

## Jesus calms the storm

### Introduction

Good morning and welcome to Osaka international Church. I appreciate the opportunity that Pastor Dan has given to me to share the gospel message this morning. I want to thank everyone for welcoming us as this is now our one month anniversary of coming to Osaka. We are doing our best to get to know all of your names. I have been to many countries around the world and there are a lot of things that have a universal aspect to them. For example, music is a universal language. Music is appreciated regardless of language or culture. Another thing that I have noticed that is universal is the sound of children playing in a playground. Regardless if I am in the United States or here in Osaka, children playing together is a very sweet and melodious sound. One thing I also notice is having fears and anxieties that trouble us is also a universal thing. Some of those things that seem to follow people regardless of where we live on this earth are fears and anxieties concerning health, finances, relationships, jobs... Maybe you fit one of those categories.

### Message

Today our message is about how Jesus calmed the fears of the disciples. Our Bible passage today is an iconic one. It is Mark 4: 35-41.

#### Slide Mark 4:35-41

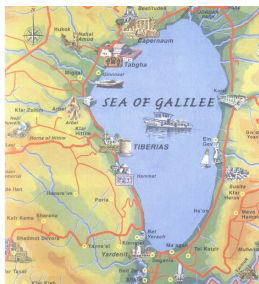
*<sup>35</sup> That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." <sup>36</sup> Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. <sup>37</sup> A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup> 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?"*

*<sup>39</sup> He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.*

*<sup>40</sup> He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"*

*<sup>41</sup> They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"*

In this very familiar passage, we meet Jesus on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.



#### Slide of Sea of Galilee

Have you ever noticed that the Sea of Galilee has at least 3 names that are found in Scripture. In some places, it's called the Sea of Galilee, in other places, Lake Geneseret, and in others Sea of Tiberias. Sometimes these different names can be a bit confusing. But the reality of it is, this body of water is often called by the city in which it is standing. The Sea of Galilee is obviously named for the region of Galilee. We find Jesus today on the shore. He has devoted his full day to serving people by healing the sick, bringing comfort to those who are in distress and teaching the principles of life in Christ. He has probably been doing some of this on land but the teaching he most likely did from a boat.



#### Slide of Jesus in boat

It's been a long day. It is Jesus himself who decides it is time to go over to the other side.

**Slide verse 36** *<sup>36</sup> Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him*

So in verse 36 they leave the multitude and the disciples take Him with them just as He was, in that boat, and other boats were with Him. We actually have a small flotilla of boats. No doubt it is night and darkness has come and in verse 37 we discover that a fast forming storm is coming upon them.

**Slide verse 37**<sup>37</sup> *A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped.*

The geographic region here around the Sea of Galilee promotes such storms due to the fact the Sea of Galilee is 680 feet below sea level and the mountainous region causes fast forming storms as winds blow quickly through them. The Sea of Galilee is the lowest level of fresh water anywhere in the world. Some of you may think the Dead Sea is lower and that is true but it's not fresh water... it has a high mineral content. I have been on the Sea of Galilee on a boat, in a storm. The boat I was travelling in was probably 3 times bigger than this particular boat that the disciples were in so I've had a first hand experience. Fortunately the boat that we were travelling in came with 2 very large engines and we quickly outran the storm. We see again in verse 37 that the waves were now breaking over the boat in such a manner as to already be filling up the boat with water. I don't know about you but if I'm in a small boat, in the dark, in a storm, and water is coming in over the sides, I might get a little anxious myself. Have you ever felt like the storms of life are coming in upon you with things you are having a hard time processing. As I said earlier, some of these involve finances, jobs, personal relationships, illnesses, etc. Have you ever said to yourself during these occasions "I'm kind of annoyed that God seems to be sleeping when I'm going through a storm in my life. In verse 38 we see one of the paradoxes of this passage.

**Slide verse 38**<sup>38</sup> *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?"*

In the midst of the storm, Jesus is asleep in the stern of the boat. Have you ever wondered why Jesus could sleep during this storm? Maybe there's 2 reasons. Maybe He was just trying to stir up a little prayer life in some of the disciples, or most likely Jesus sleeps because He's in touch with eternity. He knows that this storm isn't going to kill them or take His life. He's destined for the cross. We get a great portrait of the humanity of Christ. God in human flesh has the same attributes that we do. He gets tired, he gets hungry, He gets thirsty. In this same passage, we'll get a great portrait of the deity of Christ as He deals with the storm. Back to verse 38 the disciples are about to make a request of Jesus and seem a little put out that He's sleeping through all this. I don't know how you like to get woken up from a sleep but Nancy and I take turns especially on the weekends preparing coffee and bringing a cup of coffee back to our bedroom and serving each other so we take turns awakening each other in a soft loving manner. I personally look forward to this event. In the case of the disciples, however, they take a slightly different approach. This is what they say: Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing? Isn't it interesting how the disciples take it upon themselves to rebuke Christ. I guess we really can't blame them as they were suffering through a high intensity of fear and anxiety. We have the privilege today of knowing Christ and reading His Word and finding comfort for the storms of our lives.

