning of death of Jesus Christ for your sins, because you trust in his perfect life of obedience that merits your eternal life. You've been saved from the greatest storm, the coming judgment of God in his righteous wrath.

So, if you're at peace with God, you can find rest in his providence, you can find rest in his omnipotent power, you can find rest in the Savior's presence and you can find rest in obedience to the Lord's commands, discovering the joy of walking in his wisdom. That is how to find the rest in the middle of the storm.

And that's why Luke actually leaves us in this narrative with a question ringing in our ears. "Who then is this, that he

commands even winds and water and they obey him?" Impersonal forces of nature. Forces that cannot be reasoned with or themselves reason. And yet at his command their agitated state is stilled. How about you? Will you trust the one who commands even winds and water and find rest for your troubled souls? If you trust him to accomplish the greatest of all miracles, namely the salvation of your soul, and your ultimate rescue from the wrath of almighty God, will you trust him to take care of even the lesser trials and storms in your life? Where have you put your faith? Let's pray.

Our Father, we do pray. We believe, we do. But help our unbelief. Help us to walk before you in a consistency of believing. That we believe you fully, completely, without hesitation and without regard to circumstances around us. But that by, whenever we're afraid, we come and trust in you, and pray to you. With thanksgiving, in every circumstance, making our request known to you. Knowing that your peace, which surpasses all of our understanding will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

Father, let our faith, being purer than much fine gold, when it's passing through the fire, let our faith when it's tested, prove that you are the only legitimate object of faith. Let our faith, when tested, when trials come, when pressures come, when stresses come, and worries come, let our faith demonstrate that we belong to an almighty God who cares and loves. We thank you for this in Jesus' name, amen.