

Third Sunday after Pentecost
Mark 4:35-41 (Series B)
“He is...even when you forget He is...”
June 21, 2009

Sermon Text: Mark 4:38-41

Sermon Title: “He is...even when we forget He is...”

Sermon Hymn: LSB 738- “Lord of All Hopefulness”

Prayer: Peace and comfort in the Lord promises to be there despite our lack of faith.

Sermon Outline:

- I. Jesus’ purpose in “*Let us go across to the other side.*”
 - A. He knew the storm would come.
 - B. A lesson for the disciples in faith and repentance.
- II. The lesson.
 - A. True faith does not put the Savior-God away for a stormy day.
 - B. Jesus Christ is not a God of convenience or a lucky charm.
 - C. Jesus is our Savior-God, even when our faith is lacking.
- III. We believers do face challenges.
 - A. Jesus Christ always has our number one interest in mind.
 - B. Jesus Christ is still there even we forget.
 - C. Job 38:8-11

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and from Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord. Amen.

I have to admit the Gospel reading for this Sunday had me scratching my head for quite some time. The account of Jesus and the disciples in a boat out on the Sea of Galilee and the life-threatening storm that comes upon them. Jesus speaks His Words of Power, the Sea and the wind obey His voice, and there is complete calm- a terrific account of Jesus’ ability and power.

There are numerous conclusions, I believe, we could come to after reading this account from any of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, or Luke. One conclusion is that Jesus is always with us. This is true. Another conclusion, Jesus is always there to calm the storms in our lives. Thinking about that you have to ask yourself this question, while it is true that Jesus is always with each and every one of us every day of our lives, is He always

going to calm the storms in our lives? Well, one thing we know for sure, Jesus never promised we would never face hardship in life on this earth.

Storms, whether they are from wind, rain, tornadoes, and the like, they happen. Things happen in life that tear us up emotionally, even physically. No one hardship is like another. We can all agree with all this can't we?

In this Gospel we read that Jesus says, "Let us go across to the other side." This probably occurred several months after Jesus had started His Galilean ministry. By this time He's attracting large crowds of hearers. The disciples heard several parables from Him just that day. They had witnessed Him perform healing miracles up to this point.

On this day in this account, Jesus had apparently been preaching from a boat set along the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The rising hills along the shore of the Sea provided a natural amphitheatre from that position. Evening came and He says to His disciples, "Let us go across to the other side." Maybe He needed the rest. Maybe there were others on the other side He wanted to preach and proclaim to.

Okay, so let me ask you a question. Jesus is God, we all know this. He knows everything that has happened, is happening, will happen. So, we must conclude Jesus knew that storm was going to come upon the disciples. So, why in the world did Jesus suggest they stay in the boat and venture to the other side? Was He knowingly putting the disciples and whoever followed in harm's way? Oh, Jesus did in fact know that storm was going to come.

Let's think of this account, the best we can, from the disciples' perspective. They'd been amazed at Jesus' teachings and miracles. They loved this guy. They'd go anywhere and do anything if Jesus wanted them

to. So, they did just as Jesus suggested and they set out for the other side of the Sea. And, then that horrible, horrible storm came up.

Bad storms were common on the Sea of Galilee, and these men were quite experienced in this sort of thing. Yet, based on verse 38, they believed they were perishing. And, they knew, or at least they believed, that if the storm didn't stop they were going to die. In the middle of a sea, in the middle of a storm that's about to take your life, wouldn't you be in a panic?

Now, they'd had seen Jesus perform miracles. They knew He had great power. If you were one of those disciples wouldn't you be really irritated and upset if you knew the One who could save you was sound asleep on a cushion in the stern of the very boat you were on? They're all about to die and He doesn't even care! "Don't you care about us Jesus? Get up and do something!"

Jesus knew the storm was going to come. He knew the disciples would be terrified for their lives. He knew how they would come down, wake Him up, and ask Him the rude question, "Don't you care about us?"

What was Jesus up to anyway? It appears He's up to teaching these disciples a lesson. And, as covered before, it wasn't that Jesus is always going to calm the storms in life. He never promised that. The lesson was,...let's put it this way, the disciples had put the power of God in their pockets to save it for a rainy, stormy day. To them, was Jesus a God of convenience? In their hearts they had put Jesus in a drawer to be called upon only when they felt they had no power to deal with hardship themselves? This lesson Jesus was teaching them, you can see it broken down in the outline for this sermon.

