

How to Find Rest in the Middle of a Storm, Part 1

Luke 8:22-25

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.

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. 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 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.

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." As we observe humanity and deity join together in this one person. I want you to see here. 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, 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 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. 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. 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.

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. 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." 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?

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. 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.

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 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.

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.