

“Still In One Peace”

Mark 4:35-41

That day when evening came, He said to His disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” 36 Leaving the crowd behind, they took Him along, just as He was, in the boat. There were also other boats with Him. 37 A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat so that it was nearly swamped. 38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke Him and said to Him, “teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”

39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be Still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

40 He said to His disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

41 They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey Him!”

Jesus does not promise to calm every storm in your life. Jesus does promise to calm YOU in every storm.

John Wesley could hardly have been called a faint-hearted “stay-at-home” type of person. But there were times when he lost his nerve. During one of Wesley’s several Atlantic ocean crossings, a frighteningly fierce storm broke out, pitching and tossing the ship about like a bathtub toy. While Wesley and others clung to their bunks and hid their heads, a community of Moravians, traveling to their new homeland, calmly gathered to hold their daily worship service and sing praises to God. Watching these Moravians, so apparently unperturbed by the howling winds and crashing waves, Wesley realized he was witnessing a truly “waterproof” faith. From that moment on, John Wesley prayed that God would give him the ability to likewise ride out life’s storms with as much confidence as these Protestants from Moravia. **[Note 2]**

What made those Moravians so peaceful in the face of the storm? Was it because they were all good swimmers or they knew where the life rafts were and knew that the ocean currents in that place would take them to safety? NO! It was the same trait that the disciples so woefully lacked in our story from the Bible found in the gospel of Mark chapter 4: an unquenchable trust in Jesus Christ. After stretching out His arms and stilling the storm, Jesus turned to His companions and chastised them. By cowardly cringing and crying out to Jesus in fear, they had revealed the shallowness of their faith. Although they had been specially chosen as Jesus’ fellow travelers, His disciples, they were missing the boat. **[Note 3]**

But, Pastor Rick, “Doesn’t it tell us in the Bible to take everything to God in prayer?” YES. Jesus is not chastising them for crying out to Him or asking Him for help. Jesus is not saying that their faith was shown to be too shallow because they cried out to Him. Jesus is chastising them for being so afraid. They didn’t believe that they were safe, they were fearing for their lives. Then to make matters worse, their tone accused Jesus of not caring, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” (pause)

To be effective Christians, that have an impact on our community, we have to develop an unquenchable trust and deep faith that, no matter what, somehow, some way, God will make a way and He will work things together for good. We need to trust that Jesus keeps and always will keep, His promise to never leave us or forsake us! We live by faith not by feeling. We live by faith in and trust in Jesus ... NOT in fear. **[Note 4]**

Some people read this story in the Bible and say something like, “What could have been more of a thrill than witnessing this miracle of Jesus’ calming the storm?” But think about it. The wind was crazy, the waves, huge. In fact the waves were so big that they were swamping the boat. The boat is filling with water and Jesus is asleep. Talk about a contrast. The disciples are fearing for their lives ... they are afraid that they are going to drown and Jesus is asleep on a cushion, which most likely was a sandbag used as ballast to keep the boat from tipping over when they were pulling in a net full of fish. So it’s not Jesus was sleeping on a 4 inch piece of memory foam. But Jesus is not worried about life, the waves, or the water because He is totally convinced that, no matter what, God will allow Him to complete His purpose. The disciples are deathly afraid that they will drown before they even get to the other side of this large inland sea. The real miracle Jesus wanted to show the disciples was not that He was Lord over the wind and the sea, the miracle of the calming of the storm, but rather the miracle of calming THEM in the storm.