Have you ever projected problems into your life... problems that will occur with future events with things you cannot control? I think all of us have a tendency to do this on occasion. But Matthew 6:34 says let's take life one day at a time.

**Slide Matthew 6:34** *Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough troubles of its own.*

Worry. Worry is not a healthy thing. Oh in some cases it's necessary... we worry about our children, our loved ones, we worry about those who are not yet in Christ and I think those can be classified as healthy worries. But worrying about things that we really can't change places us in an unhealthy environment. Worry is like buying a brand new car.... Taking it home, parking it in the driveway, and then putting it up on blocks and then getting in the car starting it up and gunning the engine to the point where we have destroyed the car. We realize when we get out of the car then, that we haven't gone anywhere. Worry is like that. We worry about things we can't change

and we discover we are destroying our own lives... emotionally, spiritually, physically and yet it accomplishes nothing. That's why God asks us to let Him do the worrying for us. Our next slide (I Peter 5:6,7) illustrates this well.

**Slide 1 peter 5;6,7** *Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*

Humble yourself: don't try to do things in your own strength. Maybe it's hard for us at times to recognize that God is the omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent one. We tend to forget this at times when we're going through crises. The Scripture says here that God will exalt us, lift us, make us feel better. God doesn't really want us to be stressed out. Stress can lead to depression and God doesn't want us to feel this way. He told us that He came to make our joy complete. So he tells us to cast our cares upon Him for He cares for us. So we do this yet it seems less than 10 minutes later we take the concerns back and worry about them ourselves.

Another favorite passage that I enjoy when I'm wrestling with issues in my life is Jeremiah 29:11

**Slide Jeremiah 29:11** *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

Here in the Old Testament I'm reminded that God has plans for me, and those plans include good things.... That God wants me to have a future and a hope so I cling to those promises as I walk through life.

Now let's move on with the rest of the account of Jesus and the storm.

**Slide verse 39** <sup>39</sup> *He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.*



In verse 39 we get Christ's reply to the request that the disciples have placed upon Him. Christ rebukes the storm. I'm not sure if He had to audibly say this or just said it so that all the other boats in the region would have also heard it. But certainly we get this famous parcel of words from Jesus as He shows his deity over the storm. 'hush, be still'.

**slide Jesus calming the storm**

Jesus is pretty calm and collected as He has authority over the storm.

Remember, He created weather!

Let's continue in our passage.

**Slide verse 40** <sup>40</sup> *He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"*

In verse 40, after Jesus has been rebuked by the disciples and now has rebuked the storm, He takes opportunity to address the disciples. And He says to them "Why are you so timid... how is it that you have no faith?"

I've found over the course of my life that faith leads to courage and that courage allows God to work within me. Whether it be boldly presenting the Gospel or whether it be managing the distresses of my life. I also enjoy the verse in Psalm 46: 1,2 (feel free to look this passage up when you have a chance) – Psalm 46:1,2 *"God is my strength and refuge he is my help in any trouble".* And as I read that, I remind myself... why am I trying to solve problems in my own strength?

Next, back in our text, in verse 41 we get the reaction of the disciples.

**slide verse 41** <sup>41</sup> *They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"*

Notice that the disciples have a new fear and this fear is not from the storm. It's from the calm. They have recognized with awe and reverence that this Man is indeed God.

## **Application**

Where can we find application from all this for our lives today? Do you think this miracle was really necessary? From a teaching perspective, yes, it shows who Jesus is. But from the disciples perspective, they weren't about to perish. Jesus didn't need to calm the storm. The disciples' problem wasn't really the storm... it was their lack of faith. They would have no need to awaken him. They would have arrived safely at the other side, Jesus probably still asleep.

So where is the application for our lives in this? First, the storms of life will come. Whether that be in the form of persecution, or any of the other events I mentioned earlier... finances, illness, personal relationships... they're inevitable. But we can use these as a testing and proving ground for our Christian walk.

I want to share with you 7 reasons why we should never let worry dominate our lives each day:

### **Slides (7 total)**

#### **SEVEN REASONS WHY WORRY SHOULD NOT DOMINATE OUR LIVES!**

1. The same God who created life in you can be trusted with the details of your life.
2. Worrying about the future hampers our efforts for today.
3. Worrying is more harmful than helpful.
4. God does not ignore those who depend on Him.
5. Worry shows lack of faith IN and an understanding OF God.
6. There are real challenges that God wants us to pursue and worrying keeps us from them.
7. Living one day at a time keeps us from being consumed by worry.

It's necessary as we proceed through life to place our trust and confidence in the one who made the sea and the one who calms the wind, the one who has promised us strength and refuge, the one who has sent the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. Secondly, we might blame the disciples for reckless fear because they really didn't know who Jesus was. But we have known about Jesus for more than 2000 years. So through the storms of life rather than reacting with reckless fear or heightened anxiety, let's place our confidence in Christ.