

TRINITY NEWS

Mark 4:35-41

Storms of Life and Test of Faith

Calamities of life sometimes come to terrify us. They hammer us and threaten to destroy all our stability and security. We don't know whether we can survive them. And we don't know how long they will last. Such crisis are often compared to experiencing being trapped in a storm at sea.

As Mark tells the story, the disciples were terrified that the boat was going to break up and everyone would die. But Jesus was asleep, apparently oblivious to their pending doom. They awaken him and cry, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" (v. 38). Jesus would then quiet the storm with a word, but then he would rebuke the disciples: "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" (v. 40).

Some people still doubt if this report by Mark did happen. But whatever others may say I believe some lessons in the story are obvious. Jesus has power over nature, like the storms of life. And he experienced them along men, among his disciples. This proved he cares by showing those who believe, even us, that he is near, just beside us, he loves us and able to save us from them and teaches us to trust him in these times (more than we do).

Yet there is a lesson that may not be so obvious. Storms don't worry Jesus. He's right there with us, and he's perfectly calm about it. He isn't terrified; he isn't impatient; he isn't worried. In fact, he's so calm, he's asleep. Maybe we think "he seems to be asleep at the control room". We start to wonder whether he even knows the trouble we're in. Whether he cares.

But like the disciples, we believe he's there. In the disciples' case, they could actually see him lying there asleep. We don't have that luxury. We believe he's there, but most of the time he seems just as asleep as he was during the storm that day

on the Sea of Galilee. The psalmist had the same lament in Psalm 44:23-24, "Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep? Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever. Why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression?"

Maybe that's why Mark included this story. The not-so-obvious lesson is that Jesus was just as much in control, and the disciples were just as safe in his hands, while he was asleep as while he was awake. Most of the time, life seems like a relentless voyage from one storm to the next. And we feel and see the storm around us, often making us cower and scared just like Jesus' disciples were.

But we can take heart in knowing that Jesus isn't scared, and he isn't depressed. He might be "asleep", or he might not be, but either way, like the song says, "He's got the whole world in his hands." But even if he doesn't wake up and quiet the storm, we are safe knowing what did at Calvary. To panic is to show lack of faith, and learning from the story if we "wake him up" with our whining and complaints, he's probably going to say: "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

THIS WEEK: Wednesday. Bible study, 10 a.m.

TO PLAN: TRINITY SUNDAY & PARENT'S DAY, June 21.