Jesus is recorded in the gospel of John chapter 16 and verse 33 as saying, “In this world you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world.” Jesus knew that life wouldn’t be easy. Because of sin in this world which I have talked about in previous sermons, all of us have to deal with problems, low points, pain, and disappointment. Look around you. Many of the people around you this morning are dealing with some kind of storm in their life right now! You can always find someone who has it worse than you. Fifteen million Americans attend half-a-million support groups every week. In this life, on this earth, you will have trouble. But Jesus will walk alongside you, with you, THROUGH every valley, through whatever the world can dish out. That’s why the song, “Another in the Fire” means so much to me. The lyrics are the was another in the Fire, there is another in the fire, there will be another in the fire. Standing next to me, another in the waters, holding back the seas, And should I ever need reminding, How good You’ve been to me, I’ll count the joy come every battle, cuz I know that’s where you’ll be, what power set me free, there is a grave that holds no body, and now that power lives in me. There’ll be another in the fire. **[Note 5]**

This was the faith those Moravian travelers showed John Wesley – the faith that knows that with Jesus, that there is no storm too fierce, no opponent too great, no crisis too terrible. The disciples lost out on their chance to experience the jubilation, the sheer exhilaration that could have been theirs had they had the courage to ride the waves of that storm WITH Jesus rather than yelling at Him and accusing Him of not caring whether they drown or not. Instead, their fear forced Jesus to shut the ride down and sail them into port. **[Note 6]**

How many of us have dry-docked our faith? How many of us keep our life and our faith “land-locked” so that we stay safe? Like a ship that stays in the harbor always, never venturing out into the deep water. If a few of us do venture out on the water and take a risk, it is only to paddle about in the shallows—afraid to sail too far away from land, where the current might grab us and take us off in an unknown direction. What are we afraid of? Some of us are afraid of failure? Some of us just don’t want to get out of our comfort zone because we have been burned once before when we risked something. While the disciples did have the advantage of witnessing first-hand the power of Jesus to heal, they did not yet have the experience of witnessing Christ’s death and resurrection to buoy up their courage. **[Note 7]**

The church is not meant to be a place to hide out in peace. The church is not a building! The true church is the fellowship, the bride of Christ, the family of God. Yes, you can find peace from the world as you focus on praising God but the church was never meant to be a place to hide. Rather the church is a place for learning how to stride forth, to face life with courage, to be equipped to go out and make a difference. As recorded in the gospel of John chapter 20 the first words Jesus spoke to His church were: “Peace, peace I give you.” But He almost immediately followed that up with “I send you.” His resurrection message was: “go tell them I am risen and meet me on the road to Galilee. Behold, I go before you and lead you into new truth and new opportunities.

The resurrection teaches us that we need no longer fear anything, not even death itself. So what keeps us still spiritually anchored in safe, snug harbors? Are we perhaps, more afraid of becoming failures than we are of becoming fatalities? Are we more afraid of living than we are afraid of dying? **[Note 8]**

Jesus doesn’t want us to keep only to the easy paths of life, the “tried and true.” Jesus kept moving throughout His ministry, always pushing the disciples to the next town, to the next community, and/or grabbing a boat to journey to a new shore. Jesus doesn’t call us to just live “within our limits.” Jesus calls us to live in the power of the Holy Spirit with no limits. That is the continuing call of the church—to go everywhere, be everywhere, to hit the road and sail the seven seas. How else can the church fulfill the directive Jesus gave it: to GO ... to the ends of the earth?” Jesus practiced His ministry in His going. As He walked along, as He traveled, He helped people, He showed them the way, He healed the hurting, the broken hearted, the diseased, and the crippled. If you look at the gospels Jesus never talks about going to a group or a city to evangelize them. He cared and had compassion for the whole person. Many times the sharing of the hope of the good news was after or part of serving them first. **[Note 9a]**

The miracle story of Jesus’ calming the storm at sea testifies to two truths. First, as the divine Son of God, there is nothing Jesus cannot do to keep us from ultimate harm. Jesus’ power, in that regard is unbounded. Unlimited power, unlimited love, unlimited atonement (which means forgiveness or Jesus blood covers it all, there is no limit to what Jesus blood covers). God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and everywhere present. When Jesus promises the Disciples that He will never leave them or forsake

them He is giving us a promise that we can count on! No matter what, there is nothing that is too difficult for God. He can protect you and He will get you through. Some how, some way, God will make a way. **[Note 9b]**

Second, as Jesus' disciples living in a sinful, imperfect world, we are in for some rough times. This gospel story confirms that the boat in which Jesus and His disciples found themselves went through a real storm, a real threat. So what now? We know that we are in for rough times and that Jesus will be with us. Sometimes we will need to forgive God for letting us go through rough times. Sometimes we will need to forgive a brother or sister in Christ for causing rough times. But, In Christ, you can forgive all. If you really think about it, forgiveness and peace are closely related to one another.