A. True faith does not put the Savior-God away for a stormy day.

B. Jesus Christ is not a God of convenience or a lucky charm.

C. Jesus is our Savior-God, even when our faith is lacking.

The faith the Holy Spirit has created in our hearts, the trust He has given us in Jesus that His Word is true is not a faith that puts Jesus away for when we only think we need Him. We always need Him. There is no moment in life we need Him more than other moments. We need Him because we are sinners who continue to sin daily, hourly, and more often than we care to realize. And, what sinners need is a Savior, and that is exactly who Jesus has come to us to be, our Savior.

I know this from my own experience, and I readily admit, I have my good days and good weeks. And, because everything seems to be going my way, it's so easy to forget I'm still as much of a sinner as ever. I need to be reminded of my sinfulness and hear again my Lord's Word of Promise that my sins are forgiven. On the other hand, I have my days and weeks when I realize I've done something wrong, the guilt is barreling down on me, and the consequences are stacking up. And, it's not till those moments I pull Jesus out of my pocket and say, "save me Lord, I can't bear all these consequences." All too often, Jesus becomes a Savior, a God of power, out of convenience. Only-when-I-need-Him sort of thing.

The comfort I have, and this is how great the Lord is, He knows how sinful I really am all the time. And, He is always there in His Word to remind me of that and assure me of His forgiveness. Yes, even when I have forgotten who the Lord has made Himself to be to me, He has not forgotten.

After Jesus calmed the storm He asked His disciples two questions, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" And, the disciples "were filled with great fear and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and sea obey Him?'" You would think that after the storm was gone

and all was calm the disciples would be completely relieved and kneel down before their Lord and thank Him. Yet, they were still terrified. Terrified of what though?

They had witnessed a tremendous power coming from Jesus. And, how terrifying God's power is for those who lack faith in Him as their Savior from sin and death. How terrifying both life and death are without faith in Jesus Christ. These disciples had been taught who Jesus is. They had the Word of the prophets concerning the Messiah. They had Jesus' own Words from His own lips that He was that Messiah, yet these disciples had forgotten. God's raw power is terrifying without Jesus Christ as your Savior. How horrible Judgment Day will be for those who do not believe their sins are forgiven.

Yet, there is great news, friends. Jesus is always thinking of us. He never forgets about us, and He always has our eternal salvation at the forefront of His heart and mind. That was His number one concern for those disciples. That is His number one concern He has for all of us. Even when we forget Him, He has not forgotten us. And, He makes it possible, He provides the opportunities for us to be reminded of who He is and how much He cares for us.

Yes, we all face challenges in life. Sickness, illness, death of loved ones, natural disasters, economic hardship, even challenges congregations face, the Lord's Word is always there to be heard and read. The hardest, toughest storm of all, that is, our sin, our deaths, our deserving of eternal damnation has been calmed in the power of Jesus' blood. And, just when we forget that wonderful truth, that Promise is there for us to hear again.

Are the storms in life we all face there for the purpose of reminding us again and again that we need Jesus Christ as our Savior? Ask Job. In our

Old Testament reading this morning God is asking Job all these questions. “Where were you Job when my Word created everything around you?” We heard in that reading God said to Job concerning the power of the sea, “Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed?”

Yes, the storms will continue to come friends. And, Jesus Christ is always there in His Word to say to us, “Peace.” The storms might go away, might not, yet, the greatest storm of our guilt and fear of death is calmed again and again by His Word of power, “your sins are forgiven.”

Jesus, the Word, is the power to calm the greatest of our fear, our own death and what we really deserve. Jesus, the Word, is the power to declare to us we have eternal life in the paradise of Heaven. There is nothing more powerful, there is storm that can take away what we have been given.

Father’s Day, being tomorrow, what better truth and comfort to give your children. Father’s bringing up your children in the admonition and nurture of the Lord is more than giving them head knowledge of God’s power. It is instilling in them the Lord’s mercy, grace, and forgiveness. It is privilege to raise your children in a home where they power in the Lord’s Word of peace permeates all thoughts and words.

Members of Trinity Lutheran Church, too many are out there terrified of the power of God. I really do believe, we need to be doing what we can to bring the message of peace to their front doors, and sharing with them that Jesus is thinking of them and has the power to declare them forgiven and heirs of eternal life. We always need a Savior from sin and eternal death, and Jesus is always there as our Savior from our sin and death. Amen.