Terry Anderson, a hostage for almost seven years in Lebanon, said this about forgiveness: "Forgiveness isn't something that you just do and get over with it—it's a process ... what does it mean to forgive? Does it mean that I accept what they did to me? NO Does it mean I have to love them? That is what Christ said, but you may or may not be ready for that. It does mean NOT hanging on to the anger? I'm not going to spoil the joy of being free by being angry. I can't hurt them by my anger—I can only hurt myself." **[Note 10]**

We are to remember Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." And then ask Christ for the strength to forgive. To get on with life and not be held back by continually holding on to hurt and anger. Refusing to forgive or holding a grudge only hurts ourselves. We, as Christians need to pull together because the world is going to try to pull us apart. Satan would love nothing more than to continually erode the integrity of the church in the eyes of the unbelievers. The Ojibwa Indians had a saying that they would chant after having killed a deer or bear. "When you fall, I fall. When you suffer, I suffer. We are both in the same boat." That same boat ...is life. We are all in it and we are all battling life with of life's struggles. There is only one way that we can get through in one peace, p-e-a-c-e. The peace that passes understanding. The peace that knows that Jesus will get us through. So we don't need to worry or fear. If God is for me, who can be against me. That is to truly trust Christ, truly forgive our brothers and sisters in Christ, and to depend on Jesus' love to sustain us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Notice that the storm doesn't blow AROUND their boat just because Jesus is on board. The wind hits them full force. The boat is tossed to and fro. It starts to fill up with water. Nowhere in the Bible does Jesus promise His followers anything different. A peaceful voyage is NOT the ride of life that Christians travel on. But a PEACE-FILLED journey, with Christ always present, is. Listen to these words from a Russ Taff song: "Let the storm clouds gather, let the rains pour on down, let the mighty winds of change blow in and turn my life around. Cause I know that I've got shelter, from the storms I must go through. I'm going to be all right as long as I can come home to You (meaning Jesus)." Jesus Christ's promise is not to sail around every storm but it is to bring us THROUGH all of life's storms—still in one peace. The Peace that passes understanding. Let us pray ... AMEN

Sermon Notes for “Still In One Peace” on Mark 4: 35-41
Given on August 24, 2014 at Voice of Hope Church
August 31, 2025 at Doster Community Church

- I. Jesus does NOT promise to calm every storm in your life. Jesus DOES promise to calm YOU in every storm of life.
- II. Pray that God will give you the ability to ride out life's storms with a calm faith or rather an unquenchable trust in Jesus Christ.
- III. Jesus does not chastise the Disciples because they cried out to Him but because of their fear and shallow faith.
- IV. The true miracle is not calming the physical storm but calming THEM in the midst of the storm.
- V. Jesus know life will not be easy. But do not give in to fear and worry because Jesus has overcome the world!
- VI. How many of us have dry-docked our faith? How many of us keep ourselves land-locked because we are afraid to risk and lose?
- VII. The church is not a place to hide. The Resurrection teaches us we need no longer fear anything, not even death. Jesus says, “Peace I give you” and then quickly follows it with “I send you” (John 20:19-21).
- VIII. Jesus kept moving in His ministry, always pushing the disciples along to the next community and grabbing a boat to journey to a new shore. Jesus preached and taught as He was going!
- IX. The miracle of the story testifies to two truths.
 - a. Jesus was God and there is nothing too difficult for Him and He CAN keep us from ultimate harm.
 - b. As Jesus disciples living in a sinful, imperfect world, we are in for rough times.
- X. We can do ALL things in and through Christ who strengthens us (Philip. 4:13) Jesus is our shelter, our refuge, our mighty rock as we go THROUGH the storms of life. Jesus doesn't calm all the storms but promises to calm us and get us through every storm ... still in one peace. In Jesus you can have peace! What are you going to do about it?